RESEARCH REPORT

State of Peace, Reconciliation and Conflict in Liberia

CRS CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

JPC

Catholic Bishops' Conference of Liberia

This report presents the findings on the state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in Liberia. It is not to be shared or quoted without the permission of the author and Catholic Relief Services, Liberia Country Program.

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List of Acronyms

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
CABICOL	Catholic Bishops' Conference of Liberia
CAF	Conflict Assessment Framework
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CODEO	Coalition of Domestic Elections Observers
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDRR	Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West Africa States Monitoring Group
FBO	Faith-based Organization
GoL	Government of Liberia
GPS	Global Positioning System
IRCL	Inter-Religious Council of Liberia
JPC	Justice and Peace Commission
KII	Key Informant Interview
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
PPS	Probability Proportional to Size
PWYE	Publish What You Earn
PWYP	Publish What You Pay
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STE	Stereo Record of Audiotape
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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Executive Summary

The thirteen years since the end of Liberia's 14-year civil war were marked by two peaceful democratic elections and political stability; however, the pain and the wounds of the war are still fresh in the hearts of many Liberians, and the country remains very much a divided society. The postwar efforts to heal the nation have not fully addressed the issues that triggered the war. Reconciliation did not reach deep and wide enough to rebuild relationships within and between ethno-regional groups. Corruption is rampant, characterized by crony capitalism and nepotism. Political divisions along ethno-regional lines remain rife and are set to intensify in the run-up to the 2017 general elections, which would mark the first handover of power from an elected president to an elected successor since 1944. The parrying between different ethno-regional blocks in preparation for the elections are already heating up political tensions in the country. In addition, the war created new risks. Neighbors from different ethnicities, who once lived peacefully together, are feuding over residency rites and property ownership. Some were expelled from the areas they once considered home. Land ownership conflicts also abound and entangle many actors: local communities, international corporations, local and national officials, politicians and others. Some youth groups, emboldened by their experience during the war, have demonstrated their readiness to take on state security agencies in direct confrontations. Especially the high rate of unemployment of war-savvy youth, who are still connected to their wartime command structures, is a major security concern. The situation is compounded by the fears and security concerns regarding the drawdown of the peacekeeping forces of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), responsible for providing primary security in the country since the end of the war.

Concerned about the limited opportunities for genuine reconciliation, healing, and peace to take root in Liberia; the understaffed and under-equipped national security apparatus; and the fear of potential recurrence of violent national-level conflicts, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Liberia (CABICOL) requested the technical and financial support of Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to conduct a study that would provide the Church and other development partners insights into the current state of peace, reconciliation, and the risks for violent conflict in Liberia. The Church will use this information to guide its renewed engagement in the promotion of healing, reconciliation, inclusive development, and sustainable peace. The study applied both quantitative (a 1,516-respondent survey) and qualitative (47 key informant interviews) research tools to gather and analyze the perceptions and views of Liberians on a broad section of issues relevant for fostering peace in the country. The following key conclusions and recommendations emerged from the analysis:

PEACE AND CONFLICT

The current peace is greatly valued, but seen as "negative" and fragile: Liberians cherish the past 13 years of peace; however, they speak in terms of "silence of the guns" or "cessation of hostilities" rather than the positive elements of peace, such as ethnic integration, harmonious intercommunal relationships, civil conduct, mutual trust and civic pride. In the survey, two-thirds of respondents characterized Liberia as largely peaceful, but subsequent questions and key informant interviews revealed that peace is equated with the temporary absence of violence, with 66.3% describing the current peace as "negative". In short, Liberians view the peace as tentative, fragile, and volatile. This assessment is not surprising, because the fundamental problems that fueled the violent conflict are still there—corruption in public services, Americo-Liberian dominance over politics and the economy, marginalization of the indigenous populations, limited economic opportunity, and restricted participation in decision making and access to influence for the average person.

More troubling perhaps is that the conflict opened new fault lines. Respondents identified corruption (85.9%), land disputes (83.7%), and high youth unemployment (79.8%) as the most potent conflict trigger factors. Alliances of convenience for profit, greed and survival during the civil war have made bitter rivals of formerly amicable ethnic groups. Once bridgeable differences over land and resources now constitute major barriers to dialogue and civility, as families and communities engage in endless disputes over land boundaries and titles as well as agro-forestry and mining concessions. Trust and mutuality are hindered by weak institutions and lack of common norms and pathways for citizens and government to interact.

These social fissures are hardened by high rates of unemployment. Liberia's youth have scant professional training or employable skills for the job market, but they do have extensive military experience and skills with weapons of war. This enormous need for sustainable livelihoods far outstrips the capacity of the economy and the state to provide jobs. The result is a pool of war-ready, idle young people who can be rapidly mobilized. Furthermore, the state security apparatus is not adequately equipped or staffed to take over the provision of security services once UNMIL withdraws. Unmet economic expectations and mounting pressure to secure ethnic political bases will fuel neo-patrimonial behavior (e.g., nepotism, ethnic favoritism, and exclusion), making it more difficult to foster dialog, reconciliation and reestablishing the linkages between and among diverse groups and between citizens and the state. Liberians are tired of war, but this sentiment is not by itself a secure guarantor of peace.

Postwar reconciliation in Liberia is incomplete and shallow: Although Liberians acknowledge that gains have been made in reconciliation and healing, the vast majority remain convinced that the main perpetrators of violence escaped punishment, and that the victims of violence have largely been denied justice. Notably, more than 80% of respondents do not believe that people who suffered from the war received justice through Truth and Reconciliation Commission processes, and half believe that postwar reconciliation failed to achieve its objectives. Respondents in Rivercress and Montserrado counties had a more pessimistic view, with 60% expressing skepticism regarding reconciliation. Key informants felt that national peace and reconciliation

had the weakest impact on the grassroots level, where efforts were too piecemeal and shallow to obtain more than superficial buy-in from communities. A degree of healing can be attributed to the passage of time, which has cooled tensions and emotions.

They survey respondent and interviewee responses lead to a more cynical conclusion about the lack of reconciliation, with half of respondents stating that reconciliation has not happened. The truth and reconciliation process could have had a greater impact had it penetrated more deeply and widely into the social fabric and created more space for honest discussion on the grassroots level. The fact that it stopped short of reaching the most vulnerable levels of society raised the question of intentionality in the minds of many people who bore the brunt of the war. Was the intent to truly reconcile or was it meant to sweep unspeakable abuses under the rug and move on? Almost two-thirds (62.9%) of surveyed felt that the victims of civil war violence still do not feel safe. Liberians widely perceive (68.3%) that the organizers and perpetrators of the violence did not genuinely participate in truth telling and reconciliation. They feel that the guilty parties shirked their responsibility, denied wrongdoing, and did not show genuine remorse. Worse still, some of them secured positions of power as senators, representatives and government officials, and have even boasted about their wartime "accomplishments".

Renewed violent conflict can be prevented, but the risk of recidivism is high: Respondents were fairly evenly split on whether Liberia could again descend into large-scale violent conflict (50.6% "high to very high risk" and 43.7% "zero to low risk"). Those who were more optimistic believed that Liberians were too tired and disillusioned with war to return to fighting. The others cited high levels of public corruption, contentious land disputes, and high rates of youth unemployment as drivers for fresh outbreaks of violence. Also, attempts by some politicians to declare Liberia a Christian state were seen as a destabilizing force, with the potential to unleash violence.

Political leaders (71.8%) and unemployed youth (58.2%) topped the list of potential conflict instigators. Owing to historical and current drivers, respondents identified Nimba (28%), Montserrado (21%), and Grand Gedeh (17%) counties as potential flashpoints where local conflict can erupt and spread. Feelings of insecurity and the fear of relapse into mass violence were most pronounced in Rivercess (79.3%), Nimba (74.9%), Grand Kru (74.4%) and Grand Cape Mount (74.2%).

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Liberians enjoy access to basic democratic freedoms, but fear that unchecked abuses will jeopardize peace: Although there is broad consensus (78%) that citizens enjoy basic civil freedoms (speech, association and electoral franchise), respondents fear that these rights are fragile and easily abrogated. Many interviewees expressed misgivings about the lack of civility in the media, about inflammatory rhetoric in public spaces, and the perceived willingness of politicians to curtail freedoms based on such pretexts. Similarly, they believed that judicial corruption, overreach and disregard for laws were creating an atmosphere of permissiveness where public officials no longer felt bound by the constitution or obliged to listen to citizens. Many Liberians (50%) do not believe that state actors, the legal system and public institutions are making strong positive contributions to maintaining the peace.

Concerns linger over democratic participation, political inclusion, and elections: Political exclusion along ethnic lines was a root cause of the civil war. Most respondents (72.7%) thought that it was possible for a member from any ethnic group to become President of Liberia. This is an important departure from the days when only Americo-Liberians could ascend to political power. Despite such perceptions, Liberians still feel that Americo-Liberians control the levers of power, and that political parties do not provide meaningful vehicles for public participation. Approximately half of all respondents cast their votes based on the ethnic origin and the personality of the candidate, most pronounced in Maryland (93%), River Gee (90%), Margibi (71%), and Grand Gedeh (60%). Sixty per cent of respondents believed that elections in Liberia were not transparent, free or fair. This sentiment was more pronounced in Nimba and River Gee (80%), Grand Gedeh (76%), and in Rivercess (72.4%).

Liberians believe that the Government of Liberia (GoL) lacks sufficient capacity to safeguard peace: In light of the UNMIL drawdown, respondents doubted GoL's ability to ensure peace and safety at the grassroots and to assume responsibility for national security. Only 22% of respondents thought that the government could guarantee the safety of all Liberians, with counties to the east and southwest expressing less optimistic views, while counties closer to Monrovia were more optimistic. Key informant interview respondents corroborated this view, citing the inadequate staffing and resources of the police and armed forces. About half of all respondents thought that the GoL had failed to create opportunities for citizens to constructively engage with state institutions to build peace, and only 41.5% thought that the GoL had strengthened community capacity for peacebuilding. The conflict analysis found that NGOs and traditional leaders are compensating for the state's weak presence and capacity at the community level and continue to play an important role in conflict mediation. However, traditional authority is greatly weakened due to its diminished respect after the war.

The state is not seen as a neutral arbiter in conflict resolution: More than half of respondents (52.9%) lacked confidence in the state acting as a neutral mediator and arbiter in conflicts. This sentiment was strongest in Grand Cape Mount (83.9%), Grand Gedeh (86.7%), Maryland (81.7%), and River Gee (80.0%), where the distribution of development services perpetuated a "we vs. them" mentality, with voters feeling punished because of their political allegiance. Partisan politics, nepotism, neo-patrimonialism and opacity in granting concessions were seen as the most contentious issues facing the country and a major threat to peace.

The private sector plays only a limited role in national politics and peacebuilding: Along with civil society and the state, the private sector potentially can be a force for peace and stability. However, two-thirds of respondents (65.9%) felt that in Liberia businesspeople exercised little influence in public affairs. Furthermore, 70.7% of respondents did not see a role for businesspeople in peacebuilding. This disconnect could be explained by the precarious position of Liberia's main business groups: the Americo-Liberians, the expatriate Lebanese and Indian community, and the Mandingo business owners. Each group has tenuous constituencies in the country and can be sanctioned and potentially expelled at the whims of political leaders. Alternatively,

business communities can voluntarily decide to expatriate their financial means if the situation is deemed too risky and volatile.

SOCIAL COHESION

Owing to weak social inclusion and equity, mutual trust remains fragile: Historically, social cohesion in Liberia has benefitted from interethnic marriages, Americo-Liberian and indigenous family arrangements, and religious tolerance. The civil war severely strained these bonds to the point of rupture. More than 80% of respondents said that they would not want a relative to marry into a different ethnic group. Similarly, 90% of respondents either would refuse or only reluctantly accept a job posting in another region or ethnic milieu. Key informant interviews revealed that the poor are often denied justice because they cannot afford to litigate their cases in formal courts. They also doubt that judges execute their duties competently, freely and fairly.

Gender inequity undermines women's access to justice, economic opportunities, and reconciliation: It was widely commented that despite having more women in public offices in the postwar, Johnson-Sirleaf era, the lives of women in Liberia have not substantially improved, especially in rural areas. Women victims of violence, abuse, and destruction of property during the war did not receive the same level of compensation as men. Moreover, women did not gain the same level of access to TRC processes as men, and therefore their issues received less attention. Although the vast majority of respondents (92.2%) felt that women were unjustly treated in TRC processes, a similarly high percentage (91.1%) did not see such inequity as a driver of violent conflict. Indeed, in the postwar era, women continue to suffer many forms of discrimination, and domestic violence against women is increasing. As male politicians gear up to "take back" the presidency from Liberia's first female president, women face potential backlashes. It was widely commented that despite having more women in public offices in the postwar Johnson-Sirleaf era, the lives of women in Liberia have not improved substantially.

Religion can be a force for peace or for conflict: Religion exerts a powerful influence on Liberians, as witnessed by their belief in and worship of the supernatural. More than three-fourths of respondents (76.3%) see religion as important in their daily lives, and almost the same number (72.1%) felt that religious leaders can exert influence over their communities to promote peace. A similarly high percentage (73.7%) stated that interfaith collaboration represents a positive force for peace in the country. Interreligious tolerance was also lauded as a traditional value of Liberia's confessional communities. Nonetheless, 65.5% of Christian respondents and 57.5% of Muslim respondents felt that religious intolerance was on the rise, and if left unchecked, could trigger violent conflict. Half of all respondents (48.8%) thought that religious identity was being used to discriminate in employment, business opportunities, or school admissions. By county, more than 60% of respondents in Grand Gedeh, Margibi, Maryland, Rivercess, River Gee and Sinoe shared this view. Respondents also blamed politicians for instrumentalizing religion for political gains, citing the campaign to declare Liberia a Christian state as the biggest threat to peaceful interfaith coexistence.

Interviewees noted that postwar peace and reconciliation efforts were hampered by the government's unwillingness to grant faith-based organizations more latitude to participate in these processes. Taxes imposed on religious institutions place a

considerable strain on faith-based actors, and force cuts in social welfare services amid dwindling external support sources.

Culture, tradition, and customs play ambivalent roles in promoting peace in Liberia: Cultural values, norms and traditions not only shape society but can also be powerful forces for peace or conflict. More than three-quarters of respondents asserted that Liberians of all ethnicities were accommodating and tolerant of strangers. They also believed that Liberians possess indigenous dispute resolution mechanisms (70.1%), and that all cultural groups follow Poro and Sande society practices to instill values and life skills in their youth (64.4%). However, 42.7% of respondents said that cultural associations and norms presently promote violence, and 51% felt that traditional leaders no longer promote inclusiveness. It is perhaps worrisome that persons younger than 54 years old largely find elders ineffective in influencing their communities. Their loss of status is directly related to the humiliation suffered at the hands of child soldiers. More than two-thirds of respondents (71.3%) doubted that traditional authorities would be able to re-exert their influence to prevent violent conflict. Although respondents found recent attempts to refurbish the image and authority of chiefs through the establishment of the National Traditional Council encouraging, they also feared that chiefs would not be independent enough to withstand politician efforts to co-opt them for political gains.

Persistent isolation impedes social cohesion: People from isolated and poorly connected areas expressed high reservations about marrying and comingling with persons from other regions and ethnic groups. Surprisingly, 18-35-year-olds were the most reserved (23%) among all age groups about socializing with members of other ethnic groups. Owing to poor transport and communications infrastructure, limited opportunities for cross-county information exchange and encounters further entrench cultural isolationism. Other factors are also at play, but stereotyping and fear of the other can be reduced by facilitating cross-cultural exchanges and dialogue.

In summary, while respondents appreciate the current peace, they fear that it is fragile, negative, and heavily dependent on addressing several unresolved issues (the level of corruption, land disputes, youth unemployment, and the outcome of the 2017 elections). They are hopeful that the country will not see a return to national-level violence, but are also aware that the risks are high. Deep and meaningful reconciliation is yet to take place, and Liberians still live with distrust, hurt, and hatred in their hearts. This is manifested in the reluctance of respondents to engage in longer term interactions and relationships with people from other ethnic groups. Liberia remains very much a divided country.

The study offers a wide range of recommendations, covering short-term and medium to long-term priorities.

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Encourage free and fair general elections in 2017**
- **Organize and administer a nationwide election observation mission;**
- **Carry out parallel vote tabulation at district and national level;**
- **Develop and administer nationwide civic and voter education campaigns;**
- **Organize political exchanges between communities and politicians.**

- **Foster meaningful and profound reconciliation across Liberia**
- **Create safe spaces for healing and reconciliation;**
- **Support multiple avenues to healing and reconciliation;**
- **Create opportunities to identify and employ suitable indigenous reconciliation mechanisms;**
- **Support women-focused support and programing.**

MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Peace and Conflict**

- **Institutionalize a Culture of Peace through Education Programs in Schools and Communities**
- **Develop peace and education activities focused on young people.**

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

- **Promote Transparency, Stewardship, and Accountability in Public Resource Management**
- **Support initiatives that increase transparency and accountability in public resource management;**
- **Establish and promote the use of community accountability forums.**

- **Promote Transparent Land Management and Property Dispute Resolution**
- **Support the development of comprehensive land title documentation processes;**
- **Build community capacity for land use negotiations.**

- **Create Opportunities for Liberia's Youth to advance their Livelihoods**
- **Gain further insights into the issues and challenges affecting young people;**
- **Provide capacity building and other opportunities to improve youth employability.**

- **Promote Community Dispute Resolution Mechanisms**
- **Advocate for the establishment of chiefs' courts as Community-based Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms (CADRMs);**
- **Improve the capacity of chiefs to dispense justice;**
- **Research and integrate best practices from indigenous legal systems.**

SOCIAL COHESION

- **Increase Trust and Cooperation between Government and the Citizens**
- **Advocate for greater transparency in policy formulation and implementation;**
- **Facilitate community encounters with decision makers;**
- **Conduct social cohesion strengthening workshops.**

- **Promote Intercultural Communication and Exchanges**
- **Identify and develop cultural connectors for peace;**
- **Promote cultural encounters and intercounty migration, especially among young people.**

- **Support Youth Trauma Healing and Socialization**
- **Offer opportunities for healing and social reintegration;**
- **Institutionalize peace education in schools.**

1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1.1 Popular Perceptions of the State of Peace and Conflict in Liberia

More than a decade since the end of Liberia's 14-year violent conflict, the memories and wounds of the war remain fresh in their hearts and minds of most Liberians (CABICOL, 2013). The return of democracy did not provide opportunities for healing and reconciliation, nor did it delivered the much-anticipated dividends of peace and democracy. Those who suffered during the war, especially the young men and women conscripted into combat or pressed into other servile roles in the battling factions, are living with the pains of violations and the deprivation of life opportunities such as education, employable skills, and jobs. The severe trauma—rape, abuse, amputated limbs, physical and psychological scars—lives on in the daily memories of many Liberians. The national truth and reconciliation processes did not percolate deep enough to those who bore the brunt of the war. In the eyes of most ordinary Liberians, the TRC was a charade that the elite hijacked to absolve themselves of wrongdoing, and in some cases, to reward themselves with political appointments. They watched the suspected masterminds and perpetrators of the acts of violence against them, not only go unpunished but actually take advantage of their war-enabled political connections and wealth to access state power and resources for personal profit.

The postwar attempts to heal the nation did not address the historical and systemic causes of the war. Poverty levels remain high despite the abundance of natural resources in the country. Economic opportunities for ordinary people are limited. Apart from the inability of the economy to absorb large numbers of unemployed youth, 14 years of civil war denied most young people access to formal education and employable skill opportunities. They are, therefore, ill-prepared for the public and private sector job markets or as self-employed entrepreneurs. Many of these unemployed and unemployable youth have witnessed active combat as child soldiers. Adept in the handling weapons of war but struggling to eke out a living on the streets, they are easy prey for recruitment into fighting forces of anyone who can offer them a gun, which even without the additional enticement of monetary rewards constitutes an important instrument of prestige and livelihood for them. The high rate of youth unemployment is a particularly potent safety and security risk for Liberia.

Although the country has had two successive democratic elections since the war, political divisions and tensions along ethno-regional lines remain rife. Historical inequalities have resurfaced, while corruption, crony capitalism, and nepotism define how the business of state and governance is carried out. Against this background, many Liberians believe that while President Johnson Sirleaf may have won the Nobel Peace Prize for her contribution "to securing peace in Liberia, to promoting economic and social development, and to strengthening the position of women" (Corey-Boulet, 2011) this view of Liberia is "good from far, but far from good" (Kraaij, 2015). The apparent advancement of peace, democracy, governance, and development in post-conflict Liberia in the eyes of external observers does not reflect the lived experiences of Liberians in the country. For this reason, while outsiders may see Liberia as peaceful, some in the country have observed that "…Liberia sits astride a powder keg with the right mix requiring only a spark to blow the entire creation to smithereens" (Stewart, 2011).

This fear of recurring national-level violence is particularly heightened by several approaching tests. The 2017 general elections and the departure of President Sirleaf Johnson would mark the first time since 1944 that an elected president would transfer political power peacefully to a successor through elections. The coming drawdown of the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), which provided security and served as the bulwark against the resurgence of violent conflict for much of the postwar period, awakes fear among many Liberians of a relapse into nationwide violence.

1.2 The Need for Evidence for Effective and Concerted Peacebuilding

Print and electronic outlets, social media, and other discussion forums abound with competing perceptions on the state of peace, reconciliation, and risks of return to violence in Libera. However, to date, no formal study has scientifically evaluated the depth, scope, and salience of these views and fears across geographic, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines. In other words, there is no hard data to back the views expressed; no documented community-level voices to explain the views and give a better understanding of the challenges of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in Liberia. Consequently, peacebuilding and development efforts are based on anecdotal evidence, which risks marginalizing the issues, views, and the voices of vulnerable population groups—especially in the conflict-prone peripheries, which lack access to mainstream media. This risk is particularly high given the over-concentration of media in Monrovia; the limited communication exchanges between the center in Monrovia and the peripheral counties, towns, and villages; and the challenges with physical communication infrastructure (the poor conditions of road networks, limited cell phone connectivity, and restrictive access to national radio and television broadcasts, among others). Thus, the voices and views of peripheral counties outside the Monrovia-based mainstream media and decision-making processes are not visibly present in the national debate. The information vacuum and disconnect are very troubling, considering that all of Liberia's past conflicts have started and were largely fought in these peripheral counties.

Access to robust data is also important for effective mapping of conflict flashpoints and the selection of target intervention areas. Different geo-ethnic and political regions have different experiences of the war and ways of reacting to conflicts. Some are more conflict-prone and susceptible to conflict instigators, while others are relatively stable. Therefore, the experiences of the war for people in such locations; their need for opportunities to process the trauma, to heal, and reconcile; and the interventions that can help them rebuild their lives differ greatly. These variations must be understood and factored into any successful healing, reconciliation, and peacebuilding initiative. Hence, ensuring that the voices and views of people living in these epicenters and radial points of violent conflicts are heard and inform programing is vital to the development of comprehensive and inclusive interventions. Additionally, a thorough, evidence-based understanding of the current context in Liberia allows for the articulation of grounded theories of change that guide the development of realistic outcomes rooted in the lived experiences and expectations of the target populations. Good

data allows interventions to fully incorporate the indigenous knowledge of participant communities on the nature and dynamics of their conflict systems into the design and management of interventions for sustainable peace. This is an essential precondition for promoting genuine reconciliation, sustainable peacebuilding, and successful conflict transformation in Liberia.

1.3 Goal, Specific Objectives, and Expected Outputs of the Study

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Liberia (CABICOL) and its Justice and Peace Commission perceived this need and requested a study on Liberia's current state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) commissioned the study on behalf of CABICOL to collect and analyze the information needed for a greater understanding of the state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in Liberia since the end of the civil war. The goal of the research is to give deeper insights into the issues Liberians need to tackle to promote genuine healing, reconciliation, inclusive development, a culture of peace, and governance that serves the common good.

The specific objectives include i) providing quantitative and qualitative data on critical issues that the Church, its development partners, state and non-state decision makers, and community peace and development actors in Liberia need to promote healing, reconciliation, integral and inclusive development, and sustainable peace; ii) identifying and documenting key actors that peacebuilders and development actors in Liberia must engage constructively to promote peace and inclusive governance for the common good; iii) providing data that magnify and capture the voices, views, and lived experiences of ordinary Liberians, especially those outside Monrovia, on the state of peace, reconciliation and conflicts (which will in turn be used to inform the design of interventions that meet their needs, rebuild intercommunal trust, promote healing, and support efforts for genuine reconciliation and lasting peace); and iv) providing the Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Church and other civil society partners with the data they need to develop and implement interventions that avert the recurrence of violence before, during, and after the 2017 general elections.

The expected outputs of the study include i) an inventory of issues that require urgent and serious attention by decision makers to grow the peace, create opportunities for healing and reconciliation and/or avert the re-escalation of grievances into violence; ii) the identification of categories of actors that are potential instigators or supporters of violent conflict, that can act as agents of reconciliation, and/or that can build bridges of peace within and between divide communities or groups; and iii) the mapping of potential conflict hotspots across the country to inform targeted interventions that avert violence and/or peacefully transform conflicts, especially in the run-up to the 2017 elections.

1.4 Research Questions

Core Research Question: How do Liberians perceive the state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in the country since the end of the civil war?

The three questions and their respective subunits of inquiry that guided the research are:

1. How do ordinary Liberians assess the current state of post-conflict healing, reconciliation, and peace in the country?

2. What do ordinary Liberians see as the critical actors and issues that need to be addressed to secure and grow peace in the country, create opportunities for healing and reconciliation, and promote integrated and inclusive development?

3. What roles, if any, do Liberians believe that different actors and decision makers (the government, faith-based organizations, private sector businesses, civil society groups, community-based organizations, etc.) have in promoting authentic and sustainable peace and development?

The thematic areas covered under each research question are presented in Appendix 1.

1.5 Methodology and Processes

1.5.1 Study Methodology for the Quantitative Survey

This study aims to enhance the understanding of the state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in Liberia, and is, therefore, broader than a conventional conflict assessment. Accordingly, USAID's Conflict Assessment Frame, which aims to identify "...the many potential causes of conflict that exist and zero in on those that are most likely to lead to violence (or renewed violence) in a particular context" (USAID, 2005, p. 8) would not have been an appropriate framework to use for this study. For instance, the CAF does not mention "reconciliation" even once and does not discuss peace in terms of respondents' experiential assessment of its state and nature. This study used mixed methods to provide a) quantitative data on the issues raised in the research, and b) qualitative data that lend voices and views to better explain the drivers behind the data from the quantitative portion. The survey targeted 1,500 respondents proportionally distributed across the 15 counties of Liberia. The study used the Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) process to select 50 polling areas across the country. Appendix 2 details the rationale and procedures for determining the sample size and the sampling methodology. Appendix 3 presents the results of the test to establish the representativeness of the sample. Appendix 4 details the procedure for selection of electoral districts and polling sites for the survey. Appendix 5A lists the selected electoral districts and polling stations as well as the number of expected interviews by county. For organizational purposes, and to increase the Church's degree of involvement and ownership of the study process and outcomes, the selected study sites and conducted interviews were regrouped by diocese. The JPC coordinators from each diocese were responsible for coordinating the implementation of the research in their respective catchment areas. Appendix 5B presents the reclustering of the study sites by diocese.

1.5.2 Preparation and Administration of the Survey

i) **Desk study:** The principal researcher reviewed relevant literature on the factors that triggered, fueled, and sustained the civil war, and how these

continue to play a role, if any, in the current state of peace or conflict in Liberia. It also involved the review and analysis of key documents and records that offered insights into the historical and sociopolitical factors that have influenced and continue to develop and maintain peace, reconciliation, and social cohesion in Liberia. The desk study reviewed the efforts of various development agencies in advancing peace, reconciliation, democracy, good governance, and development, and how these initiatives contributed to the advancement of sustainable peace in Liberia. The outcome of the literature review informed the scope of inquiry, the design of the study, and the initial structuring of the research instruments.

ii) **Research design workshop:** In February 2016, CRS and the JPC organized a research design workshop for JPC staff and partners to provide input for the final design of the study. A local resource person with in-depth knowledge of the historical, constitutional, and legal framework that underscores justice, governance, peace, and development in Liberia provided a contextual analysis. Workshop participants discussed the analysis, the proposed study design, and recommended themes that should be captured to ensure representation of the views and the aspirations of ordinary Liberians, especially those living outside Monrovia, as well as persons with direct experiences and memories of the civil war. Through the cluster sampling process, they identified the study sites and generated a list of prospective key informants for the qualitative data collection. Finally, they also provided county-specific logistics information, useful for the operational aspects of the field work.

iii) **Data collection for the quantitative survey:** Using a broad range of multiple-choice questions (see Appendix 6) the study could document the perceptions of a large segment of Liberia's population on the state of reconciliation, peace, and conflict in the country. Carefully selected and trained data clerks administered the questionnaires mounted on Poimapper geo-mapping, data collection and management software, running on android cell phones. Data clerks were trained to observe stringent requirements for carrying out complete, accurate, and timely interviews. Appendix 7 presents the criteria used for the selection of data clerks.

iv) **Conduct of survey field research:** In total, 25 data clerks were assigned to interview 60 people each in the 50 selected electoral districts. Data clerks uploaded the collected data to a Poimapper supported cloud server upon completion of the survey or at the end of the full working day, depending on when cellphone connectivity provided internet access. The daily upload of data allowed the principal researcher to track data uploaded at any time, check data quality, and request corrections when needed. Regular phone contacts with the data clerks ensured that all data collection challenges were addressed promptly. This eliminated the need for data clerks to return to study sites for data correction when errors were identified. Data clerks were trained and equipped with forms to secure informed consent from each prospective interviewee prior to the interview. Appendix 8 provides a sample of the Informed Consent Form used in the study.

1.5.3 Design and Administration of the Qualitative Research Component

The KII component of the study aimed to identify and interview 40 key informants from across the country. Participants in the survey-planning workshop generated a list of 64 potential interviewees. Appendix 9 provides the selection criteria for participants in key informant interviews. Persons on this list were contacted for the initial interviews. After each interview, the researcher asked interviewees if they could suggest other key informants who could provide relevant information. The snowball sampling process identified additional potential interviewees, some of whom were subsequently contacted and interviewed. In total, 47 key informants in 9 out of the 15 counties in Liberia participated in the study.[1] The 47 KII provided a total of 35 hours, 20 minutes and 10 seconds of audio recorded data that was transcribed and used in this study. The researchers observed all research protocols for administering the KII to ensure that the study obtained informed consent as well as guaranteed the protection and confidentiality of the participants. Appendix 10 presents the Interview Guide for Key Informant Interviews. Appendix 11 presents the methodological limitations of this study.

1.5.4 Structure of the Report

This study covers a wide range of issues that illuminate the various dimensions of the state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in Liberia. At the same time, as all readers are most likely not equally interested in all topics, this report is elaborated as a collection of complete sections on specific issues and findings that can be reviewed as standalone reports.

1 The counties covered are Bomi, Bong, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Lofa, Maryland, Montserrado, Nimba, and Sinoe.

2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

2.1 Profile of Respondents

Research data from 1,516 surveys, conducted in all 15 counties of Liberia and 47 key informant interviews, conducted in 9 counties, provide the basis for the findings and analysis presented in this report. Appendix 12 shows a detailed profile of the respondents (age, gender, occupation, religious affiliation, and other categories) in the quantitative survey and key informant interviews.

2.2 Perceptions of the State and Nature of Peace in Liberia

Three questions directly gauged the respondents' assessment of the state and nature of peace in Liberia at the time of the study. Asked to describe the state of peace in Liberia now, 65% of respondents (n=1,515) either said Liberia is peaceful (53.1%) or very peaceful (11.9%). An additional 24.0% said the country was "somewhat peaceful", while 8.9% described it as "not peaceful" (7.0%) or "not at all peaceful" (1.9%) (Table 2.2A in Appendix 13). When asked to compare the current state of peace to the era prior to the war, 60.5% of respondents (n=1,515) said Liberia today is as peaceful as (19.3%) or more peaceful than (41.2%) before the civil war ignited in 1989 (Table 2.2B in Appendix 13). However, when asked to describe the type of the peace they experience, 66.3% of the respondents described it as "negative peace"—implying that even though Liberians are not openly fighting, they live under circumstances (e.g., laws, rules, regulations, policies, programs, and practices) as well as conditions (such as neglect, poverty, discrimination, etc.) that inflict hardship. However, 33.7% of respondents said that the current peace in Liberia is positive (Table 2.2C in Appendix 13).

Respondents in key informant interviews largely agreed with the results from the survey. While some were categorical that "Liberia is not a peaceful country" (STE 14), others hesitated to use the word "peace" to describe the country's current state. As one female respondent put it: "I would not use the word, (I'm a little depressed), the word peace. I think it is fairly peaceful, but it is not a realistic peace. Let me describe it that way. I think it is superficial" (STE 11). Another female respondent pointed out that "we have relative, what they call cold, peace—the silence of guns. It is not about guns with bullets flying around and where you can have ceasefire. If you ask me, whether Liberia is enjoying peace, it is 10 years of silence of guns, that is what I will tell you" (STE 17). A Maryland respondent echoed that view in stating that "Liberia's peace is negative. It is not positive yet. As far as I have seen and experienced, Liberia's peace is negative" (STE 30). Providing an explanation that corroborates this view, another respondent pointed out that Liberia "is not peaceful [because] there is hate. If you look at Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties, you notice that the peace agreement they have tried to put together; it cannot hold. There is hate in the hearts of the people" (STE 29). Buttressing that point, another respondent added, "if you walk through the principal streets of Harper in Liberia, you can feel the anger in the faces of citizens. That is a clear manifestation that the peace in Liberia is a kind of cosmetic peace" (STE 031). In the view of another respondent, however, "peace in Liberia is negative because a lot of us we are living in fear [of war]" (STE 10). According to another respondent, "what I will consider is that people are living in denial or living in fear. People fear the consequences of another war

(displacement, economic hardships, etc.) and try to refrain from violence… fear holds the fragile peace together" (STE 13).

Citing further reasons for supporting their assessment of a negative peace in Liberia, a respondent in Grand Gedeh shared a string of problems, "no community engagement program to help citizens get on their feet; the issue of corruption at the highest level; the issue of unemployment growing high by the day; the issue of companies coming in and not doing the real work" (STE 25). Another contributor to the negative peace, according to a respondent from Bong, is "especially the land issue that makes the peace negative, because the problems we have in this country, the freed slaves trying to subdue the natives and have complete control over them—that has involved the land" (STE 20). Others pointed to the persistence of economic exclusion and inequity inherent in the resource allocation processes of the state:

> The other factor is unequal distribution of the benefits of development. When we do the national budget we always start from Monrovia. All the ministries they focus the budget on Monrovia before they think of the other parts of the country. Whether it is roads, hospitals, schools, or whatever, Monrovia gets the biggest chunk of the budget. (STE 20)

On the personal level, the aftereffects of the war increased absolute poverty in some cases, but more importantly, they acutely heightened the sense of relative poverty and deprivation across the entire country: "There are extremely rich people and extremely poor people living in the country" (STE 46); "Government has produced a few millionaires that have emerged out of this new regime" (STE 20); The majority of Liberians can "only pray for survival, to get something to eat, but nothing to build your capacity" (STE 31). The perception of economic injustice is further fueled by the view that "90% of the rich and influential people in Liberia today did so on the back of the war" (STE 002). Supporting this view, another respondent argued that those who initiated and prosecuted the war did so in search of personal financial benefits: "It was not because of Doe they came, but because they wanted to have access to the wealth of the state to enrich themselves, and that is why they came" (STE 004). Hence, if Liberia is to deal with this sense of injustice in order "to build sustainable peace in Liberia, my suggestion will be to aggressively improve the social justice paradigm. That is the way to remove the inequities in a more radical way" (STE 16).

More optimistic respondents described the peace of Liberia as mixed: "In terms of the silence of weapons, in terms of the fact that we do not have conflicting parties shooting each other, and other parties slogging at each other, without any provocation… One would conclude and rightly so, that we are at peace" (STE 006). "It is a fragile peaceful country because the root causes of the conflict have not been aggressively addressed" (STE 16). A senior government official related to the security sector preferred a more reserved assessment: "It's peaceful, but it's fragile, too; it's a fragile sort of peace because there are socioeconomic problems that are causing a lot of dissatisfaction" (STE 001).

Reiterating that peace in Liberia "is negative", a respondent offered advice to the external stakeholders involved in Liberia's peacebuilding efforts: "The problem is that I

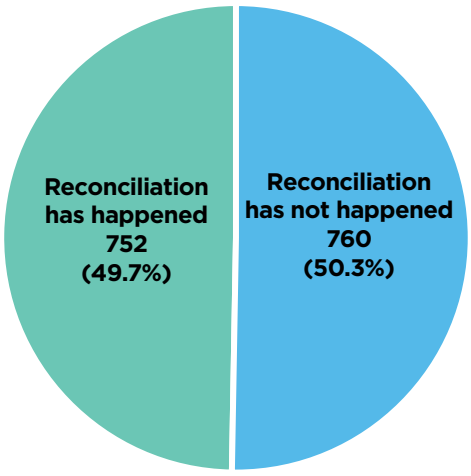
think the international community needs to do more work with the insiders and not the outsiders. In peacebuilding process the insiders are important, not the outsiders". This view asserts that peace is experiential, not an event: "Looking at it from the outside and saying Liberia is peaceful is just not enough. It is what people are feeling inside; what their perspective is; what their problem is. [Until that is done] I will say more of it is negative" (STE 13). Most respondents tended to agree with this young woman: "When it comes to peace-wise, Liberia for me, we still have a big challenge to come to live peaceful lives because even in the communities there are a lot of conflicts" (STE 10).

In summary, while Liberians appreciate the silence of the guns for more than a decade now, they fully understand that the peace they enjoy is fragile and negative in nature, since the factors that pushed Liberia into the civil war remain unresolved—the Americo-Liberian dominance of the political and economic spheres is still felt; ethno-regional politics of exclusion persist; inequitable distribution of development services continue to be evident; disparities in access to essential services between counties as well as between rural and urban centers persists; and poverty remains high, especially in outlying counties and in rural areas. In addition, the war has generated its own set of negative peace factors such as the increased distrust between ethnic groups that once lived together peacefully; the limited opportunities for reconciliation between and within counties, especially those most affected by the war; and high illiteracy and unemployment rates among the weapon-savvy young people.

2.3 Perceptions on the State of Reconciliation in Liberia

Respondents were evenly split on the extent of reconciliation in Liberia after the war, with 50.3% (n=1,512) disagreeing that reconciliation took place, and 49.7% believing the opposite (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Did reconciliation take place in postwar Liberia?



Disaggregated by age category (see Figure 2.3A in Appendix 14), the data show a clear trend, with younger people more skeptical that reconciliation has taken place and older people more optimistic. The findings are significant, with p value of 0.018. This means that the observed differences in the perception on the state of reconciliation by different age groups are represent a sentiment shared at the national level. Respondents within the 36-54 age category mostly expressed doubt regarding reconciliation in the country. They would have been at least 9 and at most 27 years old between the start of the war and the date of this research. Their experiences and lingering memories of the war as victims or fighters may be different from respondents from the much younger or older age categories.

Although the disaggregation by gender did not turn up statistically significant findings (p=0.219), it is nonetheless observable that more men than women were likely to

agree that reconciliation had happened (Table 2.3A in Appendix 13). This difference in opinions on reconciliation may be due to different experiences and memories of the war, and therefore, their needs for healing and their views on the nature and extent of reconciliation would differ accordingly.

Disaggregation by county of interview, however, showed statistically significant results (p=0.000). Notably, more than 60% of respondents in Gbarpolou, Margibi, and River Gee felt that reconciliation did take place in postwar Liberia. However, about the same percentage of respondents in Rivercess and Montserrado said reconciliation had not happened. Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Margibi and Sinoe had a little more than 50% of respondents indicating that reconciliation has not happened (Table 2.3B in Appendix 13). A couple of respondents mentioned localized community processes of reconciliation that took place after the war. Such initiatives could offer insights into the locational differences in perception on reconciliation. This is an area for further research as this study did not gather enough data to analyze how such local reconciliation efforts impact perception of reconciliation at the national level.

By religion, while 65.1% of Muslim respondents (n=146) agreed that reconciliation had happened, only 48.6% of Christian respondents (n=1,322) agreed that reconciliation has taken place in the country. Similarly, 77.1% (n=27) of adherents of African Indigenous Religions said reconciliation has not taken place in postwar Liberia. These findings are statistically significant (p=0.000), indicating the differences of opinion along religious lines are not spurious. Again, differences in personal experiences of respondents of different religious groups could provide the explanation for their diverging perceptions.

Conditions for Reconciliation

Reconciliation does not happen in a vacuum; several contextual factors facilitate or hamper it. Among these are the extent to which those affected by the violence perceive that justice has been or is being done, either through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; trials and punishment of perpetrators of the violence; payment of compensations to surviving victims of violence and abuses or their relations; legal and administrative reforms that ensure that the injustices that led to the abuses, violations, and the war would not happen again; creation of opportunities for victims and perpetrators to meet, discuss, and find ways to reconcile; and the creation of improved conditions of life for people who suffered discrimination before or as a result of the violence.

The study used a set of 14 questions to solicit respondent views on the contributions of these processes to reconciliation in Liberia. Hence, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that Liberians who suffered violence, losses, and abuses during the war have received justice from the processes listed above. The responses were rated on a 9-point scale, running from “I can’t tell” to “very high extent”. The computed mean of responses to the questions relating to the set of variables indicated above was carried out. Case selection of the mean responses at a 6.5 cut-off point shows that only 16.1% of responses fell between “partly moderate” to a “very high extent”, meaning that the vast majority did not feel that these processes contributed substantially to promoting reconciliation in Liberia (see Table 1).

TABLE 1: MEAN OF RESPONSES ON CONTRIBUTION OF POSTWAR PROCESSES ON RECONCILIATION CASE SELECTION (FILTERED AT ≥0.5)

PERCEIVED CONTRIBUTION OF PROCESSES TO RECONCILIATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Processes have NOT contributed to reconciliation	1,271	83.9
Processes have contributed to reconciliation	244	16.1
Total	**1,515**	**100.0**

Cross tabulation of the filtered variable by gender shows that while 17.3% of men agreed to some extent that reconciliation had happened because of the above factors, only 14.5% felt the same.[2] Notably, persons within the 55-71 age range reported the highest level of agreement (21%). Similarly, respondents 72 years and older showed no level of agreement at all that the above factors contributed to reconciliation in Liberia. This is consistent with the findings above that respondents in the 36-54 age category were the least optimistic that reconciliation has taken place in Liberia probably because of their direct experiences and memories of the war.

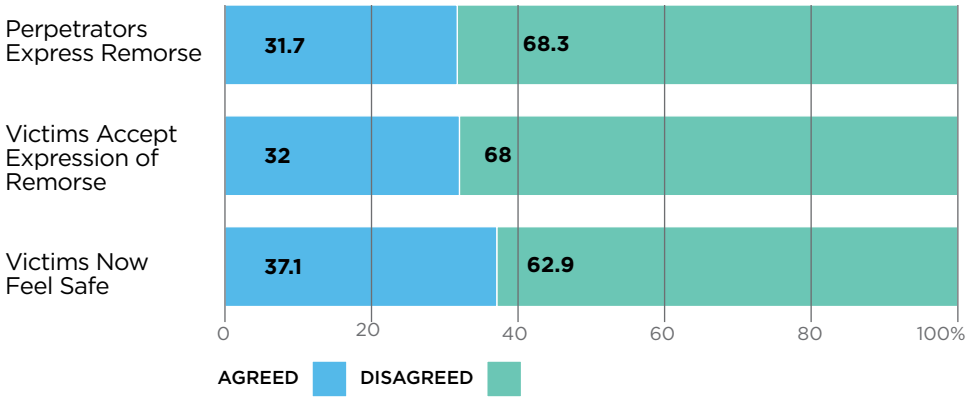
Cross tabulation with education level of respondents, however, shows that more than 83% of respondents across all education levels disagreed that some reconciliation had happened because of the factors mentioned. There were statistically significant differences in perceptions between respondents with different levels of education. Only 8.0% (22/253) of respondents who completed secondary school or teacher training college agreed from a moderate to a very high extent that some reconciliation had happened because of the factors listed. Between 16% and 21% of respondents of all other education levels agreed that the above factors had contributed to reconciliation in the country (see Table 2.3C in Appendix 13). The chi-square value p=0.000 suggests that the differences between education level cohorts are due to specific reasons, especially since these findings are based on the computation of the means of the responses to all the variables relating to the conditions necessary for reconciliation to happen. However, for want of space and time we did not pursue additional analysis to isolate the reasons behind these differences.

Regardless, it is noteworthy that all the variables above relate to state-led processes of reconciliation. The findings, therefore, imply that respondents do not agree that such state-led processes have contributed to reconciliation in postwar Liberia. Other factors that promote reconciliation in post-conflict situations are the extent to which those affected perceive that people who committed acts of violence and abuses have openly or privately expressed remorse, rendered apologies, regretted their acts, or accepted their guilt for their actions. It also depends on the extent to which individuals and groups that suffered violence, losses, and abuses during the war have had the opportunity to openly or privately accept the expressions of remorse, regrets, and requests for forgiveness from those who hurt them. Finally, whether or not civil war victims of acts of violence now feel safe, secure, and reassured that they will not experience the same level of violence and abuse in the future is the third important

2 The findings are, however, not statistically significant given a chi-square value of 2.230, at 0.135 significance level. Similarly, the cross tabulation results with the age categories of respondents showed weak correlation, with a chi-square value of 0.128.

indicator. Figure 2 shows that 62% of respondents consistently disagreed with the view that perpetrators have been remorseful, victims have had the opportunity to accept such expressions of remorse, or that the victims now feel safe, secure, and assured that they would not suffer the same level of trauma as they did before.

Figure 2: Expressions of remorse, acceptance of remorse, victims feel safe in post-conflict Liberia



In sum, the majority of respondents felt that genuine reconciliation has not taken place in Liberia since the end of the war. Participants in the study's key informant interviews largely agreed with the finding that while some reconciliation did take place; it has been patchy, did not go deep enough, and often lacked sincerity to make a lasting impact. In their view, the processes that should have created the spaces for genuine reconciliation to happen were rushed, short, or not allowed to percolate deep enough to the grassroots of society to facilitate genuine and broad reconciliation. As one respondent put it, "I will say some people have [reconciled]. You will find families that were against families or put against families during the war, or even within families and now you find them living together in some kind of peace. It is not completely finished from their hearts, but at least they are able to throw glances at one another" (STE 20). However, there remains an "unfinished business of reconciliation" (STE 002) given that what has happened thus far "is partially; not fully yet [as] there is still something that needs to be done in the area of reconciliation" (STE 001), as "the whole peace and reconciliation process is not working in Liberia at all" (STE 005).

Part of the reason why reconciliation has been difficult to achieve is that reconciliation happens between two or more parties—the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s). However, respondents believe that in the Liberian reconciliation process, those who masterminded and/or carried out vicious acts of violence have not taken responsibility for their actions. On the contrary, they have openly asserted their innocence or their right to do what they did during the war. Respondents find that several of these alleged perpetrators today enjoy state power and largesse because of the positions they now occupy in various state institutions. Hence, for many the reconciliation process in Liberia has not worked "at all because there are no perpetrators who are willing to say, Yes, I am at fault" (STE 5). Another respondent cited the case of one of the war lords who, instead of coming out to declare that he "accepts wrong, expresses remorse, [claimed that] he did not kill a fly" (STE 50).

Text Box 2: Are Liberians Reconciled?

No. I would say no. I would say no for several reasons: One of the reasons is that Liberians feel very strongly that the perpetrators of the war are the masters today. So they feel they are grieving. So, to reconcile with the perpetrator who becomes a master is a little bit difficult. The other side is that the victors are not reconciling with the vanquished, the losers. For example, poverty levels still continue to rise; so the ordinary people do not see the reason why we fought. If we fought to change the system and the system is not changed, then reconciliation becomes very difficult. At personal, town, family levels, like some of the responsibilities of this Commission, people are trying to talk to one another; they try to have ceremonies together, intermarriages are going on. That could be at the periphery, but at the core level in terms of national infrastructure that brings reconciliation is still far ahead (STE 16).

Respondents also expressed cynicism about the intentions of the government to push the reconciliation agenda through, citing a lack of sincerity and commitment. Instead, the reconciliation processes that the state established became so political that they were reduced to technical events with no genuine commitment to true rebuilding of relations. "What is going on in terms of reconciliation is but a political platform" (STE 13). Buttressing this view, another respondent noted that, even before "...the TRC report came out, there was a National Conference for Reconciliation where most of the recommendations were made to the TRC [but which] were not accomplished" (STE 006).

For other respondents, the very structural and systemic injustices that the war sought to correct remained entrenched in society. Consequently, the conditions for reconciliation do not exist. In the words of the respondents, "If we fought to change the system and the system is not changed, then reconciliation becomes very difficult" (STE 16); and "Reconciliation comes with a healing process and once people are not getting any kind of redress to the situation, obviously, they cannot reconcile" (STE 17). Hence, while the will to reconcile may be there, the conditions are not yet present.

One respondent summed up the superficial nature of reconciliation in Liberia as follows: "You know reconciliation comes from within, not without. It is from your heart; the heart to reconcile with somebody" (STE 28). Hence, "To organize a political event and say this is reconciliation is not true. People are still carrying the pain and anger in their hearts. How do you account for people who lost their fathers, mothers, wives, children, lost their homes, some died because of frustration?" (STE 13). For this reason, respondents find that the post-conflict reconciliation "is more or less cosmetic. I see that more in theory than in substance" (STE 006).

In summary, the spaces necessary for Liberians to engage in true reconciliation with each other were not created. Without safe spaces for a heart-to-heart reconciliation, it is difficult to claim that Liberians have reconciled and put the war behind them—even if they manage to live with each other and their past in relative peace. In the words of one respondent, "if you talk of reconciliation the Liberians' hearts are still dirty towards one another" (STE 29).

Text Box 3:

What is holding Liberians back?

We have not yet been able to deal with the pains, the hurt that people went through in the past. That healing process is really not going on. We need that healing process. It is only from the healing process people begin to open up, that they belong to society, they belong to one another; it is only from there we can have it (STE 17).

2.4 Perceptions on the Risks of Recurrence of Violent Conflict in Liberia

The desk study revealed a palpable fear of returning to a state of civil war, especially given the planned drawdown of the UN Peacekeeping Mission UNMIL (set to cut its 2015-capacity by two-thirds) and the elections in 2017. The popular press suggested that the combination of the two events will create volatility that the under-resourced national security services will find had to contain. Hence, the research sought respondents' view on this potentially dangerous deterioration.

2.4.1 Perceptions of risks for descent into violence:

Respondents were asked whether Liberia could descend into another violent national-level conflict. In response, 55.6% of respondents said they did not believe that Liberia could relapse into the kind of violence they witnessed before. Only 36.8% of

respondents indicated that they believed to varying degrees that war could happen again in Liberia (Table 2.4A in Appendix 13).

However, when respondents were asked to assess the level of risk that Liberia can still descend into a violent national-level conflict such as a civil war despite the peace it currently enjoys, they response were about evenly split. In all, 50.6% of respondents felt that Liberia faces a "high to very high" risk of descending into another civil war, with 43.7% indicating the opposite ("no risk to low risk"). Those who opted for "cannot tell" constituted 5.7% (see Table 2.4B in Appendix 13).

Though not statistically significant (f 0.457), it is nonetheless noteworthy that more women respondents (52.3%) than men (49.4%) believed that the risk of relapsing into war was high (Table 2.4C in Appendix 13). Disaggregated by county, respondents in Rivercess County reported the highest perceived risk (79.3%, n=29), followed by Nimba with 74.9% (n=187); Grand Kru with 74.4% (n=31); and Grand Cape Mount with 74.2% (n=31). Respondents in River Gee were the most optimistic that Liberia will not return to a state of violent national-level conflicts as in the civil war before (Figure 2.4A in Appendix 14).

2.4.2 Perceived flashpoints for relapse into violence:

Asked which county they saw as having the highest potential for the start of widespread violence, Nimba County was top of the list with 28.4% of responses. Montserrado came next with 21.1%, followed by Grand Gedeh with 16.8% and Lofa with 12.5% (see Figure 2.4B in Appendix 14). These findings are consistent with the results captured in other sections of this report. In sum, persistent historical animosities between the people of Nimba and their neighbors in Grand Gedeh; postwar conflicts between the natives of Nimba and Mandingo settlers now dispossessed of their lands, property, and in some cases residency rights; high rates of unemployment among the combatant young people; perceived state harassment of citizens, especially the motorcycle riders, are among the many factors that make Nimba the hotbed for potential violence. Montserrado has the highest concentration of unemployed youth, most of whom are ex-combatants with no training or skills other than how to handle a gun. A pervasive sense of relative deprivation in the allocation of development services in Grand Gedeh is the major cause of unrest and volatility.

2.4.3 KII perspectives on the risk of relapsing into war:

Respondents in key informant interviews were equally divided on the potential for renewed civil war in Liberia. However, those who said that there was no risk of returning to widespread national level violence were often quick to qualify their statements more as wishes than strong beliefs based on tangible evidence. For that group, some believed that the international community has invested too much in Liberia to allow it to relapse into violence. Others felt that the war fatigue and the suffering witnessed by Liberians would serve as strong deterrents. In the words of one respondent, "so they say no more war, no more violence" (STE 16). Another observed that but for the fact that "Liberians are tired with war... Liberian youth, they can over-run the Army within one hour. But the fact of the matter is, people are now tired of war" (STE 14).

Text Box 4:

Reliance on External Guarantors of Peace

There has been too much investment by the international community in Liberia. When UNMIL is fully withdrawn, as people think, there will still be a monitoring mechanism in place, and I am sure the international community will not just sit back and take back UNMIL and say "Liberia, you are on your own, just do anything" and we start scrambling for leadership and everything. No. That is not what is going to happen (STE 16).

According to several respondents, part of the war fatigue derives from the frustrations and disillusionment that people experienced living through the war. Many had joined or endured the war because they believed it was going to lead to profound political, economic, and social changes that would transform their life conditions for the better. However, they found out that not much changed for the better. People would resist a return to war because of the false and unfulfilled promises. Thinking about the risk of return to a state of war, one respondent captured the mood thus "I don't see it. Anybody who comes with that mentality, a little child will take a stick and beat him. People refer to the war as a fiasco because no one benefitted from it; people fought for nothing. Hence, they have no need for another war" (STE 19). Others believed that one factor that would save Liberia from a relapse into war is the fact that some people who fought in the war and benefitted from the DDR program now have economic and social livelihoods and vested interests they would like to protect. One respondent captured this sentiment:

> If there is any risk? I do not think Liberia can go back now. Reason being that, those that were involved in the civil crisis... a good program like DDR program helped the young people a lot; training them. Some of them are now in different disciplines. They know what they went through during the war. They know what they saw, they know where they passed [and they see] where they are now, some of them are college graduates; they are working and making their own money. I do not think they will want to go back in the bush and walk without slippers and all that kind of stuff. (STE 21)

Other respondents shared different opinions on this matter, pointing out that while some of the ex-combatants may have had the opportunity to take advantage of the DDR program and similar schemes to advance their livelihoods, many who participated in the war have come out of it with little or nothing to show for their sacrifices, and "some of the people are very angry" (STE 39). "We still have triggers" (STE 17). In particular, "the risk is there because of the high level of unemployment and the few millionaires emerging" (STE 20), who are flaunting their wealth in the midst of widespread poverty.

For some respondents, the fact that many of these unemployed youths obtained military training during the war makes the risk of a rapid onset of widespread violence more real: "Now you do not need people to train. In the 1990 wars, all the factions needed to train; now you do not need to train because they have experience" (STE 23). This group of respondents finds that there is the semblance of stability in Liberia "because of the presence of UNMIL. I believe when they leave there will be a lot of mob justice" (STE 10). Respondents fear that people who have been suppressing revenge against the perceived wrongdoings they suffered during the war will simply "burst out" (STE 36).

Others believe that relapse into widespread violence is possible because of the botched post-conflict reconciliation process. "Liberia is at risk, not only on the security system, but the outcome of the TRC. I have continued to say it. Those things that should have been done have not been done yet. Tensions are being built. Liberia is at risk" (STE 39). According to another respondent, "if those things that should be addressed, if those issues are not addressed, then we are definitely going to go back to where we

Text Box 5:

The Hope of No Return to War

Some people joined the so-called structures of conflict or struggle not necessarily because they had a cause: they wanted to gain something – personal gain. That issue was personal. For what they expected to get, they did not get, because there was no winner (STE 19).

Text Box 6: Youth and Peace

If you walk through the principal streets of Harper in Liberia, you can feel the anger. That is a clear manifestation that the peace in Liberia is a kind of cosmetic peace. Even though we enjoy peace in Liberia, but God forbid, if anything sparks the majority of the youth [who...] find no employment and what have you .... any person who comes my way I will join because I know that is the way of winning. That is why I call it cosmetic peace. Even though we have peace, it is not guaranteed for the next 5 to 10 years to come (STE 31).

came from" (STE 35). To avert this backsliding, another respondent proclaimed that "it is about time that we put our hands together and work together to make sure that, nothing, never in the history of this country, should we go back" (STE 17).

While some respondents do not dispute the risk of relapse into violence, they believe that it would not be as widespread as the civil war. "If anything will happen, [it] may be vibration in a particular setting, but not involving the entire country" (STE 31). Others are trusting in the upcoming elections in 2017 to provide the safety valve that would spare Liberia a return to war: "If we do not shine our eyes and see to elect the proper person to rule Liberia, then I feel that there will be a risk. If we do not choose the correct person to lead this country, then…" (STE 41).

In brief, respondents desperately want to avoid a return to violent national-level conflict on the scale of the 14-year civil war, and are apprehensive that there are still major unresolved historical and contemporary challenges that can trigger the outbreak of violence. War fatigue, citizen disillusionment with the outcomes of the war, and the vested interest of the international community may not be enough to ward off the onset of violence. The presence of large swathes of unemployed but weapon-savvy young people, inconclusive processes of healing and reconciliation, and ethnically-charged competition for political power in 2017 are the key flashpoints for the recurrence of violence.

Text Box 7: The Pretenses for Peace

I believe that reconciliation is on the lips of our people; it is not from their hearts… People pretend that we are at peace, but the issue of justice; the issue of reconciliation; the issue of addressing those pertinent issues that should be addressed – locking up people for long without trial, not giving somebody a fair trial – if those issues are not addressed, people may take the law into their hands, and who knows, we may go back to what happened in the early 1990s (STE 35).

2.4.4 Conflict trigger factors:

To identify the possible triggers for violent conflicts, respondents were asked to what extent the following factors could cause the recurrence of widespread violence or civil war in Liberia: limited access to basic services such as health and education; corruption in public offices; disputes over land ownership; high levels of unemployment among young people; high dependence of Liberians on imported food; disputes over the results of the elections in 2017; interreligious conflicts; differences in access to justice; interethnic competition for power; extra judicial arrests, detentions, torture, and disappearances of people. The study also asked about other factors such as limited opportunities for reconciliation after the war; ethnic politics; controlling influence and interests of private business in politics; excessive freedom of speech in the media; and the anticipated withdrawal of UNMIL. The 9-scale responses ranged from "can't tell" to "very high extent". The analysis is based on a case selection for responses with values greater or equal to 6.5, covering part of the responses indicating moderate extent and all responses up to very high extent.

The findings presented in Table 2.4D in Appendix 13 and Figure 2.4C in Appendix 14 cite corruption as the highest risk factor for the recurrence of violent national-level conflicts in Liberia. Of the 1,499 respondents who cited corruption, 85.9% gave it a moderate to very high risk value. Land disputes came next with 83.7% (n=1,515); while high levels of unemployment among young people came third with 79.8% (n=1,515). More than 60% of respondents also saw Liberia's dependence on imported food and potential disputes over the results of the 2017 elections as high risk factors for the recurrence of nationwide violence. Slightly less than half of all respondents (45.5%, n=1,515) assessed the anticipated withdrawal of UNMIL as a threat, placing it among the lowest rated trigger factors.

Responding to a similar question, some KII respondents recognized that one of "the major challenges [to stability] is corruption" (STE 8). Others, however, thought that even though "corruption is of the highest order" they did not see it as a major trigger factor for violence because there is a collective culture of accepting corruption as a way of life. It is taken for granted that all who have access to state resources are expected to use the opportunities to amass personal wealth. One respondent framed the view this way to illustrate the point: "If I get a lot of money and get fired, what is it? Well, no regrets. If I use the money for building houses around here, they will say (name omitted) did well with his money. Even the common people accept it as a way of life" (STE 13). Explaining the prevalence of corruption and its acceptance by society, another respondent pointed out that, "there is a lot of corruption going on because people have to survive. Once these primary issues are not addressed—I do not care how you blow hot on corruption, it cannot change anything—human beings must survive. You are talking of survival right there" (STE 15). Another pointed out that the will to fight corruption is either weak or highly partisan because of the system of patronage n which even in the operations of the anti-corruption commission "other people can be on the hook and others are off the hook. I think that is patronage" (STE 16).

With respect to key potential triggers of national-level violence, respondents noted that conflicts over land are multitiered (within families, between families, within communities, and between communities) because people do not know the laws and procedures governing land title documentation. "Children of the same father [are often] fighting over what the father left because probably there was no written will and the property itself was poorly demarcated" (STE 24). Beyond the individuals, weak institutions take some blame for land conflicts because "counties were created by law, but nobody has ever gone on the ground, to show demarcation. So, you have conflict in Liberia between county and county, because government has no strong institutions or technocrats to demarcate boundaries that are between counties…Within Counties you have boundary disputes between district and district, between chiefdoms and chiefdoms, between clans and clans, between towns and towns" (STE 24).

Layered on this are "the concession agreements the communities are not happy about [although] people continue to live in that dissatisfied [state that is] eventually… going to burst" (STE 13). Buttressing the argument, another responded pointed to the case in which Sandabi Corporation "almost took three counties to four counties [as a concession, and asked] …So, what happens to the people living in those villages where the land is going to be taken over by Sandabi Corporation?" (STE 20). In the respondent's view, Sandabi and the other large concession "companies are not experiencing that much problem now because they have not started to claim all the land. Once they start to clear whole villages, whole clans, people will take up guns against their corporations" (STE 20).

On the third critical factor identified in the survey, KII respondents also noted that unemployment, especially among young people, is a high-risk factor because "the issue of unemployment is growing high by the day" (STE 25). Coupled with "the few millionaires" (STE 20) who are flaunting their wealth in the eyes of the young people victimized during the war. Forced into fighting, they lost out on any form of education

Text Box 8: Land and Intergenerational Conflict

I will give you reference in your trips. Get to the colony called Todee, near Monrovia just before Kakata (it is on the left), when you get to the settlement of Todee, you have Basa and Pelle people, who are there. They are born there, but they have nowhere to have a cassava patch. All the land has been occupied and surveyed by the privileged class. So, they cannot even get into the bush and say they are making cassava patch. That is the number one land grab. It is one critical issue that if politicians cannot reverse the trend, one day, the youth will stand up and say, "yes, we want this land. We do not recognize its ownership. We were not there when this law was made". So land grab is one [problem]. (STE 24)

or training that could have prepared them for the workforce. Hence, "they are not marketable" (STE 14). Those who try to earn a living off street peddling or providing transport services with motorbikes are often criminalized. Others without such means of subsistence are left to their fate. Hence, the unemployed and unemployable youth "...are the immediate conflict prone point. If you are dejected by society; they feel they have no stake in the state. They are impoverished, unskilled and even they have no job. In these circumstances, they are easily prone for violence as they have been over time" (STE 16).

2.4.5 Potential instigators of violent national-level conflict:

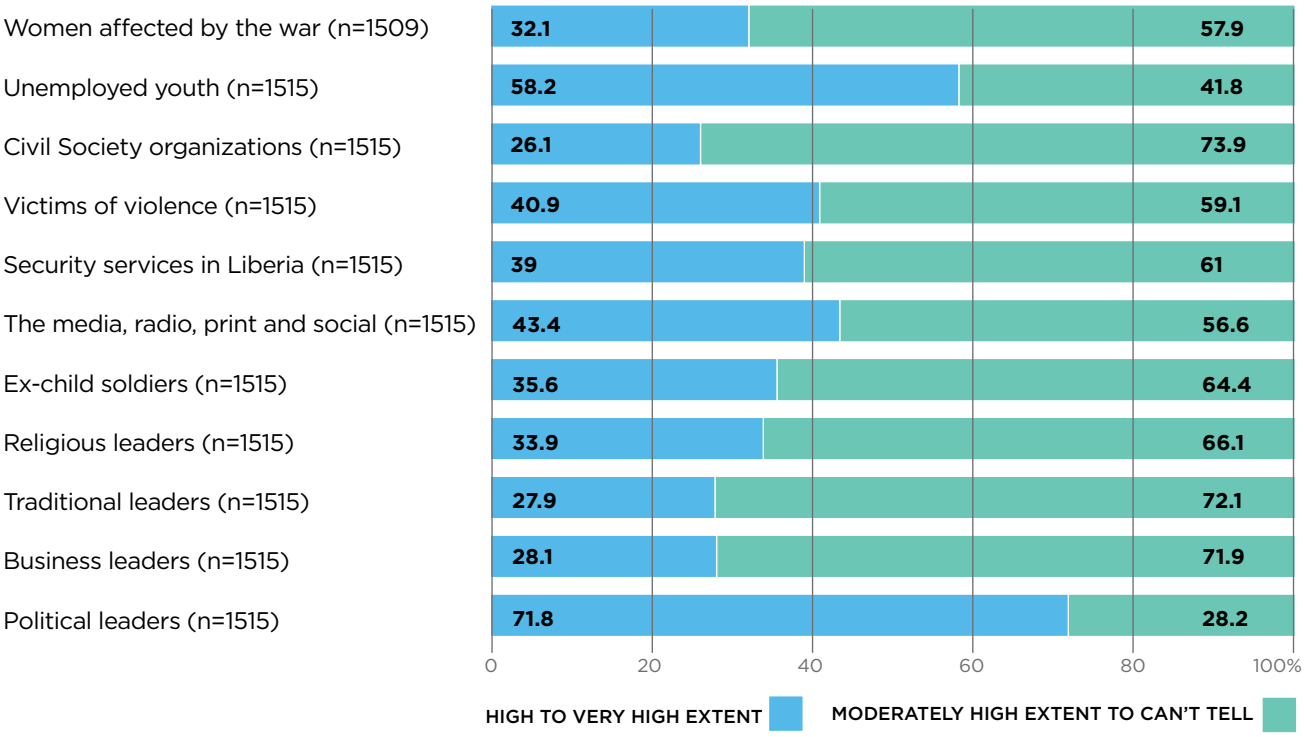
The presence of issues or grievances does not by itself lead to violent conflict; individual ails have to be mobilized and channeled into collective grievances to trigger and sustain violent encounters. Hence, to assess the potential role of agitators, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they considered the following group and institutional actors as potential contributors or instigators of violence: political leaders; business leaders; traditional leaders; religious leaders; ex-child soldiers; the media (including radio, newspapers, and social media); security services in Liberia, including the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and the police; victims of violence who have not received justice; civil society organizations; unemployed youth; women who suffered rape and abuse in the war, among others.

Figure 3 provides the aggregated responses, distinguishing between respondents who agreed to a "high" or "very high extent" and those who provided responses ranging from "moderately high extent" to "can't tell". From the summary results, 71.8% of respondents (n=1,515) cited political leaders as the most likely instigators or contributors to the next round of violent national-level conflicts. With 58.2% (n=1,515), unemployed young people were identified as the next most likely instigators of

Text Box 9: Land as Conflict Flashpoint

In 1980 when the coup took place, the main song on the radio was "Papa who owns the land?" and now coming in 2016 and then the natives are saying that we gave the land to the concession companies without discussing with the people what government is deciding to do about this land. ...So that makes the peace negative, because those issues that are dear to the hearts of the people are still being tempered with like that (STE 20).

Figure 3: Rating of actors as possible contributors to violent national conflict



widespread conflicts, with the media coming in third place with 43.4%. Respondents considered civil society as the least potent trigger factors for violent conflicts in Liberia. The sentiments are shared across all age categories of respondents, with 68% or more respondents of all age categories agreeing to a "high" or "very high extent" that political leaders could be the potential instigators of violent conflicts in Liberia. Looking at gender distribution, 73.5% of male and 69.5% of female respondents agreed that political leaders are the highest potential risk for initiating violence in Liberia. Both results are, however, statistically insignificant.

KII respondents subscribed to the view that political leaders pose the greatest risks for triggering violence, because they are perceived as self-centered, always looking out for their interests, not the common good:

> I cannot give any good detail about the politicians. I hear them on the air and some of what they say, is not in our interest, it is in their interest. They fight for their interest, and when they get the job they forget about us. Sometime when they need us, they come with sugar on us, but when they win they come with pepper on us (STE 33).

Respondents emphasized the self-serving motives of politicians: "political parties… are structures created for self-gain" (STE 39). This is because political parties are not formed "…for Liberia to be peaceful, but [for someone] to be President, Senator, or Representative" (STE 13). For this reason, "…political parties are not institutions. They are only centered around personalities" (STE 35). As such they are hardly visible when elections are not in sight. And when they campaign for positions, "peacebuilding is not on the agenda of their platform. They [could] care less. It is not where they will put their money" (STE 13).

Text Box 10: Views on Political Parties and Peace in Liberia

Political party as an opposition does not know how to benefit the society, besides criticizing. In everything they are criticizing the government without offering any solution; they themselves don't have any solutions. The structures are still weak structures because they depend on the party's standard bearer; the standard bearer owns the party and everything centers around him or her. So, most Liberian people do not understand party politics. In the rural areas, people do not necessarily vote on issues; you go to them, if you are the first to go, you ask them to vote for you, they vote for you (STE 19).

2.5 Respect for Basic Freedoms, Rights and Rule of Law Implications for Peace in Liberia

Citizens' ability to access and experience their rights contributes to the building of social cohesion and peace in many ways. Hence, the study sought to establish to what extent the following factors have contributed to the peace that Liberians have today:

- Liberians express themselves freely in all media;
- Newspapers, radio, TV stations and other media houses operate freely;
- Liberians are free to join any political party;
- Liberians can vote the way they want;
- Liberians can join any association or group that they want;
- Liberians respect the law at all times;
- Judges are free from corruption;
- Judges make their decisions freely;

- Liberians have respect for the decisions that the law courts in the country make;
- Government officials and public servants always make decisions and act in accordance with the laws of Liberia;
- Government agencies always respect the views of citizens when the make and implement policies.

The findings, with responses selected for moderately high to very high extent (case selection [3] 7), are presented in Figure 2.5A in Appendix 14. Noticeably, respondents made a large distinction between their ability to exercise their rights and freedoms, on the one hand, and the actions and behaviors of state actors, institutions, and individuals as the contributors to the peace, on the other. More than 78% of all respondents emphasized that Liberians can express themselves freely in all media; that newspapers, radio, TV stations and other media houses are able to operate freely; and Liberians' ability to join any political party of the choice as important freedoms that contribute to the current state of peace. Added to this, they cited the ability of Liberians to vote the way they want; and the freedom to join any association or group that they want as "high" to "very high" contributors to the peace of the country. On the other hand, less than 50% of respondents were willing to state that behavioral traits, such as Liberians' respect of laws and citizens' respect for decisions of courts, as important contributors to peace. Additionally, they did not feel that the absence of corruption among judges in the country; the freedom of judges in the exercise of their duties; the willingness of government officials to act within the laws of the land; and state officials' respect for the views of citizens have contributed to the peace of the country. In other words, they believe that these factors had either negative or no impact on the kind of peace that Liberia has today.

KII respondents celebrated the various personal freedoms that Liberians now enjoy, with some caution. They were appreciative of the freedoms of speech, of the media, of association, and the ability to vote as one chooses. In the view of one respondent, "We have freedom of speech. There is no harassment. There is no trouble, we sleep soundly and move smoothly" (STE 41). However, they were also mindful that some of these freedoms are either being abused or are exercised without direct contribution to positive change in the lives of Liberians. As one respondent noted in respect of freedoms of speech, "now people are no longer afraid to speak up their minds. But when you speak who listens? So, people speak, but no one listens. People come and make speeches, very good speeches, but there is no implementation" (STE 39). Others indicated that Liberians "have …fail[ed] to know that freedom of speech goes with responsibility [and so…] we abuse the freedom" (STE 14). Hence, "freedom of the press is misused freedom of the press" (STE 15). In sum, the ability of Liberians to speak freely now does not necessarily translate into constructive dialogues that promote peace, reconciliation, and inclusive development.

With respect to the institutional dimensions of the rule of law, respondents recognized the efforts being made to revitalize the judiciary and other law enforcement institutions. They noted, for instance, that "a lot of work has been done in the judiciary to keep the entire beauty of that institution, and they are working

Text Box 11: Putting the Media in Perspective

Our Media needs development. If they are not developed they can become dangerous, the most dangerous group of people in the peace and development process. It takes little for the media to derail the entire process, either for lack of knowledge or based on a single piece of information that they gathered. The media knows its power to make or break, but it can be reckless (STE 19).

hard" (STE 14). Nonetheless, they worry about other key factors that are hindering the proper functioning of these institutions, citing moral rectitude, human frailness as well as ethnic, social, and political pressures. Despite the flow of international funding into institutional reform that seek to "...make the system vibrant and independent [and to insulate the judges] such that nobody can penetrate with corruption [...] the justice system is fragile; we see corruption going on, which means there is no justice" (STE 39). In sum, the judiciary, the police and other security institutions charged with protecting the rule of law are "...not strong because they interpret the law" (STE 34) partially to favor the rich and powerful to the disadvantage of the poor. Hence, justice is on sale, and "if you are a person without money, if you are considered to be indigent, you must have somebody there who can plead your case" (STE 25), otherwise there is "no justice" for the poor. In the view of another respondent, when "it comes to justice, it is actually bought. The Justice System is not working... If you take a case to the police or court, if you do not have money, justice is not for you. If you are a poor person, justice is not for you. Justice is actually bought from the police to the court" (STE 46). "There is still more to be done, as far as justice is concerned" (STE 39), especially in ensuring that vulnerable groups such as women and girls have a fair chance of getting justice from the courts. As one respondent notes: "women and girls [need help] to access justice because of the [nature of the] judiciary system. If you go without anybody behind you, sorry you cannot get justice [as] the judiciary system is a mockery. We have a long way to go" (STE 49).

Aside from the corruption in the justice system, respondents also believed that "the judiciary in our country is still dependent on the president" (STE 35). They find that it is still unable to dispense justice freely and equitably to all: "there may be some improvement compared to what used to happen, but there is still much that needs to be done, if our Judiciary is to be considered independent" (STE 35). Part of the reason for the apparent lack of progress in reforming the judiciary is because "most of the people working in the judicial system, down to the police, [pause] it is like putting old wine in new bottle" (STE 46). In the view of the respondent, the problem is not with the change of personalities, but changes in the hearts and minds of those running the judicial system. According to the respondents, many who are in positions of authority in the system brought with them a wartime culture, in which those in position of authority had little respect for due processes, and "that particular wartime attitude [is] still ingrained in the youth" (STE 15). There are instances where a policeman wearing uniform today still has that culture of violence and "ugly things" from their previous life (STE 46). Buttressing this view, another respondent cited instances, where the police "create more harm; if you carry your case to the police station, you who is the victim, they want to register the case, you do not have money, no one will come to your rescue. They expect you to pay money before they register your case" (STE 49).

In sum, while Liberians are currently enjoying a period of peace, in part due to secure access to basic freedoms and rights, the persistent institutional, attitudinal, and behavioral challenges lingering from the civil war years undermine the full realization of the rule of law and, in turn, the growth of durable peace in the country.

2.6 Gender Equity, Justice, and Peace

The study used several variables to gauge the role of gender in the conflict, peace, and reconciliation processes in Liberia: Equality in compensations paid to male and female victims of violence, loss, and abuses during the war; Equality of opportunities for participation of men and women in post-conflict truth telling, healing, and reconciliation processes at the national, county, and community levels; Equality of attention given to the concerns of women in the post-conflict rehabilitation, reintegration, and reconciliation processes; Whether male and female victims and survivors of violence, abuse, and losses were given the same access to economic opportunities (loans, contracts, financial services, markets for their produce, etc.) to rebuild their lives; Do women have the same employment opportunities in the public and civil services as men; and Extent to which women play active roles in mediating conflicts at all levels.

Figure 2.6A in Appendix 14 shows that 63.6% of respondents acknowledged that women played and continue to play important roles in the search for peace and reconciliation in the country. Also, 56% of respondents believed that women in Liberia had the same employment opportunities as men. However, 92.2% of respondents indicated that male and female victims and survivors of violence, abuse, and losses were not given the same access to economic opportunities (loans, contracts, financial services, markets for their produce, etc.) to rebuild their lives.[3] Furthermore, 71.1% of respondents said that male and female victims of violence, loss, and abuses during the war did not receive the same level of compensation; and more than 50% of respondents thought that women's issues and concerns did not receive the same level of attention in the post-conflict rehabilitation, reintegration, and reconciliation processes. Also, half of respondents felt that men and women did not have equal opportunities to participate in post-conflict truth telling, healing, and reconciliation processes at the national, county, and community levels. Despite these differences in the perceptions of the way men and women have been treated in the post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation processes, 91.1% of respondents said that they did not believe that the differences in the way men and women are treated in Liberia can contribute to widespread violence or conflict in Liberia.

KII respondents agreed with most of these findings. They believed that "women fought for the peace of Liberia, and they are still fasting and praying for the success of peace in Liberia" (STE 41, see also STE 44). However, while the war may have ended, "women are still victimized at two levels—first, at the domestic level where gender-based violence, including… rape of minors… are prevalent in our society" (STE 16). At the political level, women are still under-represented in public offices (STE 16). Respondents noted that part of the reason for this double victimization of women is that "over 70% of the women of Liberia are not educated. It is this high-level of illiteracy" among women that makes their equitable participation at all levels in the public sphere of the country a challenge (STE 19). Added to this, in many respects, "Tradition has relegated them to the background" (STE 35), and so "women are still culturally bound" and reluctant to assert themselves in the public sphere: "…They still feel politics is for men" (STE 13). "Most of them have been taught to be subservient; that is what the culture promotes [to create the situation where] the power [that women have] is left somewhere, often never used" (STE 20). Another respondent, however, believes that the silence of women

3 These findings may reflect the fact that the DDR program, the only major form of economic support for those affected by the war, was directed largely at ex-combatants, the majority of whom were men. The government has not implemented TRC's recommendation to dispense compensations to victims of the war, a category that includes many more women.

in the public sphere may not be because they refuse or are not allowed to speak, actually "women are talking but their voices are not heard" (STE 43). In other words, women may have learned that it is not worthwhile to speak up and out in the public sphere because society is not paying attention to their views and voices, even when they express their opinions.

The foregoing notwithstanding, KII respondents noted that "women [have and continue to] play a major role in peacebuilding [because] they know if there is a problem, they will feel it" (STE 28). Indeed, as a result of the war, many women "have become bread winners instead of housewives" (STE 28, see also STE 46). Hence, since the beginning of the war, "women [...] played so many roles, leading up to the Accra Accord and in the subsequent peacebuilding processes" (STE 21). They took to the streets to demonstrate, fast, pray, and advocate for peace. More importantly, the niche role that "women have played [...] makes them central in the peace process [because they could] bring on board the issues people will not normally think of. Some are the social issues, health issues, and educational issues"(STE 19). In some cases, it is only "through women you get out some facts men will not easily say" (STE 50).

Respondents acknowledged that "women in leadership is a big thing" in Liberia today, not only because the country has its first female president, but also because within the traditional leadership structure at subnational levels "We are getting more women who are chiefs, paramount chiefs, and elders selected by their villages. Many women are now involved" (STE 19). In other domains, "with the emergence of a woman as a president [women] have woken up from their slumber" (STE 39) and began to assert and insert themselves in public spaces. In particular, respondents acknowledged the establishment of the Women, Gender, and Child Protection Centers at various levels as a major contributor to securing the rights of women (STE 54). Additionally, some women leaders already in the political limelight are "going around, educating women on their rights and the importance of education, so that when they are educated, they will not allow the men to dominate the political system in the country... They themselves [continue to] play a positive role to ensure that their presence is felt in the country" (STE 35). Such initiatives have enabled some women to become "more vocal and not easily bought like the youth and men" (STE 50).

These achievements notwithstanding, Liberia still faces the challenge of improving representation of "women in the judicial branch of government, in the legislative, private sector, executive—that is key to women empowerment right now" (STE 19). In other service sectors, the presence and voice of women still need to be strengthened. In particular, respondents noted that "we need more women in the media because the current media set up is biased against women" (STE 19). However, they acknowledged that achieving some form of equity in the representation of women in Liberia's public spaces may require affirmative action, since there is currently no level playing field for women to compete with men for positions. This is "because if you say women should compete based on the notion of gender and equality, there is no gender equality" (STE 24) [since] "women do not have the resources, the power, the energy and the enthusiasm to contest national elections" (STE 13) with men. "At the political level the women are still crying for 30% affirmative action in every institution" (STE 16); however,

when civil society brought that to the attention of the constitutional reform process, some critics argued against it, insisting that the constitution should "not let that for the women; let them come and compete with the men. But they know that tradition and culture, and history have not allowed them to compete with us. So, I think, to some extent they are being marginalized" (STE 16).

Respondents, point out that the absence of such affirmative actions is what has ensured that "the percentage of women in the Legislature is 8%." It is also why in the run-up to the 2017 presidential elections, "the names we are hearing are all men. You never hear a woman's name. All the twenty names are men" (STE 13). Corroborating this view, another respondent argued that the election of President Sirleaf is an exception that is not likely to repeat itself. The respondent further argued that it is her personality as an individual, not respect for gender equality "that got everybody going back in their shells [but] as the woman is going away, you know, everybody is coming back with that strength, you know with that machoistic" (STE 15) male dominance that would once more scare women away from politics. The respondent anticipated male resistance to the presidency of another woman because "it's something that they are not used to" (STE 15). Accordingly, any woman who tries to run for president in Liberia "will meet up with serious challenges from the men because men have tasted women leadership, and I do not think they are comfortable with it" (STE 15). In the view of another respondent, this imminent backlash against women accessing power lies in the fact that since a woman ascended to the presidency some women breached the cultural norms and began to "think they should be higher grade than men" (STE 29). Other respondents note that in reality, however, women political leaders have not shown that they are any better than their male counterparts when it comes to the practice of good governance. They point out that in the recent dismissal of corrupt officials there were women among the lot (STE 34).

Respondents also cautioned against homogenizing women and their issues. They observed that there are large gaps between urban, educated, and salaried women, on the one hand, and their rural, uneducated, subsistent counterparts on the other. Therefore, what the urban elite seeks to present as women's issues in the public domain does not always represent the interest of their rural counterparts. They do not represent the concerns of "women in the interior dominated by practices that deny them basic things" (STE 25). They see a tendency of urban women to equate women's rights to only political rights, since their language and posturing suggest that "they just want to get themselves into power [but not] to get down to what is happening on the ground, how people are down-trodden, how our mothers are suffering; they do not get food" (STE 34). Rural women do not have the same kinds of access to social and economic services as their urban counterparts (STE 16). Even the urban women who purport to speak on behalf of their rural colleagues often presume and impose desires on their rural counterparts without adequate consultation. For example, when urban women championed the promulgation of the Law on the Devolution of Estate in 1998, purportedly to protect the interests of rural women, the response of rural women was protest: "[they] are going about fixing laws; they are spoiling our businesses; they're spoiling our homes. Why couldn't they ask us whether this is what we want in fact?

Text Box 12: Let the Subaltern Speak—A Story of Misrepresentation of the Other

If you do not understand, let me tell you a story. In 1998 we were trying to change the law to allow women who are married traditionally to inherit property from their husbands. We called it the "Law on the Devolution of Estate". We wrote the law took it to the Legislature, decided to look at it, invited the chiefs, and the chiefs said, "ah these people want to break us down". The news got to our sisters, for whom we say we were developing this law, and they said "ah, but these people could not ask us? They are going about fixing laws they are spoiling our businesses; they're spoiling our homes. Why they couldn't ask us whether this is what we want, in fact. They should have brought the matter to us because they too have the insecurity problem because marriage under traditional law is for security".

The sooner you marry the girl-child you know she is secure. That man who married the girl-child, no matter how old he is, even if he is going to die tomorrow, once you marry him, especially if he is a well-off man, she is better off. It's for security. So, the women said "oh, these women want to spoil our business". We had to go and take the law and take it to them and get their buy-in. The population for which we fight, for which we advise is more than the people who are speaking on their behalf (STE 19).

They should have brought the matter to us [but now] these women want to spoil our business" (STE 19).

Similarly, respondents argued that women should not be portrayed as an undifferentiated class of victims. On the contrary, often, women are the agents of their own undoing. While some have argued that women are reluctant "to go to the workplace and compete for" (STE 23) jobs and other positions because they have not prepared themselves for it, other respondents have pointed out that getting more women into positions of power and influence has not necessarily translated into improved conditions for the majority of women: "today we've got more women in government but there is no change" (STE 29) in the conditions of women. In the view of another respondent, "besides having a woman president, the majority of our women are still uneducated [and this] high level of illiteracy [...] has become exacerbated and it is entrenched" (STE 19).

2.7 Democratic Participation, Political Inclusion, Elections, and the Potential for Violence

Political exclusion and limited opportunities for democratic participation underscored much of the conflicts in Liberia that culminated in the civil war. Hence, to establish the relevance of these factors in Liberia's current and future prospects for peace, the study used three variables that focused on i) the level of inclusivity and equality of opportunity for political aspirants from all ethnic groups to be elected President of Liberia; ii) perceptions on the extent of freedom, fairness, and transparency in the elections in Liberia; and iii) perceptions on the extent to which ethnic considerations factor into voter preferences at the polls. Again, a selection of responses in the ranges [3] 7 disaggregated the answers of those who "agreed", "strongly agreed", or "very strongly agreed" from respondents whose answers ranged from "no opinion" to "very strong disagreement".

The results in Figure 2.7A in Appendix 14 indicate that while 72.7% of respondents believed that anybody from any ethnic group in Liberia can now aspire to be President of the country, only 51.1% agreed that Liberians do not consider the ethnic backgrounds of candidates in deciding for whom to cast their vote. Additionally, only 37.4% of respondents agreed that the current electoral system in Liberia ensures free, fair, and transparent elections and their outcomes. In other words, respondents see clear gaps between one's political aspirations, voter behaviors, and the practice of running and winning elections. While more than two-thirds of respondents agreed that ethnicity is not a barrier to running for president, they are evenly split on the extent to which ethnicity affects the voting behavior. Fewer still are willing to attest that the elections in Liberia are free, fair and transparent. Consistently, more than 60% of respondents in all age and gender categories did not agree with the statement that the elections in Liberia are free, fair, and transparent. However, both correlations were not statistically significant (p=0.302 and p=0.211 respectively).

Table 2 below, however, shows that disaggregated by county, more than 75% of interviewees from Gbarpolou, Bomi and Grand Cape Mount agreed to various degrees that the elections in Liberia are freed, fair, and transparent. Conversely, more than 80%

of respondents in Nimba and River Gee did not agree that the elections in Liberia are free, fair, and transparent. Similarly, 76.6% of respondents from Grand Gedeh, 72.4% from Rivercess, and 55.7% from Montserrado, disagreed with the statement that elections in Liberia are free, fair, and transparent. The chi-square tests confirmed their significance ($p^3 0.05$).

In line with the survey data, KII respondents also shared the view that under the current political setup, anyone can aspire to be President of Liberia. They are however quick to add that this was not the case before the war because in that era Liberia had "a small minority running it at the exclusion of the vast majority" (STE 23). During that period of "black-on-black apartheid" (STE 001) rule of the Americo-Liberians over the indigenous communities, "real democracy was seriously in demand" (STE 15). Despite the new political conditions in the postwar era, respondents still believed that the former power holders are still intent on controlling the reins of government (STE 20).

TABLE 2 PERCEPTIONS OF FAIRNESS, FREEDOM, AND TRANSPARENCY IN LIBERIA

COUNTY	EXTENT OF AGREEMENT THAT ELECTIONS ARE FREE, FAIR, AND TRANSPARENT				TOTAL
	NO OPINION	DISAGREED TO VERY STRONGLY DISAGREED	MILDLY AGREED	AGREED TO VERY STRONGLY AGREED	N
Bomi	0.0%	12.9%	9.7%	77.5%	**31**
Bong	3.9%	32.7%	18.3%	45.1%	**153**
Gbarpolou	0.0%	0.0%	6.9%	93.0%	**29**
Grand Bassa	2.5%	37.2%	6.6%	53.7%	**121**
Grand Cape Mount	0.0%	3.2%	19.4%	77.5%	**31**
Grand Gedeh	0.0%	76.6%	3.3%	20.0%	**30**
Grand Kru	6.5%	35.5%	19.4%	38.8%	**31**
Lofa	9.5%	33.2%	6.8%	50.6%	**148**
Margibi	3.6%	44.0%	1.2%	51.1%	**84**
Maryland	0.0%	40.0%	11.7%	48.3%	**60**
Montserrado	3.3%	55.7%	10.4%	30.8%	**521**
Nimba	4.8%	86.6%	2.7%	5.9%	**187**
River Gee	0.0%	93.2%	0.0%	6.7%	**30**
Rivercess	6.9%	72.4%	0.0%	20.6%	**29**
Sinoe	0.0%	23.3%	30.0%	46.7%	**30**

With respect to the fairness of elections, some respondents believed that the elections that brought Charles Taylor to power as well as the 2005 elections were fairly

transparent and free. However, they believe the 2011 elections did not meet the criteria of freedom, fairness, and transparency (STE 24, STE 35). They felt that the processes were tempered with and that "the counting of the ballots was not transparent" (STE 24). One of the respondents echoed this perception: "to be very frank, sincere and honest with you, elections are not free, they are not fair and they are not transparent" (STE 35). For this reason, Liberians are getting disillusioned about the electoral process. As one respondent who served as poll manager in one of the centers in the last elections noted, they had a situation "where we were going around, begging people to come and vote and some of the statements we heard were—the people said they were not going anywhere to vote for somebody who does not know them" (STE 31).

KII respondents also confirmed the prevalence of ethnic identity politics in voting. This, in the view of a respondent, explains why the majority of those who have ruled the country over the last 167 years are "descendants of the freed Slaves" (STE 20) who did "not want to give the natives the chance to rule" (STE 35). Consequently, they restricted participation of the indigenous peoples in the electoral processes. In recent times, however, Liberians face the groupthink mentality under which ethnic groups create and maintain enemies from other outgroups. This development was seen as arising from the fact that "we have not overcome this tribal thing…this man is not my tribal man, and so what is good for me, should not be good for him" (STE 32). The common enemy phenomenon derives from the communitarian ascription of responsibilities in conflicts, which dictates that "If somebody from the Geo tribe did something to me, wherever I meet a Geo man he is my enemy. That is how we think" (STE 32).

Politicians are capitalizing on the ethnic factor in elections; respondents noted that political leaders are using ethnic population sizes to lay claims to rights to power in the state system. Rather than campaign on issues, they are staking their claims and rights to power on the basis only of the numerical strength of their ethnic groups in the country. In the respondents' view, by mobilizing the emotional attachments of their ethnic constituencies to win elections, politicians erode the very essence of democracy, which hinges on mobilization behind ideas, not emotions, for purposes of winning a vote. One of the respondents explained:

> Now people are reverting to arguing that the tribe has the population, the numbers, and the tribe has a right to be leaders because that is democracy […] during the elections process it is about numbers—one man, one vote. If one tribe says we are more, in terms of population and have a right to the presidency, it tells you something; how people use the idea of democracy to undermine the democratic entitlement [and] the very meaning of democracy itself. (STE 002)

Under the circumstances, the view that anyone can become President of Liberia today is more aspirational than reality. Accordingly, respondents had mixed feelings about relying on elections to stem the system of political exclusion in the country. While many are looking to the 2017 election to bring to an end to "the exclusion of the native majority" (STE 20), others "foresee that for the next election the poll centers will be empty. People will not turn up" (STE 31), because of the same ethnocentric reasons. In sum, Liberians have a lot more work to do to "resist the issue of ethnicity, where one ethnic group tries to dominate the other groups" (STE 23).

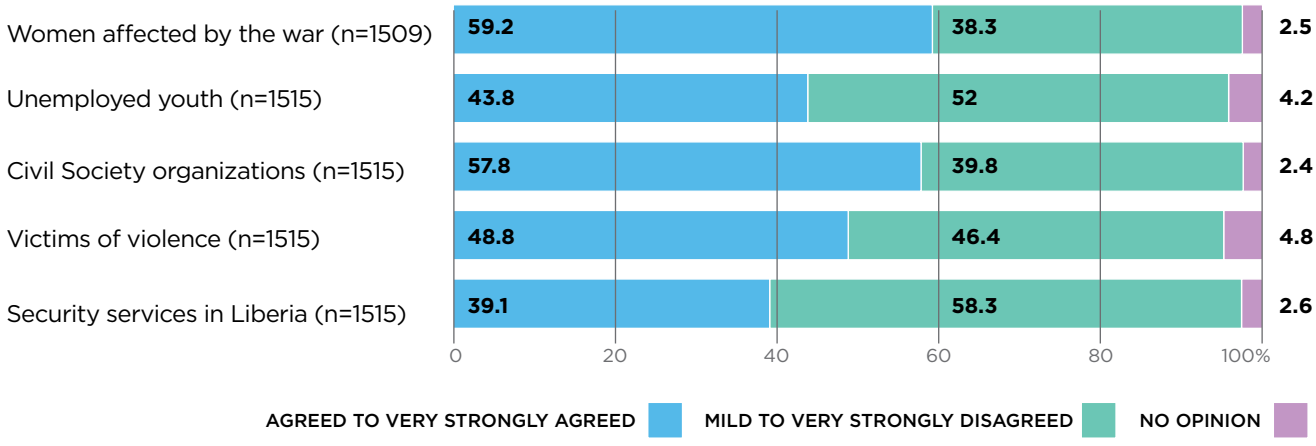
In sum, respondents believe that the new democratic dispensation is an important political safety valve because, unlike in the past, it grants equal opportunity, in principle, to members all ethnic groups to aspire to the presidency. It makes people feel they can have a say in who rules them. In particular, it has granted the indigenous population a bigger voice in the legislature. However, respondents believe the persistence of ethnicity as an important factor in the voting behaviors of Liberians undermines the idea that members of all ethnic groups have an equal chance of getting elected President of Liberia. Compounding this problem is the fact that the electoral processes are not perceived as transparent, free, and fair for all people. Consequently, respondents anticipated that disputes over the electoral results in 2017 could be a trigger for violent conflicts.

2.8 Social Inclusion, Equity, Coexistence, and Peace

Social inclusion, equity, coexistence and peace are products of how people feel treated in their own communities or counties; the level of discrimination based on identity markers such as race, color, religion, or gender; the use of group identities as instruments for political ends; and the degree to which intermarriage between different identity groups are allowed. For this reason, the study used five variables to gauge the conditions and opportunities for rebuilding social cohesion, equity and peaceful coexistence within and between different identity groups in Liberia.

The study gauged the level of agreement on the variables on a 9-point scale of responses. The summary of findings for responses selected at 7 or higher for respondents who agreed to different levels with the statements are presented in Figure 4 below. In total, 59.2% of respondents agreed that intermarriages are permitted between ethnic groups, and 57.8% of respondents said that people of different faiths can live together without any problem. Regarding the question whether people from all backgrounds are treated fairly and equally before the law, 58.3% of respondents disagreed. Respondents were split on the question of discrimination on the basis of religion.

Figure 4: Perceptions on factors that promote social inclusion, equity, and coexistence



KII respondents in principle shared the views on social inclusion, equity, coexistence and peace reported in the survey results, particularly in respect of the following:

Intermarriages and interethnic bonds: With respect to intermarriages between faith groups, KII respondents noted that in principle families readily allow their relatives to marry people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. Historically, between indigenous and settler communities, "there have been a lot of intermarriages… nobody can show me a pure settler. They have disappeared with time through intermarriages… [even among the indigenous] …no one can come and say I am an original Liberian" (STE 002). Across religious lines, "there are intermarriages that are as old as tradition itself. A new Muslim coming and moving to Liberia will say all these Muslims who we met here are not true Muslim. They do not go by the Quran. They are diluted" (STE 19). In present day Liberia, "intermarriages are going on" (STE 16) between ethnic and other identity groups, as well. For one respondent, this system of intermarriage provided "an advantage that we can take and build upon it and begin now to construct" (STE 002) a true Liberian identity.

Respondents, however, noted that while the principle and practice of marriage across identity lines is permitted, it is not a widespread phenomenon in practice. Indeed, there are some locations around the country where intermarriages between some ethnic groups may have been slowed, if not stalled altogether (such as the Geo, the Mano, the Krahn, and the Mandingoes). In particular, respondents pointed to the increasing marital feuds between the Mandingoes, on the one hand, and the Geos and Krahns, on the other. They argued that the intermarriages have been unidirectional because they "see that the Dingos allowed their sons to marry non-Dingo daughters [but] would never allow their daughters to marry a non-Dingo" men (STE 50). Given the patrilineal structure of Liberian society, ethnic groups who give up their daughters in marriage to Mandingoes feel cheated because children born to such unions become "your tribe, not mine" (STE 50). The evolving conflicts over land and property in Nimba and other places is exacerbating this sense of being cheated through intermarriage.

Interfaith coexistence: Findings in relation to interfaith coexistence, the use of religion in politics, and the use of religion as an instrument for discrimination in the public sphere are regrouped and discussed under Section 2.12 of this report. In short, respondents believed that historically interfaith coexistence was never a problem, pointing their finger at recent attempts to instrumentalize religion for political ends as the source of interfaith tensions.

Equal treatment before the law: The majority of KII respondents disagreed with the view that all Liberians have equal and fair treatment before the law, irrespective of their backgrounds. They pointed to the high levels of corruption within the judiciary in which judges and lawyers frequently "act in very unethical ways" that have ensured that "poor people have not been able to experience the justice they deserve so much" (STE 01). The view that justice is on sale in most of the courts has already been cited earlier in this study (STE 25). Hence, respondents believe that for most Liberians, there is "no justice [unless] you have money" (STE 30). Another respondent pointed out that people on trial for even minor offenses who are unable to secure the needed help at the pre-trial stages to get their cases heard are often detained in overcrowded cells for up to

six years (STE 04). Emphasizing the exclusionary nature of the justice system, another respondent argued that "Masonic Craft has been very important in the lives of the elite to the extent that justice has been compromised because of members of the Masonic Craft. For this reason, "most of our young ones are members of the Masonic Craft. They are convinced that is how they can win legal cases" (STE 002).

Access to justice is discriminatory and limited by the transactional costs: legitimate and illegitimate legal fees, travel costs, time lost in travel, and cost of attendance, etc. Respondents also called into question the quality of service they receive and its impact on the equity as well. Centered on this grievance are perceptions about the ethnic and religious representativeness of the judiciary as well as the quality of the personnel on the bar and the benches of the courts. As one respondent argued, Muslims are underrepresented on the bar and the bench in the judicial system, pointing out that in "the entire judiciary we have only two" judges affiliated to the Islamic faith (STE 14). While no specific instances of injustices were cited as a result of this perceived imbalance in the religious representation in the court system, the respondent inferred that with the current debates about Christianizing Liberia, Muslims would have a hard time getting a fair hearing in court, should they seek legal redress on this or related matters.

In some cases, the poor capacity of judicial personnel calls into question the quality and equity of services they provide. A respondent cited the case in one county where "the magistrate is not even a high school graduate, and so when it comes to the issue of explaining the laws to the people, he does not have the technical know-how to explain the law. So, there are many loopholes; there are many rulings that have been given, only to be annulled… later by Higher Court" (STE 35). Due to these challenges, a respondent said that a UN study in which he participated found that "less than 5% of Liberian people use the formal [legal and judicial] process" (STE 001). Instead, they use the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, even though these are not recognized as part of Liberia's judicial system.

2.9 Role of the Government in Promoting Peace

In intrastate conflicts, governments play pivotal roles in restoring peace; however, its effectiveness depends to a great extent on citizen perceptions of the state's impartiality and capacity to create the enabling environments for peace. The study assessed respondent perceptions on the capacity of the Government of Liberia to maintain peace and security in the country after the withdrawal of UNMIL. Respondents shared to what extent they agree that the Government of Liberia has since the end of the civil war created opportunities for Liberians to work with state institutions to sustain and grow the peace. It also asked respondents about their perception of the neutrality of the Government of Liberia in handling conflicts between different ethnic, political, and religious groups; and whether Liberia now has the institutional mechanisms at the local level to resolve conflicts before they escalate into large scale violence.

GoL's capacity to preserve the peace after UNMIL: In response to the survey questions on the potential impact of the withdrawal of UNMIL, only 22% of respondents said the GoL has the capacity to maintain security in the country after UNMIL draws down (see Table 2.9A in Appendix 13).

No significance differences existed in the level of agreement of respondents by age and gender categories; however, significant differences were found between counties (p=0.000). While Grand Cape Mount, Maryland, Montserrado, Nimba, River Gee, Rivercess, and Sinoe had less than 20% of their respondents agreeing that the GoL has the capacity to provide security to Liberians when UNMIL exits, between 20% and 30% of respondents in Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, and Lofa Counties agreed with the statement. In Bomi, Bong, Gbarpolou, and Margibi more than 30% but less than 50% of respondents agreed with the statement (see Table 2.9B and 2.9C in Appendix 13). While respondents were overall apprehensive about GoL's capacity to provide security for its citizens without external assistance by UNMIL, it would appear that counties to the east and southeast were less optimistic. In contrast, respondents in counties to the west of the country, which are also much closer to Monrovia, have a greater confidence in GoL's ability to provide security. Apart from prior experiences during the war, differences in perceptions of GoL readiness to provide nationwide security coverage may be influenced by the different personal experiences of the respondents.

KII respondents largely reinforced the survey findings that the current ability of the Government of Liberia to promote and sustain peace is weak. With respect to the provision of security services, for instance, respondents noted that the current security apparatus is heavily dependent on the presence and operations of UNMIL (STE 002, STE 004, STE 39). They are very apprehensive of the government's ability to pick up security duties after UNMIL draws down "and guarantee individual protection and security" (STE 002) for a number of reasons. First, they believe that "the security system is weak" (STE 33) or "the security forces are not as strong as they should be to take charge" (STE 001). In the view of another respondent, "we cannot say that the nation can run itself [because] we have enjoyed peace for almost 12 years now with UNMIL presence" (STE 25). Respondents, therefore, wondered how the state can protect its citizens with an army of some 2,000 personnel and a police service with fewer than 7,000 men and women officers (STE 004). Buttressing this point, another respondent cited the example that:

> In my own county we do not have enough police manpower. In the absence of UNMIL we have to manage our country by ourselves. When it comes to the security work, we do not have men… The number of police personnel we have here is inadequate. They are inadequate in the sense that, they cannot even cover the entire county, so it is a serious problem. (STE 37)

Against this background, some respondents have argued that "the only thing threatening the peace and reconciliation we are enjoying is the security issue—the lack of sufficient security and the threat that it poses when UNMIL leaves [and the fear that people] will take the law into their hands" (STE 36). This fear that with the withdrawal of UNMIL, people will capitalize on the weakness of the state's security system to seek revenge on the people who hurt them during the war was widespread. As one respondent captured it, most Liberians lost loved ones during the war, and those who were responsible for their loss "are still living among us. I see you day and night. You know what it means. And you say, forget it? I cannot see my loved one; then I see you

Text Box 13: Thoughts on Security

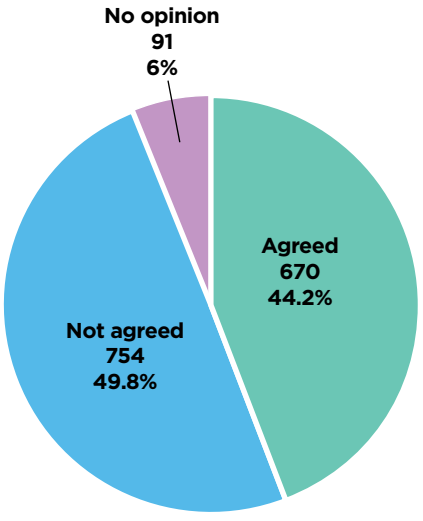
The entire security sector, that needs to serve as bastion of hope for the citizens, is being turned up in the hands of the international community. The police are always just working on the surface, but the security sector is heavily managed by the international community… We have not tasted full-fledged security at the hands of this government [because] the security sector has not been placed fully in the hands of the government for us to know that… it is governed all by ourselves (STE 004)

day and night passing. You think I can forget like that? Let UNMIL go, what my brother did to me, I will revenge. There are so many ways to revenge" (STE 30).

Besides the inadequate staffing, respondents also expressed distrust in the new security services. Even though UNMIL has been training the security officials of the state, citizens have no confidence that they can live up to the task of taking care of the country. This fear stems from the fact that "the security sector has not been placed fully in the hands of the government for us to know" (STE 004) that they are capable of managing it. Even before the handover is done, respondents feel that "the police are not citizen-friendly. People have no trust and confidence in the police" (STE 14). Reinforcing the skepticism and distrust of the security services, another respondent was not sure whether members of the security services (mostly recruited from the factions of the civil war) have been adequately trained for duties in a civilian and democratic setting (STE 30). Corroborating, a colleague recalled his encounter with a serving military officer whose driving mirror he had accidentally brushed while navigating his way on foot through the traffic in Monrovia. In concluding his narration of the acrimonious exchanges with the officer, the respondent who confessed support for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Liberia's soil concluded that "God just wanted me to know and see what we have because we have people who are saying UNMIL should stay and we are saying 'no, we have to learn to walk, not to sit'... but I was cautioned by that sort of action that took place" (STE 15). The officer had threatened to kill him if the respondent, an elderly pastor, made any dent on the officer's car. As if to confirm the scenario of uncertainty depicted here, another respondent concluded that "if we can trust our local security, then we have no fear about Liberia being at risk. But the trust... the citizens do not have the trust in our own security apparatus" (STE 39).

Respondents also felt that "the security personnel are not well-educated for their functions" (STE 45). Hence, many believe and behave as if "they work for the President or they work for the individuals" (STE 16) they are detailed to protect. Conversely, when it comes to serving the public interest and the common good, they tend to be negligent of their responsibilities. The respondent in STE 45 recalled the harassment incident against local communities by personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia, which were assigned to protect communities suffering encroachment on their lands by new arrivals from Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso along the eastern borders. The respondent concluded that "if UNMIL leaves, and you get fed up with what you are experiencing, they may strike back. Striking back may bring another chaos" (STE 45).

Figure 5: GoL is creating opportunities for sustainable peace



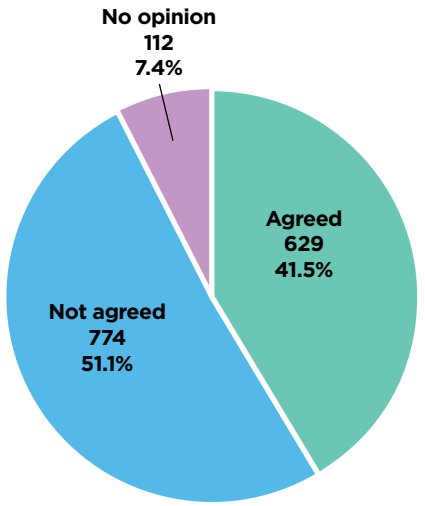
GoL creating opportunities for maintaining peace: With respect to the GoL's effort in creating opportunities for Liberians to work with state institutions to sustain and grow the peace in the country, 44.2% of respondents agreed that the GoL has fulfilled this obligation, and 49.8% of

respondents disagreed. Statistically significant differences existed in cross tabulations of the results by age category of respondents (p=0.018) and for county of interview (p=0.000), but not for gender (p=0.703).

Local capacity for peace: With regard to the existence of the institutional mechanisms at the local levels to resolve conflicts before they escalate into large scale violence, 41.5% of respondents agreed that such mechanisms are in place, 51.1% disagreed, with 7.4% choosing to express no opinion. As in the case above, the results showed statistically significant differences for age category of respondents (p=0.036) and county of interview (p=0.000) but not for gender (p=0.072).

KII participants acknowledged the government's efforts to put in place key institutions, such as the Human Rights Commission and the Information Commission as well as their efforts to reform the legal and judicial systems. However, they believe that much more needs to be done to protect and guarantee peace. In the view of one respondent, "what needs to be done is to strengthen these institutions to function… so that they actually respond to the needs of the people" (STE 27). Building this local capacity for peace by making these institutions responsive to the needs of the people largely depends on the presence and efficacy of service points that afford citizens everywhere prompt and affordable access to justice and conflict resolution opportunities that pre-empt recourse to violence. However, the absence and weakness of the law enforcement and justice systems in areas outside of the national and regional capitals poses a threat to peace in Liberia.

Figure 6: Existence of local capacity for peace



The absence and weakness of the state-sponsored conflict management systems has necessitated the reliance on indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms for access to justice. Indeed, one respondent suggested that in the search for peace, emphasis should be placed on "community engagement to try to resolve a lot of conflicts at the community level, because the legal system does not favor community harmony" (STE 13). However, other respondents noted that the once respected institutions of chiefs that manage such systems were desecrated and disrespected during the war so much so that "the chiefs themselves have lost their integrity in society" (STE 27). This happened when armed child soldiers "challenged the authority [of chiefs and] broke down the rules of law, the cultural rules of law" (STE 19). Nonetheless, the chiefs are doing their best "at the local level to handle most of the problems that arise" (STE 27), with no support from the state. Calling for the state to support such efforts, respondents pointed out that "it is a duty of the government to promote positive Liberian culture, but then the government is not doing that. People are not encouraged to use their culture and support the governance system" (STE 14).

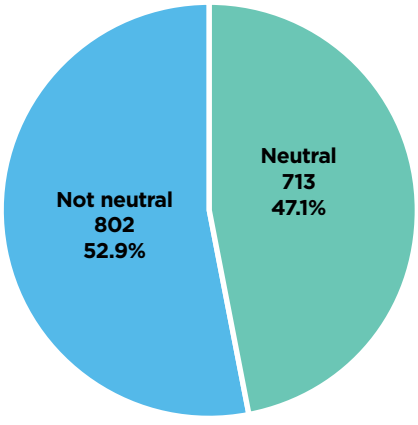
Several international NGOs are supporting the rebuilding of the local capacity for peace. As a respondent noted, "NGOs are doing extremely well; they have been pushing peace, especially in situations where people fought and killed each other" (STE 53). It is the "NGOs [that] work at the community level" (STE 19), providing skills training in conflict resolution and development. However, these are often short-lived interventions, usually geographically focused in restricted areas, and often thematically disjointed from the efforts of other NGOs. Consequently, a groundswell of interventions that address peacebuilding in a holistic and broad way is lacking. Hence, the opportunity for transformational change of the peace and security sector was missed. Indeed, respondents credited the peaceful nature of Liberians, not the government or the institutions of state security, for the current peace. To underscore the point, a respondent pointed out that in the "entire Maryland County, we have about 65 police officers [hence] you will see one police officer going to arrest three persons in the community. Those people will be peaceful to walk with the police officer to the police station, where they will be incarcerated" (STE 31).

2.10 Role of the State in Conflict Resolution

The State has the coercive, persuasive, and legal resources to mediate intra- and intergroup relationships, to deescalate and facilitate peaceful resolution of conflicts. However, citizen perceptions of the neutrality of the government in facilitating such intra- and intergroup conflict management processes are key to the transformation of conflicts and sustainable peacebuilding. For this reason, respondents were asked to rate the neutrality of the Government of Liberia in handling conflicts between different ethnic, political, or religious groups.

Figure 7 below shows that while 47.1% of respondents said the government is usually neutral, 52.9% of respondents disagreed with that view. Chi-square statistics showed no significant differences for cross tabulation by age categories and gender ($p>0.05$ in both cases) but significant for county of interview ($p=0.000$). In other words, the observed differences in responses by county are not accidental, with contextual factors contributing to differences in perceptions.

Figure 7: Neutrality of government in local conflicts



Respondents rated their views based on a 6-point scale, running from "can't tell" to "always neutral". Their replies were filtered at ≥4.5 to capture the midpoint of answers indicating "occasionally neutral" through to "always neutral". Table 3 below shows that while more than 60% of respondents in Gbarpolou, Lofa, Margibi, Nimba and Rivercess indicated that the government was always neutral in handling conflicts within and between various groups in the country, more than 60% of respondents in Bomi, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Maryland, Montserrado, River Gee indicated that the government

was not always neutral in handling such conflicts. Respondents from Bong and Sino counties were evenly split. Table 2.10A in Appendix 13 indicates that these findings were statistically significant.

TABLE 3: NEUTRALITY OF GOVERNMENT IN RESOLVING INTERGROUP CONFLICTS

COUNTY	PERCEPTIONS ON LEVEL OF NEUTRALITY OF GoL	
	NOT NEUTRAL (N=802)	NEUTRAL (N= 713)
Bomi	74.2%	25.8%
Bong	51.6%	48.4%
Gbarpolou	17.2%	82.8%
Grand Bassa	62.0%	38.0%
Grand Cape Mount	83.9%	16.1%
Grand Gedeh	86.7%	13.3%
Grand Kru	45.2%	54.8%
Lofa	25.0%	75.0%
Margibi	32.1%	67.9%
Maryland	81.7%	18.3%
Montserrado	62.0%	38.0%
Nimba	36.4%	63.6%
River Gee	80.0%	20.0%
Rivercess	37.9%	62.1%
Sinoe	50.0%	50.0%
Total	**52.9%**	**47.1%**

The KII shed additional light on the regional differences identified in the survey responses. KII respondents noted that the history of interethnic power struggles, which culminated in the ethnically delineated factions in the civil war, has created and sustained distrust of government as a neutral institution that can arbitrate in local conflicts. On some of the war fronts, government and its officials were conflated with the enemy identity group. Hence, in one instance, Muslims, Mandingoes, government officials, and civil servants were all lumped together as an enemy group (STE 14, STE 50). Because the government was perceived as complicit and "part of the faction that the religious community mediated between", its role as a neutral arbiter is severely curtailed, particularly in places with local conflicts between ethnic groups that were supporting the government and those against it (STE 25). Another respondent cited the government's failure to condemn the state security's maltreatments of a sitting

senator from Bomi during the 2011 elections as an example of its complicity in fueling or condoning local conflicts, especially those in which it has vested interests (STE 55).

Recent actions and inaction by state institutions in respect to managing local conflicts have, unfortunately, perpetuated the "government versus us" mentality among some ethnic groups. One respondent recounted several instances around the country were citizens took on and fought the police and other security agencies for perceived complicity in the deaths or molestation of their colleagues. The respondent concluded that "these are attacks on the symbols of law and order. There is an attempt to demystify the symbols of law and order [...] when the police, the institution that should help us to maintain law and order, is being demystified, it tells us we have a problem on our hands" (STE 002). Another interviewee cited the case of conflicts between communities and land concessionaires. Respondents noted that the government had approved 66 out of 68 recent concessions without following due process. The communities whose lands were annexed were never consulted (STE 004, STE 13). By these acts, the government compromised its role as a neutral arbiter between the citizenry and the expatriate commercial interests.

Another area where respondents faulted the government was the allocation of development interventions. Respondents cited the inequitable distribution of development services to all counties as evidence of persisting and intentional state punishment of certain counties or ethnic groups for perceived past or current anti-government stances. Respondents of Grand Gedeh County pointed to the fact that while their neighbors in Nimba have had access to electricity for more than three years, they don't have any. Access to news via television services is non-existent, as there is no television coverage; the plans to build three community colleges were implemented in two of counties but not Grand Gedeh: "the money that they had to build the Grand Gedeh Community College, that money was used, because the young man who is the Director-General for Commission on Higher Education... did not want Grand Gedeh Community School to be built" (STE 44). The respondent continued, "if the government really needs to promote peace, unity and reconciliation, there should be redistribution of the national cake" (STE 44, topic also mentioned in STE 25).

In sum, there is a high level of distrust of the Government of Liberia acting as a neutral arbiter in conflicts between citizen groups. In the view of respondents, current actions and inaction of the government are not helping dispel this cynicism and civic distrust it is neutrality in handling such conflicts. The government has also not done enough to address the historical roots of citizen distrust in the state system.

2.11 Role of the Private Sector

Private businessmen and -women have considerable interests and influence in state systems and processes. Their covert and overt actions often guide the evolution of conflicts, especially in natural resource–rich countries such as Liberia, and they can be mobilized as actors for peace. For this reason, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they believed that private business, Liberians and non-Liberians, have a strong influence in the politics of Liberia and whether their role contributes to building peace in the country.

Figure 8 indicates that only 27.5% of respondents (n=1,515) believed that Liberian and non-Liberian private businessmen and -women exercise substantial influence over the politics of the country, while 65.9% did not believe that the private sector actors in Liberia had any influence in state processes.

Figure 8: Influence of private sector actors in the politics of Liberia

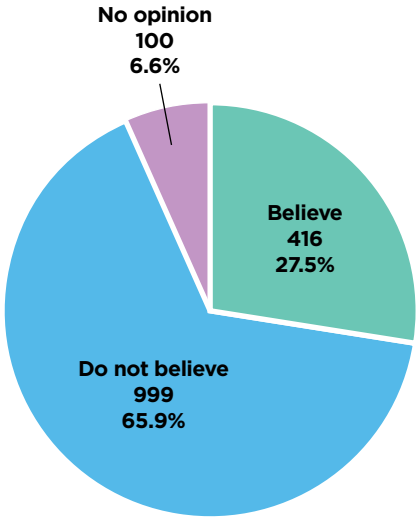


Table 2.11A in Appendix 13 presents the findings of the cross tabulation of responses. It shows that more than 70% of respondents in Gbarpolou and Sinoe believed that private sector businessmen and -women influenced Liberia's politics. However, the same proportion of respondents in Bomi, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Nimba, River Gee, and Rivercess did not believe that private sector actors had any influence on the politics of Liberia. Respondents from Grand Kru, Margibi, and Maryland were split almost evenly on whether they believed or did not believe in the influence of the private sector in the politics of the country. While cross tabulation with age categories and gender of respondents turned out statistically insignificant results, counties of interview did produce statistically significant results (see Table 2.11B in Appendix 13).

Table 2.11C in Appendix 13 presents the cross tabulation of the responses to the question on the role of private sector in the politics of Liberia with the responses on perceptions on the influence that the private sector has on peacebuilding efforts in the country. Table 2.11D in Appendix 13 presents the chi-square test results for the cross tabulation. Table 4 below summarizes the findings (excluding the "no opinion" responses on both questions), while highlighting the levels of cross-agreements on the two questions.

The findings are significant with p=0.000, which suggests that they represent the views of the general population. In other words, there are considerable differences in how Liberians see the degree of influence of the private sector on the public sphere in Liberia and whether it can leverage this influence to support the peacebuilding effort. While some companies and businessmen and -women may have influence over state actors, in other instances, their spheres of influence may only stretch to non-state actors (community groups, CSOs, worker's groups, etc.). In other words, private sector actors are engaging the public sector from different starting points, and this determines their potential role in supporting peace. Findings from the KIIs on this question underpin this point.

TABLE 4 SUMMARY PRIVATE SECTOR IN POLITICS AND PEACEBUILDING

PRIVATE SECTOR INFLUENCE IN NATIONAL POLITICS	PRIVATE SECTOR ROLE IN PEACEBUILDING	
	HAS A ROLE IN PEACEBUILDING	HAS NO ROLE IN PEACEBUILDING
Believe Private Sector Has Influence	(A) 150 (11.3%)	(B) 434 (32.8%)
Believe Private Sector Has No Influence	(C) 237 (17.9%)	(D) 501 (37.9%)
n=1,322		

Respondents in the key informant interviews identified four categories of private business groups that have actual or potential interests in influencing the politics and conflict dynamics of Liberia. First are the Americo-Liberians, who have Liberian citizenship but are largely domiciled in, or commuting between the US and Liberia. They therefore fall in **Quadrant A** of Table 4. According to one respondent, "those who are at the helm of affairs are all Americo-Liberians" (STE 35). They own and control most of the political and economic power in the country because "the Americo-Liberians owned most of the property, run most of the business, have the wealth and have the education" (STE 11). Respondents cited past and present government functionaries from this group who owned or operated plantations and other business interests. They cited examples where government ministries and departments have been housed in property owned by Americo-Liberians. They exert considerable influence in the public sphere to protect and grow their business interests. In the view of one respondent, the Americo-Liberians "believe that Liberia is a farm and they have somewhere abroad as their home. So all the money they get, they take it abroad and leave Liberia undeveloped" (STE 44). In the view of another respondent, such exclusionary control over the politics and economics of Liberia "are the things that make the native man very angry [because] he feels that he is not part of Liberia" (STE 35). In other words, while the Americo-Liberian businessmen and -women may not actively instigate conflicts, their business attitudes and behaviors create resentments that feed into the national conflict dynamics. Conversely, they can be positive contributors to peacebuilding, if they choose to invest in creating an equitable playing field in the economic and political domains for both indigenous and non-indigenous persons to participate as active stakeholders in the public and economic life of the country.

Actors and institutions in **Quadrant B** do have some influence on the political scene through their ethnic, social, and business networks, but no formal role in peacebuilding. Nonetheless, their actions and inaction affect the state of peace in the country. Respondents cited the Mandingo business owners as a category of private sector actors that would fall into this quadrant because of their manifest political interests and actions in the past. They pointed out that initially the Mandingos coexisted peacefully in their host communities, focusing on their businesses. However, during the war, they

saw an opportunity to annex and own land by siding with the government during the conflict. This infuriated their hosts who kicked them out and annexed their property. To date, Mandingoes are restricted from owning land in most parts of Nimba County and certain parts of Grand Gedeh and Lofa counties (STE 14, STE 20, STE 25, STE 50).

Quadrant C contains private actors and institutions that have no formal influence in the public sphere, but can exert considerable influence on peace or conflict in the country. Foreign companies, such as the plantation developers and logging companies with large land concessions, fall in this category. They have no formal foothold in the corridors of power, but can use their connections with influential politicians to secure their business interests. In the process, they incur the anger of the local people who feel expropriated of their lands. Also, falling into this quadrant are the emerging native businessmen and -women who may not have political connections, but can leverage their influence in their ethnic groups to foment trouble or promote peace.

The last category of private sector actors with no formal channels of leverage on politics and policy processes (save for informal and crony channels), are the Lebanese and Indian business community—**Quadrant D**. Despite the fact that some of them were born in Liberia, this group of businessmen and -women do not have rights to Liberian citizenship. Therefore, they cannot access formal positions of power and influence and "cannot own anything. Therefore, all their wealth goes out" (STE 011). They have no incentives to keep their money in the country. To facilitate their businesses, however, they have to associate and align with powerful local business and political leaders. Thus, they can influence policies and the dynamics for peace and conflict informally via their local business networks.

In sum, Liberia's private sector has sought to exert influence in the public sphere through different formal and informal channels, depending on the status and interests of the individual businessman and -women as well as corporations. Through these mechanisms, they can also directly or indirectly play roles that enhance peace or trigger conflicts. Local experiences with private sector influence in matters of state and governance seems to vary by county. This may reflect the relative concentration of private sector businesses in different counties as well as their level of involvement in state affairs. All in all, respondents alleged frequent complicity between government officials and private businesses in illegal trade—such as in drugs (STE 30)—part of the reason why corruption is perceived as a high-risk factor for Liberia's peace and stability.

2.12 Religion and Peace in Liberia

Religion is an important factor in conflicts and peacebuilding: its tenets and values, its actors and institutions can act as powerful dividers or connectors, conflict instigators or peacebuilders among and between people of different religious persuasions. Religious identities can be used as a rallying call for mobilizing people of different creeds for non-religious ends, such as politics. It can also be used to build bridges across divided societies to restore peace and social cohesion.

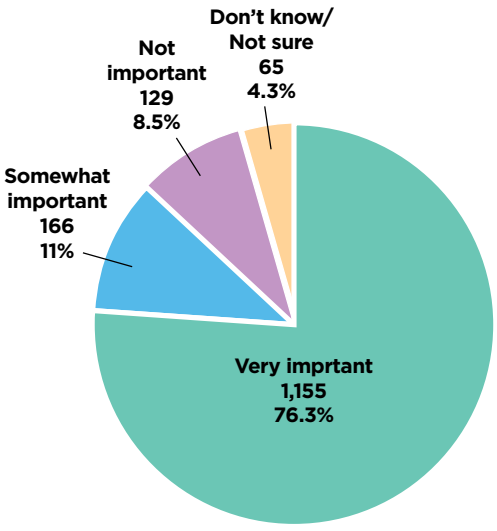
Although religion was not one of the causal factors of the war, some developments on the religious front since the end of the civil war raised concerns regarding its potential impact on instigating renewed violence, especially in the run-up to the

2017 elections. The profile of respondents in this study showed that 97.1% are either Christians or Muslims, which mirrors the national population structure in the 2008 National Population And Housing Census of Liberia, in which 85.5% of Liberians self-identified as Christians, with another 12.2% indicating that they were Muslims.[4] Although adherents of the two dominant faith traditions—Christianity and Islam—have lived together peacefully, participants in the study design workshop were apprehensive that the recent calls to declare Liberia a Christian state could trigger conflicts along religious lines. At their request, the study sought to ascertain how important religion is in the lives of Liberians and what role it has played and could play in conflict or peace processes in the country. Beyond the importance of religion for Liberians, the study investigated a wide range of religious factors and actors that can impact peace and conflict situations. These included inquiries into the contribution of religion to discrimination and coexistence in Liberia; the use of religion in politics; respondents' perception of religion as a source of violence; influence of religious leaders in peacebuilding; and interfaith collaboration for peace. The findings are reported below.

a. Importance of Religion for Liberians

More than three-fourths of respondents felt that religion had a central place in the lives of Liberians, with 49% rating it as "very important", and 27.3% indicating that it was "important". One-fifth (19.5%) saw it as "somewhat" or "not important", with 4.3% of respondents indicating that they either did not know or were not sure (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Importance of religion in the life of Liberians



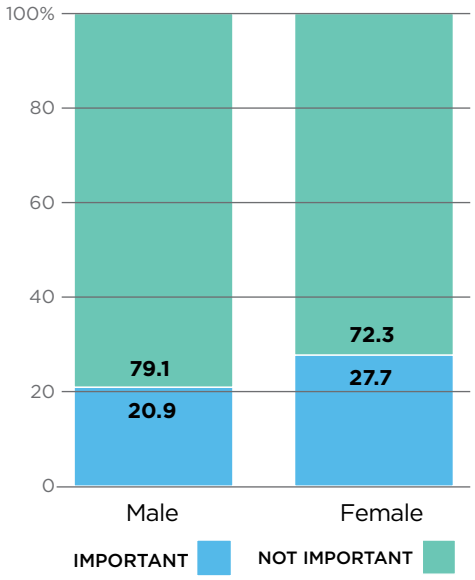
While cross tabulation by age categories did not provide statistically significant differences (p=0.147) gender and county of interview did provide significant differences (p=0.002 and p=0.000 respectively). In general,79.1% (690/872) of male respondents said religion was important in the lives of Liberians, with 50.2% of the males indicating that religion is "very important" for Liberians. This compares to 72.3% (465/643) of female respondents who said religion was important, with 47.3% citing it as very important (see Figure 10). In other words, men expressed a slightly stronger view that religion plays an important role in the lives of Liberians then women.

By county of interview, Gbarpolou, Grand Kru, and Sinoe were the only ones that registered less than 50% of respondents who said religion was important in the lives of Liberians. All other counties had more than 60% of their respondents subscribing to the view that religion is important for Liberians (see Table 2.12A in Appendix 13). The KII responses provide some additional background and examples for the importance of religion in the lives of Liberians.

4 Government of the Republic of Liberia, (2008) National Population And Housing Census: Preliminary Results, Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) Monrovia, Liberia, June 2008, accessed on December 4, 2015 from unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/docViewer.aspx?docID=2075

KII views on the importance of religion: In sum, the survey data established that religion plays a central role in the lives of Liberians. KII respondents in this study corroborated this view, noting that "Liberians are very religious: if they are not Muslim, they are Christians; so, they take that passion and religion and bring it into secularism" (STE 013). For this reason, since the formation of the Liberian state, "religion has always been there" (STE 015) at the center of the governance structure of the country. Several of Liberia's past leaders have blended the roles of statesmen with leadership of religious sects. Thus, the interface between church and state was almost indistinguishable, although current religious leaders insist on keeping a stricter separation between the church and the state.

Figure 10: Gender perspectives on importance of religion in life of Liberians



While most Liberians belong to a religious group, respondents questioned the depth of their exclusive commitment to the tenets of their officially professed faith traditions. They point out that a unifying force in Liberia's religiosity lies in the fact that despite being members of different new or imported religious sects and denominations (such as Christianity and Islam), most Liberians still share a common base of belief in AIR practices—the Poro and the Sande (STE 020). Also, while not a religious institution, the "Masonic Craft has been very important in the lives of the elite" (STE 002), and in turn has shaped public life in Liberia. Consequently, one respondent sees "the issue of religion [as a] phenomenon … because you have 90% Christians, they still believe in the traditional societies. They do not see anything wrong belonging to the Poro Society" (STE 23).

But another respondent sees Liberia's religiosity in Marxist terms and argues that because the "Liberian people… are religious, religion is playing its role to give people hope; [telling them] that all hope is not lost in the midst of all these trials, temptations, hardships, suffering, corruption and all that. Religion provides an avenue to tell the people that we should look forward to a bright future, even a bright Liberia" (STE 039). For another respondent, however, religion in Liberia is an exploitative tool that some religious leaders are using for personal gain and self-promotion. It is an "institutional license because they want to enrich themselves" (STE 053). In other words, such people are preying on the religious devotion of Liberians for their own non-religious ends.

Text Box 14: Role of Religion in Peacebuilding

Religion has played a key role in the peace process. Liberians are very religious. If they are not Muslim, they are Christians, so they take that passion and religion and bring it into secularism and say, you are my brother, my sister. But look at the fragile nature of peace in Liberia, it has nothing to do with religion, but to do with land, differences over resources, but it has never occurred that religion is playing a part in the conflict. Religion plays more role in resolving a lot of the conflicts than creating the conflict (STE 013).

b. Religion, Discrimination, and Coexistence

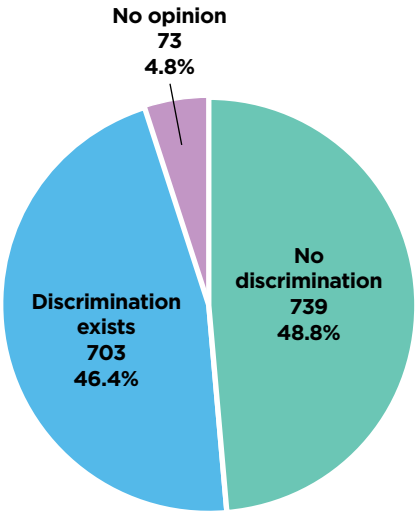
Identity-based discrimination is a major threat to social cohesion and political stability. Religious discrimination is potentially a very powerful conflict trigger,

because it touches on people's sacred values. Infringements on such beliefs often transcend racial, ethnic as well as internal and external geographic and political frontiers. Hence, to establish the degree to which religion is used as an instrument of discrimination in Liberia, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the view that in Liberia people are not discriminated against on the basis of their religion in employment, business opportunities or school admissions.

Figure 11 indicates that respondents were about evenly split on the statement that people are not discriminated against on the basis of their religion when they are looking for employment, business opportunities, or admission to schools, with 48.8% agreeing to various degrees with the statement, and 46.4% disagreeing. Cross tabulation of the responses shows that these findings are significant for the county (p=0.000) and gender categories (p=0.045).

Segregated by county, the results show that more than 60% of respondents in 6 out of the 15 counties (i.e., Grand Gedeh, Margibi, Maryland, Rivercess, River Gee and Sinoe) agreed that religious discrimination exists. Conversely, a similar percentage of respondents in five other counties (i.e., Gbarpolou, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Kru, and Nimba) either did not agree or indicated that they had no opinion on the subject (see Table 2.12B in Appendix 13). Slightly more men than women disagreed with the statement (see Table 2.12C in Appendix 13), and the results were statistically significant (p=0.045, see Table 2.12D in Appendix 13).

Figure 11: Discrimination on the basis of religion (Employment, business, and education)



KII respondents observed that historically, religious discrimination was never a problem in Liberia, as most communities hardly made any distinctions between people based on their faith. Although the settler community introduced some form of discrimination in access to employment, business opportunities, or admissions to schools, it was perceived more as a group identity–based discrimination on other grounds (racial, color, indigenous, etc.). As one respondent observed, the African-on-African apartheid system that the settlers established extended discrimination even within their own ranks, since "among them there was discrimination against the mulattoes" (STE 001) or people born of unions between the settlers and the locals.

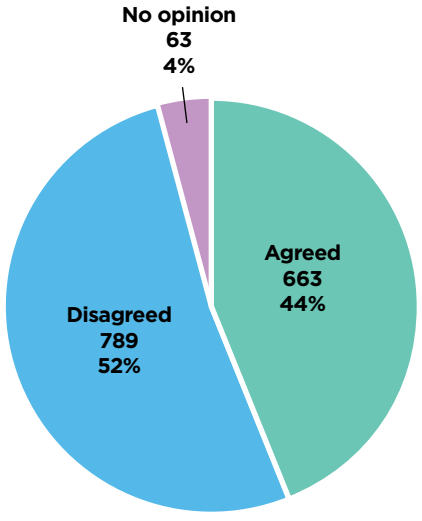
Respondents felt that the absence of religious discrimination created the space for peaceful interfaith coexistence among Liberians. In the words of one respondent, until the war "there wasn't any religious tension; there was more collaboration and cooperation in bringing peace than religious tension" (STE

13). However, the civil war introduced a religious dimension in the relationships between Liberians because various factions during the war were perceived as predominantly Muslim or Christian. The interreligious tensions that built from that period culminated in the 2004 Christian–Muslim war in which "certain communities were targeted [and people] burnt some mosques and burnt some churches" (STE 007, see also STE 10). While some respondents underplayed the religious motivations of that conflict, pointing out that it was a fight between "ex-fighters from the Charles Taylor regime who felt that they were being humiliated by LURD" (STE 14); they admitted nonetheless that "this huge LURD conflict [was a kind of] religious conflict, …although it is not direct, but we cannot isolate it from the religious dimension" (STE 14). Others pointed out that the escalation of what was essentially a personal conflict into the burning of churches and mosques epitomized the volatility of the religious factor in Liberia's conflict dynamics.

c. Use of Religion in Politics

Participants at the research planning workshop were wary that the call to "Christianize Liberia" could represent an attempt to use religion as an instrument for some political purposes, especially in the run-up to the 2017 elections. Therefore, the research sought to understand if and how religion has been used and/or could be used as a political instrument and its potential to trigger violence across the country. Accordingly, respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they would agree that in Liberia politicians do not instrumentalize interreligious differences in their campaigns.

Figure 12: Politicians do not use interreligious differences in their election campaigns



In response to this question, 52% of respondents disagreed to various degrees that politicians do not use religion in politics, and 44% of respondents agreed that politicians do use religion to canvass for votes (see Figure 12). In other words, there is a tendency for politicians in Liberia to use interreligious differences as an instrument for mobilizing votes on their side. The findings were however, statistically significant for county of interview, but not for gender. This suggests that respondents' experience of religion being used as a tool to drum up votes varies across counties. Nonetheless, the observation that religion is being instrumentalized in politics is worth some serious programing attention from the Church and its partners, especially as it seems to be a nascent development that has potential to endanger the peace of the country. The views shared by KII respondents also confirm this finding and the urgency for action.

KII respondents observed that although most of the early leaders of Liberia were devout Christians, religion was never projected into the public sphere as a political instrument until recently. They shared their fear that the pursuit of the Christianization agenda is a manifestation of the desire of some political figures to use religion as an instrument for political ends, and can become "a very, very serious problem [because] those who you consider as stakeholders and decision makers in Liberia are the people who are fueling conflicts for their own political reason, selfish reason" (STE 14). Another respondent believed that "there are hidden hands who think that by this they can exclude other people politically [so that] they can have their cake alone" (STE 16). Querying the genuineness of the intent of the proponents of the idea, a Christian respondent argued that "we do not want to hear of Christian Nation. We are already Christians… How many people in power are ready to go by the rules of Christianity?" (STE 29).

Respondents believed that the efforts to turn religion into a political instrument is the next cleavage that politicians want to use to divide and rule Liberia. In a multiparty democratic setting where the power of ethnicity as a fault line for political mobilization seems to be waning, religion seems to have become the most potent instrument for political mobilization and exclusion, if its emotive force can be evoked. Hence, in the view of respondents, the Christianization agenda has nothing to do with preserving religious values and identities; it is an attempt to instrumentalize religion for personal political gains. As one respondent summed it up: "If you ask Liberians they will tell you religion has nothing to do with this thing. The politicians only use religion to do it" (STE 20). But as evidenced in responses to the next question below, this trend is a recipe for the recurrence of violent national-level conflicts that risk drawing in fanatical religious support beyond the borders of Liberia.

d. Religion as Instigator of Violence

Respondents were asked to what extent they believed that religious differences can be a source of violent conflicts in Liberia. Table 2.12 E in Appendix 13 presents the results selected at >5 to indicate "high extent" or "very high extent" responses. In total, 63.9% of respondents believed that religion can be a source of conflict. Almost a quarter (23.3%) said that religion is a "low extent" to a "very low extent" risk; 6.2% did not believe that religion can be a source of conflict at all, and 6.6% said they could not tell.

Disaggregation of the responses by age category and gender turned out no statistically significant differences (p=0.448 and p=0.088 respectively), with significant differences emerging for county of interview and religion of respondent (p=0.000 for both). Looking at counties, only 6.7% of respondents in River Gee and 6.9% in Gbarpolou believed that religious differences can be a source of violent conflicts in Liberia. While in Grand Gedeh and Grand Kru less than 30% of surveyed believed that religion is a high to a very high risk factor for conflict, their counterparts in Bomi, Lofa, and Sinoe were split on the question. The remaining nine counties had more than 60% of their respondents indicating that they believed religious differences can pose a risk to violent conflicts in the country (see Table 2.12F in Appendix 13).

Looking at faith groups, apart from adherents of African Indigenous Religions (more than three-quarters indicated that religious differences in Liberia are not a risk factor for violent conflicts), most respondents from all other faith groups said religious differences constitute a risk factor for the outbreak of violent conflicts in Liberia. Notably, however, fewer adherents of Islam were willing to commit to that view than Christian respondents (see Table 5 below). The KII data provide some insight into the reasons behind these variations.

TABLE 5: RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES AS A CONFLICT RISK FACTOR IN LIBERIA (BY RELIGION OF RESPONDENT)

RESPONSE CATEGORY	RELIGION OF RESPONDENT							TOTAL
	1 AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION	3 ATHEIST	5 BUDDHISM	6 CHRISTIANITY	7 HINDUISM	8 ISLAM	9 OTHER (SPECIFY)	
Religion not a Risk Factor	26	0	0	457	1	62	1	547
	74.3%	0.0%	0.0%	34.5%	33.3%	42.5%	50.0%	36.1%
Religion is a Risk Factor	9	1	3	869	2	84	1	969
	25.7%	100.0%	100.0%	65.5%	66.7%	57.5%	50.0%	63.9%
Total	**35**	**1**	**3**	**1,326**	**3**	**146**	**2**	**1,516**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

KII perspectives on religion as an instigator of violence: The survey findings suggest that Liberians have different experiences and/or expectations regarding religion as an instrument for inciting violence. KII respondents explained that while religion has been at the forefront of promoting peace in Liberia during and after the war, it is also a source of conflict and even violence. AIR beliefs were seen as universalistic and accommodating of all forms of creeds and worship rituals. As one respondent explained it, "we had our own beliefs in mountains, trees, rivers, etc. For us we understand that our people were finding God and they saw God in magnificent things—in mountains, trees, rivers. Christianity came and condemned the way of life of our people" (STE 48). This non-accommodative and often adversarial method of conversion that both Christianity and Islam used, turned off some adherents of African Indigenous Religions from the belief systems of these newer faith traditions, with some adherents of AIR vowing not to interact with members of the newer faiths. Hence, "Even now there are some towns and villages [in Liberia] that have promised that a Christian Church will not go there; Muslim Religion will not go there, because they condemned Traditional Religion. Since they condemned theirs, they will not live together" (STE 050).

Second, respondents observed that within Christianity and Islam, there are perpetual fights over doctrine and turf, as different sects interpret scripture

differently. “Christians, Muslims, [and other faith traditions] are chaotic all by themselves” (STE 004), because they constantly seek to “discredit each other [so much so that] even though we are all Christians but we are not united” (STE 050). One respondent cited the different interpretations of scriptures from one church to the other and questioned how the concept of a Christian nation would work, since there is no universal agreement on Christian beliefs (STE 004). The respondent concluded that with such a state of confusion within Christianity, “it means that the whole state cannot be governed with this kind of confusion in the Christian state” (STE 004). Similar confusions within Islam were cited as well.

For these reasons, respondents believe that intra- and interreligious competitions and fights have greatly eroded the power and influence of religion in general—and the interreligious institutions in particular—in mediating peaceful resolution of conflicts. In particular, one respondent cited the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia (IRCL) and argued that “We have the IRCL and Interfaith Council but it is [interreligious] in principle. It is not a unit you say is serious when there is a conflict to be resolved. Each one there is from a group—Traditional or Christian. They all know that we have condemned each other, but we stay on the Council. So, all they do is formality” (STE 050).

Respondents also pointed out that since the end of the war religion has become a source of violent conflict due to the increase in interreligious conflict. This is “because right now the Christians and Muslims are always at loggerheads” (STE 007). The respondent referenced the Muslim–Christian war of 2004 to make the case. But another respondent argued that the 2004 conflict was never a religious war because “it was not the Christian directly involved or the Muslim directly involved” (STE 025). In the view of another respondent, conflict “was just a LURD issue between two persons”, but in the fighting they “burnt churches, burnt mosques” (STE 014). Despite downplaying the religious significance of the 2004 conflict, the same respondent remembered that “the forces of LURD were predominantly Mandingoes” (STE 014), and thus predominantly Muslim, fighting against the NPL’s mainly Christian war group. Regardless of the significance of this inference, the fact that this seemingly minor interpersonal conflict took on a religious connotation signals the very active and volatile nature of the religious factor in the embers of Liberia’s civil war, and what little effort it would take to reignite the passions of war along religious lines. It is also a signal that religion has become a powerful emotive force in Liberia, which makes it a perfect instrument for political mobilization.

The emotional and associational power of religion is also an instrument for mobilization in interethnic conflicts as well. Respondents cited the case in Lofa County, where another minor misunderstanding in 2010 mushroomed into a religious-ethnic clash between “the Mandingo tribe who are Muslim, and [the] Loma tribe, who are traditional ancestral worshippers” (STE 020). Despite the apparent noninvolvement of Christians in the dispute, when “someone called from Konia [to Voigima] to say ‘you are sitting down and the Loma have already

killed all our people in Konia', immediately the Mandingoes [in Voigima] started and attacked the churches in the Loma residential area" (STE 014). Christian churches were targeted in this conflict that did not originally involve Christians "because tension is already there and people want to use the opportunity to start another war" (STE 014). Referring to the same incident, another respondent in Voigima recounted how one of the factions "burnt the priests' house, and the church was burnt down", concluding that "I can say this city is on a time bomb [because] that situation was not resolved" (STE 050).

Respondents highlighted the danger of using religion as a mobilizing factor for settling ethnic and political disputes, especially in light of the new Christianization agenda. Attempts to institutionalize the construction of religious identities in Liberia via the constitution would entrench religion as a political instrument and, by extension, engrave interreligious conflict into Liberian politics. This is contrary to the lived experiences of Liberians, as historically Christians and Muslims have always lived together peacefully, sharing in each other's religious feasts such as Christmas, Easter, and Eid al-Fitr (STE 001, STE 002). Liberians never used religious identity to distinguish between themselves. Emphasizing the point, another respondent discussed at length the blood and familial relationships that surpass religious ties in Liberia; so much so that religious affiliations do not create identity boundaries and conflicts among Liberians; it is a subdued and subsumed identity. The respondents emphasized that this "emerging threat" (STE 001) of using the Christianization agenda to pit people who grew up together in harmony against each other is alien to the Liberian way of life. Similarly, respondent believed that the religious identity conflict, especially from the Muslim side, is partly imported with recent Muslim immigration to Liberia (STE 19).

Even though respondents could not fathom the immediate intent of the proponents of the Christianization of Liberia, they argued that Muslims are apprehensive because they do not know what will come next once that agenda is constitutionalized. As a respondent pointed out, Muslims have never complained about or resisted the informal Christianization of Liberia in which even public buses have been turned into churches, with Christian pastors preaching everywhere. Elaborating on this point, a respondent noted,

> Even in Monrovia public buses are made church. They preach inside. No one ask why should the country be Christianized? We do not know the reason. We are a Muslim group and say it cannot happen. We do not know the nature of that. …What is coming next? (STE 22)

In summary, Liberians are concerned that the Christianization agenda would escalate the already volatile interfaith relationships created during the war era. While ordinary citizens on both sides of the Christian–Muslim divide do not see a need to officially label Liberia as a Christian state, they are very apprehensive of the consequences should the idea be brought forward in a referendum, as the constitutional review process requires. Religion, once a unifier in Liberia, could become the divider if this course of action is pursued. The respondents

Text Box 15: Transposition of Imported Religious Identities

The Liberian Muslim is a family person – Liberia first. And that has been the fulcrum for our co-existence. So, people who started migrating to Liberia in the last 20 years do not understand. They have come to cause the pressure and problems [because they] do not understand the culture of relationship of Liberian Muslims and Christians, who are treated like Liberians. We have co-existed because we are a family; we are brothers and sisters. A young man will say, "I am a Christian, but my grandmother is a Muslim." He respects that… (STE 19).

voiced this warning: "If you want to nationalize religion; you want to make Liberia a Christian nation? I think it will mean a declaration of the violation of other people's rights" (STE 16). This violation of rights is expected to meet resistance from those affected, a sure recipe for stoking violent conflict along religious lines. In sum, while Liberians "do not pray for that, if it is introduced, in less than six months you will hear the guns" (STE 14). Corroborating this anticipation of violence should the Christianization agenda pass, another Christian respondent said he has started keeping record of all the proponents and agitators for the idea so that he can be ready to "show paper [to war a crime tribunal] and say that these are the proponents; these are the people who started the campaign; these are the people who voiced the campaign that called for this instability" (STE 15).

Text Box 16: Silence and Perceived Complicity of the Church

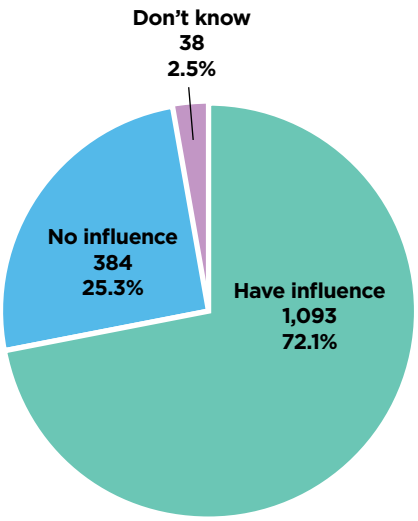
The late Archbishop Francis was a champion of justice, peace and reconciliation before his demise. Since the death of that man, the Catholic Church has been very silent on some of the issues. Elections are coming up and our Bishops are not saying anything. People are asking questions. Is it because Marcus Francis has died, so we do not have other people, who speak up for the poor, for those who are voiceless, for those who cannot say anything to the government? In other words, the Catholic Church for me it's state-friendly ...But the Church, based on what we have read, the history of the Church has been the voice of the voiceless, and the Church has been the champion on the issue of justice. So, the Church that we see nowadays is totally different from the Church that we saw, for instance during the days of the late Archbishop Emeritus Francis (STE 035).

e. Influence of Religious Leaders on Peacebuilding

Respondents were asked if faith leaders in Liberia have a strong influence on their followers that they can leverage to promote peace or nonviolent conflict resolution. Figure 13 presents the summary results. It shows that more than two-thirds of respondents agreed that religious leaders have influence on their followers in the promotion of peace. Still, about a quarter of the respondents did not agree that religious leaders in Liberia have any influence to promote peace among their fateful.

As in previous findings, differences in opinion were split along county lines. Notably, more than 70% of respondents in Gbarpolou and Grand Kru, and 56.7% in Sinoe did not agree with the statement. Eleven other counties, including Montserrado showed that more than 70% of their respondents felt that religious leaders do have strong influence on their faithful, which they can leverage to promote peace. Respondents in Nimba County were evenly split, with 52.9% agreeing that faith leaders have strong influence, while 47.1% disagreed with the view (see Table 2.12G in Appendix 13).

Figure 13: Religious leaders have influence on their followers to promote peace



KII views on the influence of religious leaders in peacebuilding: in times of political crisis, such as during civil strife, faith leaders often provide alternative national leadership to fill the leadership vacuums in the state system. It is therefore essential that they are seen as credible, competent, legitimate, and influential. During Liberia's civil war, faith leaders could deliver this message, by and large. The visibility, influence, and credibility that religious leaders enjoyed in Liberia provided the legitimacy and fuel for them to do what they did in promoting peace during and after the civil war.

They used this power to "change the minds of people" (STE 21) in ways that promoted peace. Respondent commended the role that faith leaders such as the late Archbishop Michael Francis played during civil war.

Despite these achievements, respondents believed that the potentials of religious leaders and institutions as a force for good have not been fully harnessed and utilized by the state. On the contrary, "religion is one area we have not taken into consideration even in the reconciliation process and governance process of the state... [instead of helping] ...them to institutionalize their structures we have been addressing issues on ad hoc basis" (STE 002). Consequently, the nation has failed to fully take advantage of the networks and resources of the faith-based institutions, and to learn from "how they have been able to decentralize their administration in the rebuilding of the country" (STE 002).

Respondents further observed that, instead of supporting the work of the faith-based organizations (FBOs) to promote peacebuilding and development efforts, the state has rather burdened them with taxes that they cannot pay. This comes at a time when the traditional donor support is drying up due to a confluence of external and internal factors, including donor fatigue and policy changes. Hence, FBOs do not only have to pay the taxes, they are also burdened with running their schools, clinics, and other social services that complement or, in some places, even fully compensate for the absence of government services in those sectors. But as one respondent noted, "they cannot run those things with their vehicles on empty fuel tanks" (STE 015). In the view of the respondent, if religious leaders are less visible in engaging on matters of public concern within the public sphere, it is precisely because of the financial constraints and competing demands on their limited resources:

> I cannot continue calling [on] the Archbishop to leave his office and come for a meeting here on serious issues of state that have to be handled by government... if you cannot give them subsidy; if you had given the necessary support to their institutions so that they are not begging, then they can come and help the government to see to the reconciliation efforts that need to take place. (STE 015)

Despite acknowledging their important contribution to the peace process, some respondents see the peacebuilding role of Christian churches as following a double standard. They question why the Church was silent when the Americo-Liberians were in power, but suddenly found a voice to champion issues of justice and peace when a native politician, Samuel Doe, came to power. They saw the same tour de force play out again when Charles Taylor came to power, in contrast to the current tenure of President Johnson Sirleaf:

> In the 1990s the churches were silent. But when the inexperienced aborigines began to be president then the Church became very vocal. Even the Catholic Church was more vocal than in the past. When Doe was President it was very vocal; when the settlers were in charge the churches were silent...that was a contradiction. (STE 23)

Building on this view, other respondents accused religious leaders of taking partisan sides when they joined the calls for President Taylor to resign. One respondent expressed disappointment when religious leaders went into the streets, asking for the resignation of the president, noting that "when they entered the streets, asking for the resignation of an incumbent [president], I believe they were taking sides" (STE 044). For this reason, a respondent questioned the perceived double standards of Christians at the level of practice of faith, wondering whether Christians live by the tenets of their faith (STE 29).

Irrespective of the verdict on the effectiveness of religious leaders in promoting peace, respondents expressed consensus on the strong influence that religious leaders wield on their faithful and in the public sphere. Among ordinary people, religious leaders and institutions have more legitimacy, influence, and credibility than the state and its functionaries (STE 002). And, because of their strong religious beliefs, Liberians look up to their faith leaders to provide alternative leadership when the state system fails. When the country suffered a leadership vacuum during the war, both the locals and international community looked up to the religious leaders to fill the void.

So crucial and influential were these roles that on several occasions, religious leaders had to resist public pressure to interject themselves in politics and assume formal leadership roles in managing the affairs of state. For instance, Archbishop Michael Francis was asked to be interim president for the country, with Sheik Kafumba Konneh as vice president. Both religious leaders declined the offer (STE 015). Nonetheless, Liberians looked up to them to be the voice of the voiceless and the moral compass guiding the state. Explaining the choice of the two faith leaders not to take up the mantle of leading the state during its direst need, one respondent, a senior citizen, felt that instead of taking on such assignments, religious leaders prefer to act behind the scenes:

> The role religious leaders have played is to be a non-state actors that always mediate and calm the struggles for leadership, calls for calm, and peaceful interaction among parties and individual actors. That is where it stops. Religious leaders do not go beyond that. Religion will not select a leader and will also not accept to be a leader. The role of religion has always been non-state and will remain non-state. (STE 015)

In recent times, however, some citizens are experiencing a crisis of confidence in their faith leaders, given the perceptions of commercialized religion or religious capitalism in which some "religious leaders are getting too rich whilst the church people are poor" (STE 029). Others believe that religious leaders are not consistent and sincere in their engagement with the state in matters of securing peace and promoting authentic development for all. Emphasizing this point, one respondent, a religious cleric, cited the following case. His diocese covers all the five counties in the southeast, which is a deprived area in all spheres. However, as he points out, instead of speaking up for the voiceless citizens, "some Church leaders …stay aloof when they should not do so [for] whatever affects the people, affects the Church. They should not be afraid of being arrested. They should air the views of the people" (STE 039).

In summary, the perception of selective engagement or non-engagement of religious leaders and their institutions with past and present governments greatly dents their credibility to serve as voices of reason. It also weakens the influence they can exert, individually and collectively, to steer the nation away from conflicts and towards peace. For faith leaders to be effective in their role as peacebuilders (individually or collectively), they have to reposition themselves as neutral arbiters between the state and its citizens.

Text Box 17: Religion: a Source of Peace, not Conflict

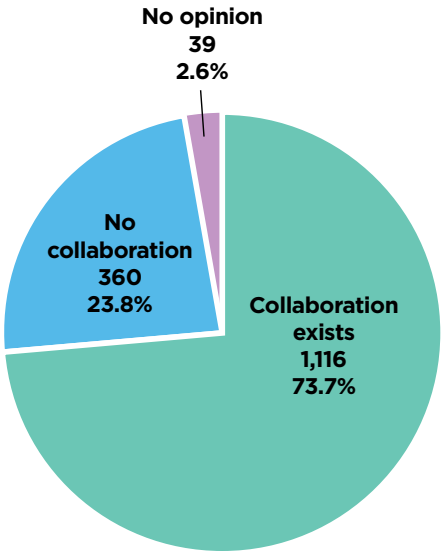
Our religion plays a very significant point in bringing peace to that area. The Priest, Imam, all play a role. That is one of the peculiar things in the Liberian civil war. There wasn't any religious tension; there was more collaboration and cooperation in bringing peace than religious tension. It was very absurd that recently, I will call them some Christian fanatics believe that Liberia should be Christianized. Some of us Christians believe God does not need to be constitutionalized, that God is by faith and you can practice it. This is based on the fact that many countries with centralized religions have more conflict than other countries (STE 13)

f. Interfaith Collaboration for Peace

Despite the question about the neutrality and consistency of religious leaders in providing leadership for peace, respondents still had hope that religious leaders can be effective collaborative peacebuilders. In response to the question "To what extent would you agree that in Liberia religious leaders of all faiths and denominations can work together to ensure that conflicts are resolved peacefully", 73.7% of respondents indicated that interfaith collaboration for peace among religious leaders is possible, while 23.8% felt it is not (see Figure 14).

Disaggregation of the responses by age category and gender did not produce statistically significant results ($p>0.05$), but disaggregation by counties did ($p=0.000$). Table 2.12H in Appendix 13 shows that apart from Grand Kru (with 38.7%) and Nimba County (with 46.5%), all other counties had more than 60% of their respondents agreeing that religious leaders of all faiths and denominations in Liberia can work together to ensure that conflicts are resolved peacefully.

Figure 14: Possibilities for interfaith collaboration for peace



KII perspectives on interfaith collaboration for peace: The differences in experiences of the collaborative role of religious leaders in working for peace may reflect the variations in access to communication on what goes on at the national levels. Notably, respondents in Nimba and Grand Kru cited their disconnect from national news networks due to the weak or absent telephone, radio, and television signals and linkages with national networks. While Nimba has witnessed improved road and other communication connections with Monrovia in recent times, due ongoing infrastructural development, "Grand Kru has no access to Monrovia [because] there is no road network" (STE 039). Overall, however, respondents in the key informant interviews frequently credited the collaborative work of religious leaders with the internal and external track II diplomacy as an important contribution to peace in the country. This interfaith mediation effort "brought

together both Christians and Muslims" (STE 027; see also STE 28) to work for peace. The coalition of religious leaders from all the mainstream Christian churches and the National Muslim Council "are the ones who mediated from faction to faction to make them to come together to listen to the international community [...] to allow them to be able to meet on a dialogue table, to even come up to give them amnesty to be able to go about taking political positions" (STE 015). In the view of a respondent who was a founding member of the Interfaith Mediation Committee, "when Muslims and Christians came together, that was our strength" (STE 019; see also STE 034). That strength, according to another respondent, manifested in the following ways:

> When the NPFL entered the country, their first target was the Muslims. At the time, we had a Charismatic leader, Sheik Kafumba Konneh, who felt that although the conflict had a religious tone, we had to subdue that. Otherwise, the country will go into ethnic war. So, he joined with the Christian community and established what is now called the Inter-Religious Council. It was the interfaith mediation committee that went on air and cleared that issue—that the war in Liberia is not a religious war. From there, they moved to Charles Taylor, moved to Samuel Doe, and through their intervention they encouraged ECOMOG to intervene in Liberia. A lot of diplomacy was done. (STE 14, see also STE 034; STE 050; and STE 055)

Religious leaders continued to play a crucial role in the post-conflict peacebuilding process. Three religious leaders—Sheik Kafumba Konneh, Bishop Adolf Kola and Rev. Freeman—served on the TRC when it was established. Other religious leaders could cross faith and denominational lines to preach peace to different groups of Liberians. As one Christian respondent put it,

> when I go to the mosque to talk to people I must stand, and the people receive us. They are not going to say you are not one of us. They are open to listen to what we have to say, and how they can form part of our activities. When I go to the church they receive me. It is a kind of what I see everybody struggling to contribute towards it. So, religion is contributing an important role. Religion and peacebuilding, there is a strong link between them. (STE 17)

Respondents, however, noted that this interfaith collaboration for peace is now under threat as the "issue of Christianization is causing serious problems for the Inter-Religious Council; [so much so that if not resolved] the Christian will not call the Muslim for discussion" (STE 14). Others see religious leaders and institutions as playing firefighting roles—they are not proactively engaged on the issues of conflict; the only time they will come out is when there is problem (STE 034). This, perhaps, is what prompted one respondent to conclude that "there is this Inter-Religious Council, which has not made any impact in terms of peacebuilding" (STE 24).

In sum, religion is viewed as a double-edged sword because it "could be a force for peace and could cause conflict" (STE 016). It can be the vessel for building social cohesion as well as an instrument for dividing and casting

Liberians into identity molds that hitherto were imperceptible in the society. While the positive elements have been used to support the search for peace during the civil war, in the postwar era they are in the background, largely because religion seems to have been crowded out of the public sphere in the postwar democratic dispensation. Where it has been highlighted as a key ingredient in the political life of the country, it is being used as an instrument to redefine identities exasperating the risk of political marginalization of non-Christian religious minorities in the country. Respondents consider this Christianization agenda as a high-risk factor for the recurrence of violent conflict in the country.

2.13 Culture, Tradition, Customs, and Peace

Culture, like religion, is an important determinant of a society's conflict vulnerability. It can either promote or inhibit peace, especially in multicultural settings. A culture of peace or violence is the product of the customs, traditions, belief systems, and values that prescribe attitudes, behaviors, and practices that promote violent or nonviolent approaches to managing conflicts. Actors and institutions in a cultural setting take their guidance from the norms and rules of engagement that the culture prescribes. A clash of cultures is a recipe for conflict while cultural similarities provide possible connectors for peace. Liberia is a multicultural country with a population of under four million people split across 16 different indigenous ethnic groups. To ascertain the extent to which the cultures of the 16 ethnic groups in Liberia, separately or collectively, promote or hinder the attainment of peace, the study used the following six variables for the assessment:

- Extent to which cultural values and traditions encourage acceptance and incorporation of strangers in Liberian communities (accommodation of strangers);
- Role of traditional leaders in promoting accommodation of strangers;
- Role of culture in the promotion of violent conflict resolution practices;
- Role of culture in the promotion of peace;
- Presence of cultural sanctions that promote conflict or peace;
- Role of traditional rulers in prevention of violent conflicts.

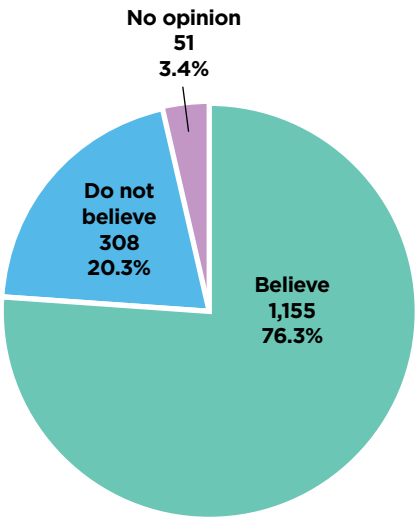
a. Cultural Accommodation of Strangers

Asked whether the values and traditions of all ethnic groups in Liberia welcome strangers and treat them on equal terms as their fellow citizens, more than 76% of respondents said that they believed this to be true, while 20.3% felt the opposite (see Figure 15).

Disaggregated by county, 65.59% of respondents from Nimba County (n=186) said they did not believe that all ethnic groups in Liberia are welcoming to strangers, and 10.22% answered "no opinion". In other words, 75.81%

of respondents from Nimba County did not support the statement that all ethnic groups in Liberia have cultures that welcome people from other cultures. Similarly, 45.16% of respondents of Grand Kru expressed a skeptical attitude—25.81% had "no opinion" and 19.35% "did not believe" that all ethnic groups in the country welcome people of other cultures (see Table 2.13A in Appendix 13). With a p=.0000, the expressed differences of opinion are statistically significant, representing a shared feeling among the populations of these two counties. Further research is be required to clarify the factors that created these divergences in opinion. The findings from the key informant interviews provide additional pointers on this issue.

Figure 15: Indigenous cultures in Liberia accommodate strangers



KII perspectives on cultural accommodation of strangers: KII respondents observed that in general, Liberian societies welcome strangers. Speaking in the case of Nimba County, a respondent recalled that "traditionally, our people are hospitable. They accept strangers and treat them like angels. They will give you their daughters; they will feed you until you get a farm for yourself" (STE 50). This hospitality was extended to all irrespective of ethnicity or religion. This is what enabled the indigenous ethnic groups to welcome and incorporate settler communities into their society. In many places "the chief and elders would give their daughters, their sisters to welcome the strangers …they gave birth to children until they multiplied …and soon the strangers became indigenous because their mothers are from the land" (STE 50). Respondents noted, however, that the civil war heightened the realization that the social bonds built through this incorporation of strangers faltered when the settler and host ethnic groups found themselves on different sides of the war. The broken trust has turned into outright confrontation as certain ethnic groups—especially the Mandingoes, who are considered settlers in many parts of Liberia—found themselves chased out and debarred from returning to locations they called home for decades. Nimba, is a hotspot for the indigenous–settler conflict, as the indigenous "booted out" the Mandingo settlers after the war (STE 020).

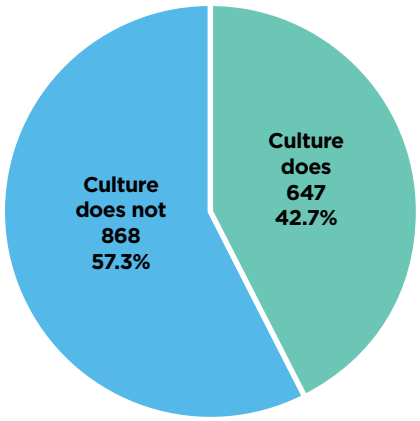
In sum, while historically most cultures in Liberia may have been open to accepting and even incorporating members of other ethnic groups in their settlements, the experiences of the war era seems to have whittled down this propensity to accommodate strangers. Counties that were hotspots during the conflict demonstrate persistent mutual distrust among the local and settler communities. These limitations on interethnic engagements and cultural exchanges have dire implications for the efforts to rebuild social cohesion in the country.

b. Role of Culture in the Promotion of Violent Conflict Resolution Practices

The study asked respondents the extent to which they agreed that the cultures of the various ethnic groups in Liberia promote violence as a means to resolve conflicts. A little less than half (42.7%) of respondents agreed to various extents that the cultures of the ethnic groups in Liberia promote the use of violence for conflict resolution, while 57.3% said they do not (see Figure 16).

While no significant differences were noted for age categories and gender (p=0.588 and p=0.883, respectively), responses for different counties and religions turned out statistically significant results (p=0.000 and p=0.033, respectively). Table 2.13B in Appendix 13 shows that more than 60% of respondents in Gbarpolou, Lofa, Margibi, Maryland, and River Gee subscribed to the view that the cultures of ethnic groups in Liberia do promote the use of violence in resolving conflicts. Respondents in Bong, Grand Kru and Grand Gedeh were closely split on the issue. In contrast, in Bomi, Grand Bassa, Montserrado, and Nimba counties, more than 60% of respondents shared that the cultures of ethnic groups in Liberia do not promote violence as a tool for resolving conflicts. Disaggregated by religion, while the vast majority (80%) of AIR practitioners said culture does not promote the use of violence in resolving conflicts, Christians and Muslims were internally split on the issue, with more respondents leaning towards the view that culture does promote the use of violence for conflict resolution (with 57.1% and 55.5%, respectively, see Table 2.13C in Appendix 13). The key informant interviews provided additional insights into the differences in opinion across religious and regional lines.

Figure 16: The cultures of Liberia promote the use of violence in resolving conflicts



KII views on role of culture in the promotion of violent conflict resolution practices: While most cultures in Liberia have beliefs, values, and institutions that promote peace, respondents acknowledged that there are aspects of culture across all ethnic groups that promote violence. First, most ethnic cultures in Liberia are male-centered and, therefore, support male dominance in society (STE 16). Even within the male group, status is based on demonstration of male prowess: "our culture looks for... who is the most man? Not, who are the men alone? You've got to look at who is the most man, then who are the second men and then you come to where are all the men" (STE 15). In other words, the capacity to display aggression, bravery, and courage, especially when in contest with other men is prized over calm and submissive behavior. This does not only encourage recourse to violence in the competition for power; it also creates the conditions for unhealthy rivalries that can easily transform into violent conflicts. This creates a culture of violence in the

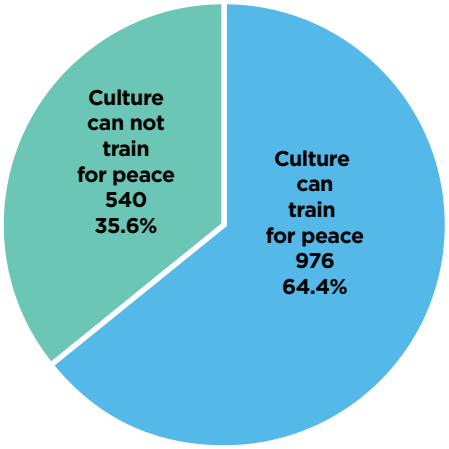
community (STE 007), since the display of force is deemed an appropriate tool for the assertion of one's might and power.

For this reason, respondents believe that the Liberian culture has become a weapon that the rich and powerful leaders in both the traditional and the modern state system can use for their purposes. Respondents observed that politicians often infiltrate and hijack culture—especially the sacred and occultist dimensions of culture—to advance their political agendas. According to the respondents, this is a persistent trait of politics of the country because Liberia remains a "magical" state, where belief in occult practices and supernatural powers permeates all levels. Recourse to such powers in the competition of asserting oneself as "the biggest man" is seen as acceptable (STE 16), which further highlights why ethnic cultures in Liberia are a crucial factor in the conflict dynamics.

c. Role of Culture in the Promotion of Peace

The study asked respondents to identify the extent to which the culture and traditions of all ethnic groups in Liberia can train their members for peace. Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents felt to a "high" of "very high" extent that the cultures and traditions in Liberian can provide their members with skills in peaceful resolution of conflicts. However, more than one-third of all respondents disagreed with this view (see Figure 17).

Figure 17: Role of culture in the promotion of peace



Except for the age categories (p=0.534), cross tabulation by county of interview, gender, and religion all yielded p values lower than 0.05, implying statistically significant differences. By county of interview, only 9.4% of respondents in Nimba and less than one-third in Grand Kru (29%) agreed that Liberia's ethnic cultures train their adherents for peaceful resolution of conflicts (p=0.000, see Table 2.13D in Appendix 13). Looking at gender disaggregation (p=0.041), women were slightly more likely than men (with 67.5% compared to 62.2%) to agree that Liberia's ethnic cultures socialize their members in non-violent conflict resolution (see Table 2.13E and 2.13F in Appendix 13). According to religion, 70.5% of Muslim and 65.1% of Christian said that Liberia's ethnic cultures do promote peaceful conflict resolution, in stark contrast to only 11.4% of African Indigenous Religion practitioners who shared this view (Table 2.13G in Appendix 13). The chi-square p=0.000 value means that this finding is statistically significant (see Table 2.13H in Appendix 13). The statistically significant differences in several categories indicate that multiple factors account for these differences in opinion. The key informant interviews help shed light on some of these issues.

KII perspectives on role of culture in the promotion of peace: KII respondents said that the various cultures in Liberia have played "very cardinal roles" (STE 19) in the peace process in the country. Most Liberians relate to their culture and traditions, and chiefs played a prominent role in disarmament, especially in cases where distrust between the armed combatants and the state stalled the process. In many instances, the armed groups would only deal with the traditional leaders to whom they were willing to give up their "guns because they did not trust UNMIL. They gave the guns to their traditional leaders. Some of them had lived in the bush for so long that the Chiefs had to go and take them" and bring them home (STE 19).

Even before the civil war, "culture played a significant role" (STE 004) in the resolution of conflicts because traditional conflict resolution processes focused "on restitution instead of retribution" (STE 001). As a result, when decisions were made in the conflict resolution process, everyone accepted the outcomes. Because of the legitimacy of these processes at the community level, "you do not see a spillover or disappointment [after the settlements]. Everybody goes in accordance with what was being said by either the Chiefs or the Zoes" (STE 004).

Respondents noted, however, that the conflict resolution and peacebuilding power of cultures in Liberia is eroding for a number of reasons. First, with the advent of the modern state system, imported legal frameworks and adversarial conflict resolution processes were transposed and imposed on the local cultures. No attempt was made to incorporate the traditional legal system into the modern, imported one. To date, no effort has been made to "resolve the dual system of our legal system—African Traditional Legal system" and that of the modern state (STE 004). This was seen as a shortcoming of the political leaders who lacked the "political will to listen to the Traditional People and the Religious People" in order to develop common grounds for mediating conflict using the best values from the two systems. Had they taken these steps, "we will not have problems in Liberia" (STE 014). Second, respondents lamented that

> our culture, it has been desecrated. The effects of the war and the coming of the settlers, and many other interventions, have been to gradually diminish the influence of culture in the lives of our people. The war disintegrated and desecrated our culture. Since then we have not been able to express it in our national life. (STE 002)

Respondents called for the reintroduction of relevant cultural values and processes, in particular the use of the indigenous alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms instead of the adversarial formal legal system. To underscore the argument, a respondent cited this scenario: "I am in this community and take you to court over a piece of land. Do you think there will be peace? No. But if we take a different direction from that perspective we could come to some form of negotiation" (STE 13). Another respondent noted that "unless we can reintroduce the relevance of culture of our lives, and the positive nature of it to continue to build stability, we will not go anywhere" (STE 002).

While agreeing that culture plays an important role in the prevention and/or resolution of conflict in Liberia, some respondents questioned whether there is consensus on a shared culture among Liberians: "What makes us Liberian?" (STE 17). This question is certainly pertinent among the youth, but also older people are not sure what makes them Liberians, the respondent pointed out. A homogeneous Liberian culture cannot be assumed to exist, even within the same ethnic groups, given the intergenerational differences in experiences and perspectives. For instance, the youth who have grown up knowing nothing but violence and have no stake in society (STE 17) have a different approach to addressing disagreements with other people (STE 15; STE 19). Their culture cannot be that of the rest of society because "they do not belong to the [local] culture; they do not belong to the West; the churches do not have a grip on them; the schools do not have a grip on them; and the culture does not have a grip on them" (STE 20).

In sum, while respondents recognized the important role of culture in the promotion of peace, they also acknowledged that there is no homogenous culture. In particular, the culture of the young people, most of whom were born and raised in the war era, is not founded on the values, beliefs, norms, and practices of the traditional Liberian society. Instead, the youth are coming into working life and other public spaces with the attitude that they know best—a reflection of the culture of war. This disconnect poses a significant challenge to peacebuilding efforts: the young people have to be "reprogramed" to relearn traditional Liberian values and the virtues of peace and respect for human life.

The ambivalent role of culture in conflict and peace: A cross tabulation of responses to the questions whether culture promotes peace and whether culture promotes violence was carried out to determine to what degree respondents believed that culture is both an instrument of peace and a weapon for war (see Table 6 below). In all, 60.3% of respondents who said culture promotes the use of violence in resolving conflicts also agreed to a very high extent that the culture of all ethnic groups in Liberia can train their adherents to be peaceful. Similarly, 38.2% of respondents who subscribed to the view that cultures in Liberia promote the use of violence also agreed to a high extent that these cultures have the potential to train their adherents to be peaceful. In other words, about one-third (28.7% or 435) of all respondents in the survey believes that culture has an ambivalent role as a promoter of peace and instigator of violence at the same time. This finding is statistically significant (p=0.000).

TABLE 6: CULTURE PROMOTES VIOLENCE VS. CULTURE PROMOTES PEACE (FILTERED AT ≥6.5)

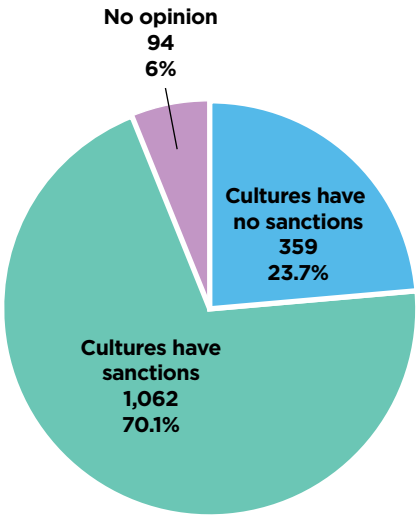
CULTURE PROMOTES VIOLENCE (FILTERED AT ≥ 6.5)	CULTURE PROMOTES PEACE						TOTAL
	CAN'T TELL	NOT AT ALL	VERY LOW EXTENT	LOW EXTENT	HIGH EXTENT	VERY HIGH EXTENT	
Does not Promote Violence	63	56	67	141	429	112	868
	79.7%	67.5%	59.8%	53.2%	61.8%	39.7%	57.3%
Promotes Violence	16	27	45	124	265	170	647
	20.3%	32.5%	40.2%	46.8%	38.2%	60.3%	42.7%
Total	**79**	**83**	**112**	**265**	**694**	**282**	**1,515**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

In sum, the findings above present cultural influences in Liberia as a double-edged sword that can promote both peace or conflict. The KII responses provided some background on the historical and contemporary views how culture can be turned into a weapon of war or an instrument of peace in Liberia. Two additional aspects of ethnic cultures in Liberia provide further insights and guidance on developing programs to advance rebuilding peace. These are the sanctions and rewards as well as the role of local authority figures, specifically chiefs, in promoting peace.

d. Presence of Cultural Sanctions that promote Conflict or Peace

To determine whether there are any cultural deterrents to the use of violence in resolving disputes, the study asked respondents to rate the extent to which the cultures and traditions of all ethnic groups in Liberia have strong sanctions that they can use against members who stir up violence or breach public peace. In total, 70.1% of respondents said they believed that all cultures in Liberia have sanctions to deter the use of violence in resolving disputes. About one-quarter of respondents believed the contrary (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: Presence of cultural sanctions that promote conflict or peace



Cross tabulation of the summarized responses with county of interview and religion produced significant results. For county of interview, the major differences are in Nimba County where only 16.6% of the respondents said all cultures in Liberia do have sanctions that deter the use of violence to resolve problems (see Table 2.131 in Appendix 13). Along religious

lines, practitioners of African Indigenous Religions and Hinduism felt that the cultures in Liberia do not have sanctions that deter people against the use of violence to resolve disputes (with 68.6% and 66.7%, respectively). A higher percentage of Muslim respondents agreed that cultural sanctions exist, compared to Christian respondents (see Table 2.13J in Appendix 13). The key informant interviews provide several reasons for the noted differences in opinion.

KII views on presence of cultural sanctions that promote conflict or peace: KII respondents indicated that indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms originally had very strong sanctions that secured compliance of citizens with the outcomes of dispute resolution processes (STE 25, STE 004). However, the 14 years of civil war did not only destroy the cultural foundations of society, harmony, and the rule of law (STE 19)—they also destroyed the cultural foundations for peacebuilding as well. The culture of community, which emphasized social harmony and good relationships "of people caring, of respect, is all gone. The war wiped it out. There is no respect for elders. There is no respect for authority either. That was all destroyed by the war [and] …it's hard to get back to those values" (STE 011, STE 039). Consequently, respect for elders and authority—the basis for the legitimacy of chiefs and elders to invoke and enforce customary sanctions against warmongers or to preside over the indigenous conflict resolution processes—is almost completely eroded away. Therefore, chiefs and elders no longer have the power that customs and traditions once vested in them to promote peaceful coexistence. With traditional culture significantly undermined and downgraded, respondents remarked that "I see no role that culture is playing" (STE 007) in conflict resolution. The possibility to buy justice in the courts (i.e., corruption) makes cultural values and norms, and the associated traditional conflict resolution processes, irrelevant: "when I look at these things, it is like the person (the offender or potential trouble maker) sees you [and] because they have the cash, so they can do anything to anyone and feel safe. When it gets to the law, they go and pay" (STE 007).

In contrast, one respondent cited the use of sanctions such as "banishment in addressing grievous crimes [as some of the cultural] ways of settling conflict and disputes" (STE 002). Another respondent, described the spiritual dimension of the cultural sanctions and rewards systems, arguing that "the cultural things (i.e., sanctions) are often hidden… we do not understand why. We apply all the scientific methods [to resolving conflicts] and they are not working" (STE 20). The respondent gave the example of the Mandingos and Lomas, who regularly swore not to shed each other's blood but broke their promise numerous times during the war. The violation of this oath has had spiritual implications on the physical world. The respondent attributes the intractability of some conflicts to the failure of the parties "to go back and atone for those things [that have been dishonored] …from time to time, the [violence would] blow up because, the traditional, cultural, spiritual [aspect] has been ignored" (STE 20).

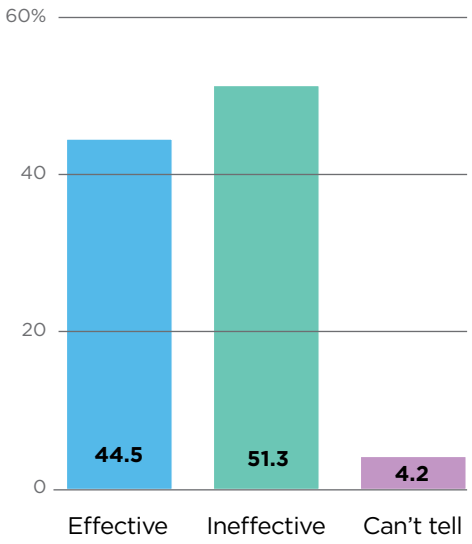
Buttressing the spiritual dimensions of traditional sanctions and rewards against violence, several respondents decried the decline of the Poro and Sande cultural education system, which once instilled these values in the communities. The strict disciplinary codes were held in such high regard, that non-initiates actively sought the training. A respondent recalled how non-natives seeking the office of president "in order to integrate or become acceptable to the interior people, joined the Poro" (STE 20). Emphasizing the importance of these traditional education systems for instilling values and discipline in all ethnic groups in Liberia, another respondent recounted the situations in Bomi and other counties where, because of the time overlap between formal schools and the Poro, parents preferred to take their children out of school to attend the Poro sessions: "people are rather taking Poro more importantly than formal education" (STE 55). A lady respondent with a legal background corroborated the higher premium placed on the Poro and Sande education systems than on the formal, Western education system. She argued that her traditional training was more important than the Western education she received (STE 18). For these reasons, some have advocated the integration of the values of the traditional education system into the formal one. Alternatively, it "should be held during a time frame when the students actually are on vacation. When schools are in session, the Poro and Sande activities should not take place" (STE 55). This would help mainstream the traditional education system, demystify it, and enable it to contribute important social cohesion and moral values in the nation-building effort.

In brief, respondents believed that the customs and traditions of most ethnic groups in Liberia have sanctions and rewards that can be used to promote good inter- and intragroup behaviors and peaceful coexistence. However, the gradual erosion of the foundations of these moral tools—during and in the aftermath of the wars—has weakened their applicability as viable instruments of peace. Respondents, however, believe that there is room for reviving and incorporating these cultural values to promote peace and reconciliation. They often contain sacred and spiritual dimensions that fit better with the local worldviews and are, therefore, more acceptable than Western dispute resolution mechanism. Reviving these cultural values, however, would require rebuilding the capacity of their custodians—the chiefs and their courts of elders.

e. Role of traditional leaders in promoting Inclusiveness

The study sought to ascertain the effectiveness of Liberia's traditional rulers in fulfilling the role of peacebuilder. In most of rural Africa, state services and bodies have only a limited presence, and chiefs often represent the only legitimate authority figure for maintaining social order. They are also the gatekeepers for visiting groups and the facilitators of processes of accommodation, inclusion or even incorporation of strangers as well as other marginalized groups into mainstream society. In most cases, chiefs are also the custodians of the customs and traditions of their community. They have the duty to make and enforce rules that conform to and affirm the community's way of life. The latter function is often regarded as sacred, linking the dead, the living, and the unborn.

Figure 19: The role of traditional leaders in promoting inclusiveness



Respondents were asked to indicate how effective traditional leaders have been in ensuring that different ethnic, political, and religious groups living within their jurisdictions feel at home. Figure 19 shows that respondents were split in their view: 51% of them believed that traditional leaders are ineffective in this task, while 44.5% said they were effective.

Disaggregated by gender, age category, and county of interview, the observed differences were statistically significant for age category and county but not for gender (p=0.912). Table 7 below shows that while more than 50% of respondents 55 years or older thought that traditional rulers are effective in promoting inclusive communities, more than 50% of respondents in the younger age bracket 18-54 did not believe that the traditional rulers are effective (p=0.028). There is an age gap in the perceptions of traditional rulers, with more older than younger Liberians finding that traditional authority figures create conditions that welcome and accommodate strangers.

TABLE 7: EFFECTIVENESS OF TRADITIONAL RULERS IN PROMOTING INCLUSIVENESS

LEVEL OF ASSESSMENT	AGE CATEGORY OF RESPONDENTS					TOTAL
	18-35 YRS.	36-54 YRS.	55-71 YRS.	72-88 YRS.	89 YRS. AND OVER	
Not Effective	350	310	59	4	0	723
	57.1%	57.9%	49.6%	26.7%	0.0%	56.3%
Effective	263	225	60	11	2	561
	42.9%	42.1%	50.4%	73.3%	100.0%	43.7%
Total	**613**	**535**	**119**	**15**	**2**	**1,284**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Table 2.13K in Appendix 13 presents the cross tabulation results with county of interview. It shows that while respondents in six counties (Bomi, Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Lofa, and River Gee) said that traditional leaders were effective in ensuring inclusion of strangers in their communities, in a set

of seven counties (Gbarpolou, Grand Kru, Margibi, Maryland, Nimba, River Gee, and Sinoe) respondents either had no opinion on the questions or felt that traditional rulers were ineffective in fulfilling this role. Respondents in Grand Gedeh and Montserrado counties were closely split on the issue. The difference in opinions reflect the different experiences of respondents in their home counties, as further clarified by the KII responses.

KII perspectives on role of traditional leaders in promoting inclusiveness: Despite the localized challenges of incorporation and social cohesion in places such as Nimba, Grand Gedeh, and Lofa, among others, respondents observed that traditional leaders in Liberia continue to champion the creation of spaces to accommodate diversity, especially on the religious front as "the custodians of the culture of the people" (STE 027). At the community levels, chiefs were the ones who welcomed strangers, gave them land to settle on, and often provided them with wives, if they were male (as indicated earlier in this report).

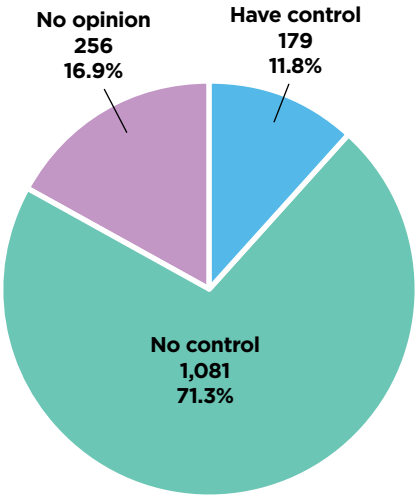
In the current era, though weakened by the past conflict, the chiefs are slowly reclaiming their place in the public domain and helping create more inclusive societies, locally and nationally. At the local level, respondents indicated that chiefs have convening powers that enable them to bring people under their jurisdiction together on communal issues, irrespective of their diverse identities, which can help contain divisive disputes. Hence, even government agencies have recognized the importance of this function, pointing out that the chieftaincy institution "solves a lot of problems [because] when we use the chiefs we find that the traditional systems are able to maintain peace and security" (STE 001). At the national level, respondents cited the recent case where, in response to the agitations over the Christianization agenda, the National Traditional Council "unanimously condemned the Christianization of Liberia. They said there is no need for that. We have been living peacefully in Liberia for more than a century. There have never been any religious conflicts. So, there is no need for that" (STE 014). The Council's firm stance on the issue is a testimony to the openness of traditional leaders to accommodate diversity among Liberians, according to the respondents.

f. Role of Traditional Rulers in preventing Violent Conflicts

Persons vested with traditional authority and power perform the valuable societal task of enforcing cultural values and norms. In most African cultural settings, including Liberia, traditional rulers or chiefs fulfill this function of maintaining social harmony and peaceful coexistence. Hence, the study sought to explore to what extent respondents believed that traditional rulers have strong control over members of their ethnic groups and can use this influence to prevent outbursts of violence against other ethnic groups. As indicated in Figure 20, 71.3% of respondents believed that traditional rulers have no control over their subjects. Incidentally, more respondents chose "no opinion" (16.9%) than agreed that traditional rulers exercise moral control (11.8%)**.**

Disaggregation of the responses by age category and gender did not yield statistically significant results. Table 2.13L in Appendix 13 shows that only Nimba County had a higher percentage (57%) of respondents who believed traditional rulers in Liberia have strong control over their subjects and can use this to prevent violent conflicts. In Montserrado County, 15.1% believed that traditional rulers have this control and can use it, while the remaining 13 counties all reported less than 10% support for this view.

Figure 20: Role of traditional rulers in preventing violent conflicts



Looking at religion, adherents of African Indigenous Religions were nearly evenly split in their responses. While 57.1% believed that traditional rulers have strong control, 42.9% did not. Respondents of all the other faith traditions largely believed that traditional rulers do not have the control and power to prevent their subjects from going to war (see Table 2.13M in Appendix 13).

KII views on the role of traditional rulers in preventing violent conflicts: KII respondents noted that, despite their diminished authority and respect, chiefs still "wield a lot of traditional authority in the villages and towns" (STE 16), especially in places where the presence and operations of the state are scant or non-existent. In such cases, citizens hold strong beliefs "in some of those traditional things [i.e., sacred and spiritual powers vested in chiefs] and this enables chiefs to use anti-democratic means to secure compliance from their subjects" (STE 16). In such settings, the chiefs and their councils of elders still play important roles in preventing conflicts at the local levels. This is because in the villages "people obey the chiefs; [what] the chief says you must obey" (STE 16). For this reason, the traditional alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approach still fills an important need gap in resolving or preventing conflicts, especially since "our criminal justice system has many, many challenges" (STE 27).

On the national level, respondents expressed mixed feelings on the reemerging prominence of chiefs in the national public realm through the formation of the National Council of Chiefs. While some felt that it gives them voice, visibility, and a foothold on the national stage, enabling chiefs to interface with the national governance structures on behalf of their people, others felt that the council is a tool for political subjugation and patronage. In the opinion of one respondent, "now they have the National Traditional Council, which is financed and paid by government. I call it direct invasion for giving them autonomy. If you want to put them on pay roll, we should have made laws and make them autonomous. But I am not sure that is the case" (STE 16). In the view of a respondent associated with the chieftaincy institution in Lofa County, through such systems of patronage, politicians can use chiefs to win elections and

then dump them afterward, with little or no support to [help] them function in their duties (STE 47, also see STE 37). Decrying the neglect and abuse of the chieftaincy institution, a respondent in Lofa County who also happened to be a chief argued that, rather than using the chiefs as objects of political patronage, the political leaders should

> promote chieftaincy. Our salary is too small. Again, even I who controls the district, even a small motorcycle, I don't have. I have to walk each time when they call me somewhere like Krahn to determine a traditional case, the little money they give me to go and settle that. I cannot say "Government has not paid me, so I will not go". No. I am taking care of my people. Transportation is lacking. When they make confusion, I have to go there to make peace. …I take my own money and go there to make peace. That is why I suggest they should help us (STE 47).

While chiefs may be active players in preventing conflicts, one respondent felt that chiefs are often the originators of conflicts. This is because "traditional leaders who should be politically neutral, are often not; they seem to be neutral, but technically they take sides" (STE 16). They tend to "shower praises on political leaders… [I] think there is something wrong [there]" (STE 16). Chiefs are also central to the land dispute question because they have, in many places, appropriated and privatized communal lands and granted concessions without reference to the people or consideration of the wider common interests and good (STE 16). Hence, "multinational corporations [looking for opportunities] for foreign direct investments usually go straight to the chief; they don't read the document, and they just sign because they don't understand. That is an issue we encountered" (STE16).

In sum, although it has been significantly weakened over time, the chieftaincy institution remains a vital link between the people and the political establishment in Liberia. Chiefs continue to enjoy—albeit diminished—respect and legitimacy in their areas and execute important competencies, especially when adequate state structures are lacking, for example, in the delivery of conflict resolution services. Chiefs, therefore, need to be re-empowered, legally and logistically, to enable them to play more formal and independent roles in the administration of the country. They need support to develop more transparent systems of managing public resources such as land and other communally owned natural resources.

2.14 Personal Attitudes, Behaviors, and Practice for Social Cohesion

Up to this point, the study examined respondent views and beliefs on the general state of Liberian society on peacebuilding, reconciliation, and the risk of recurrence of violent conflict. However, national sentiment is an agglomeration of personal beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and practices of individual citizens. Hence, an assessment of the respondents' view on personal attitudes and behavior will shed additional light on how and why society at large functions. This segment of the study provides insight into the respondents' self-assessment of their personal beliefs, attitudes, behaviors,

and practices when they interact with members of other identity groups. The implicit hypothesis that this part of the study seeks to test is to what extent do personal attitudes, behaviors, and practices toward other identity groups (ethnic, religious, etc.) shape collective beliefs, attitudes, and behavior of Liberians. The following variables serve to frame the inquiry:

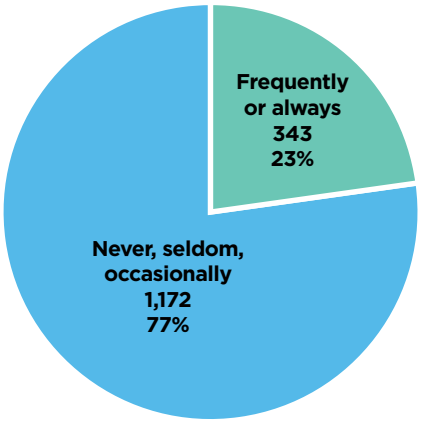
- Self-assertiveness in intercultural settings;
- Avoidance of people of other cultures;
- Accommodation of views of others on national issues;
- Empathy towards others;
- Ethnic considerations in voting for presidential candidates;
- Issues-based voting behavior in voting for legislative representatives;
- Migration and intercultural incorporation;
- Acceptance of ethnic intermarriages.

The findings for each of these variables are detailed below. Where appropriate, additional analyses were also carried out to isolate the nuances between several variables.

a. Self-assertiveness in Intercultural settings

This variable examined the extent to which respondents will push to ensure that their cultural views are accepted in group discussions. The intent is to gauge the respondents' levels of tolerance and accommodation of alternate cultural views. In response to the questions to what extent they would insist on their views when they engaged in discussions with people from other cultures, 77% of respondents said they never, seldom, or only occasionally insist on their views. Only 23% of respondents said they would always insist on their views (see Figure 21).

Figure 21: Personal assertiveness of respondents



Cross tabulation of the responses with county of interview, age category, gender, and religion of respondents produced $p<0.05$ for all of them, indicating that the differences found within each of the independent variables are statistically significant. Looking at regions, Table 2.14A in Appendix 13 indicates that only in Grand Cape Mount more than 50% of the respondents said they would frequently or always insist on their views; Bomi, Bong, Lofa, and Montserrado counties varied between 20% and 40% in this category, while the remaining 10 counties reported less than 20%. The findings are statistically significant ($p=0.000$). According to gender, a slightly higher

percentage of men indicated that they never, seldom, or only occasionally insist on their views (79.5%) against 74.5% for women (statistically significant with p=0.022) (see Table 2.14B in Appendix 13). By age categories, 72- to 88-year-olds were the only group that frequently or always insist on their views (50.0%). In the other age categories, more than 70% of respondents shared that they never, seldom, or only occasionally insist on their views (statistically significant with p=0.029) (see Table 2.14C in Appendix 13). By religion, 80% of adherents of African Indigenous Religions and 79.2% of Christians said they never, seldom, or occasionally insist on their views. Fewer Muslim respondents shared this view, but still it was the dominant sentiment with 61.6% (statistically significant with p=0.000) (see Table 2.14D in Appendix 13).

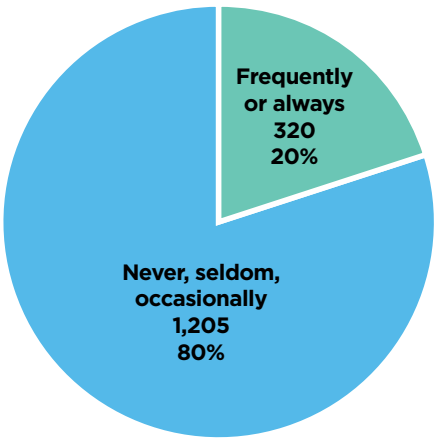
The statistically significant findings across all cross tabulations revealed quite a broad diversity in the attitudes of Liberians on personal tolerance and accommodation. For instance while 20% to 40% of residents of Bomi, Bong, Lofa, and Montserrado counties are likely to insist on their views when in discussions with others, one would expect a more lively debate in Grand Cape Mount, where up to 50% of residents would insist on their views.

In sum, even though most respondents indicated they are tolerant of the views of people from other cultures when discussing national issues, close to a quarter of respondents hold contrary views. Respondents from Grand Cape Mount County, persons 72 years and above as well as slightly more men than women are likely to insist on their views over those from other ethnic groups. Adherents of Indigenous African Religions, on the other hand, are more tolerant of other views than Christians and Muslims.

b. Self-segregation or avoidance

Intercultural interaction in multicultural settings is an important sign of social cohesion. It also indicates the extent to which people in multicultural settings embrace or avoid conflicts as a way to resolve their differences. Respondents were, therefore, asked to indicate the extent to which they would intentionally avoid associating with people from other cultures in public situations. One-fifth of respondents (20%) indicated that they always or frequently avoid people of other cultures to minimize the risk of conflict. The other 80% said they never, seldom or only occasionally avoid mingling with people from other cultures in large group settings (see Figure 22).

Figure 22: Avoidance of people from other ethnic groups

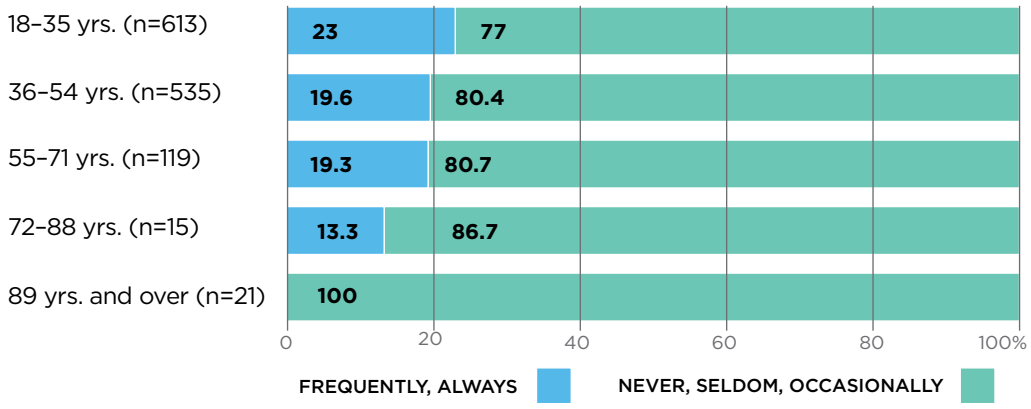


Disaggregated by county of interview, Table 2.14E in Appendix 13 shows wide regional variations in the reaction of respondents. More than half of the respondents from Rivercess and Grand

Cape Mount; more than one-third from Bomi, Gbarpolou, Lofa and Sinoe; and close to one-fifth of respondents from Grand Bassa, Margibi, Montserrado, and Grand Kru indicated that when they are among people of other ethnic groups in public spaces, they frequently or always try to stay away from them to avoid conflicts. Bong and Grand Gedeh, and Maryland are the only counties where 10% or fewer respondents shared this view. The findings are statistically significant. This has implications for building social cohesion, as at least one-fifth of the population of Liberia is afraid to associate with people from other ethnic groups. Notably, counties reporting higher levels of avoidance are also the ones that are least accessible by road and other communication channels. This raises questions about the limited opportunities for intercultural interaction among Liberians through travel and media communication.

Though not statistically significant, it is nonetheless notable that slightly more women (21.3%, 137/643) than men (19.8%, 13/842) said that they frequently or always avoid people from other ethnic groups. Disaggregation by age categories also turned out statistically insignificant differences, although it is observable that 23% of respondents in the 18-35 cohort, compared to less than 20% in the other age categories, indicated they frequently or always stayed away from people of other ethnic groups. This finding is interesting because younger people usually tend to be more gregarious and have various physical and remote opportunities for intercultural interaction. Hence, the reasons behind this age-based difference in responses should be investigated further.

Figure 23: Avoidance of people from other ethnic groups (by age category)



Cross tabulation by religion, however, revealed statistically significant differences (p=0.014). About one-third of Muslim respondents indicated that they frequently or always stay away from people from other ethnic groups in public situations, compared to 22.9% of AIR practitioners and 19.2% of Christian respondents (see Table 2.14F in Appendix 13). While the study did not directly establish the reasons for the differences along religious lines, it is understandable that some religions or sects are more conservative than others and, thus, tend to prescribe more restrictive attitudes towards engagements with members of other religions.

In sum, even though the majority of respondents indicated that they would freely mix with people of other cultures, still one-fifth indicated that they take steps to avoid such interactions. These findings are particularly significant in the case of religion, where close to one-third of Muslims respondents indicated that they would rather not mix with people from other cultures. Given the parallel nature of the quantitative and qualitative data collection processes, this study was unable to investigate the reasons for such differences. Further work is required to ascertain whether the reasons for avoidance behaviors are religious or cultural or due to other factors (like perceived insecurity).

c. Accommodation of Views of Others on National Issues

Accommodating the views of others on national issues requires giving equal value and respect to their opinions in conversations. In divided societies, it is an important step in the construction of inclusive narratives that allow hitherto suppressed voices and views of the minority groups to be taken into account in the rebranding of societies and reconstruction of equitable and inclusive relationships that foster peace. Hence, this question assessed the extent to which respondents consider the views of others on national issues equally as important and valid. For this reason, respondents were asked to indicate what importance and respect they accord to the views of people from other parts of the country when they are discussing key national issues. The responses on a 5-point scale ranged from "not as important as mine" to "more important than mine".

Table 2.14G in Appendix 13 presents the selection of responses (filtered at ≥3.5). Responses in the "important" category include part of respondents who said they considered the views of others "somewhat important" as well as all the responses from the "equally important as" and "more important than" categories. The "not important" category in the table includes responses from the midpoint of "somewhat important" through all replies under "less important than" and "not as important as". The table indicates that more than two-thirds of respondents are in the "important" category, suggesting that most Liberians are willing to give equal or higher value to the views of people from other identity groups other than their own.

According to age categories, middle-age respondents seemed more willing to give equal or higher values to the views of others than older people. The 36-54 years old group showed highest agreement (with 72%); next came the 18-35 age category (with 70%). The percentages, however, slide downward for the 55-71 and the 72-88 year groups. The two people in the 89+ category both said they would consider the views of others as important as theirs (see Table 2.14H in Appendix 13). The findings, however, are not statistically significant.

Cross tabulation along gender lines, revealed that both men and women expressed the same level of agreement (72%), but with p=0.815 this finding is also not statistically significant. Also, cross tabulation with religious affiliation of respondents did not produce significant results (p=0.693). For county of interview, however, the results were statistically significant (p=0.000). All

counties except Gbarpolou, Grand Bassa, and Grand Kru had more than 60% of their respondents confirming that they consider the views of others at least as important as their when discussing national issues. Rivercess and Nimba counties had the highest scores, 93.1% and 91.4% respectively (see Table 2.14I in Appendix 13).

d. Empathy towards Others

Seeing the world from the perspective of the other promotes mutual understanding of issues, breaks down cultural and other stereotypes, and helps in the reconstruction of inclusive narratives for social cohesion in divided societies. Hence, this variable examined the extent to which respondents would try to understand issues and events in Liberia from the perspectives of those directly affected by them. It is a measure of how far respondents are willing to go to put themselves in the other's shoes, in order to better understand their perspectives on the events and issues that directly affected the other.

Figure 24: Empathy towards others

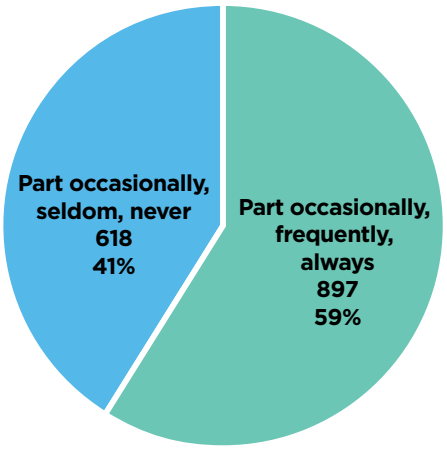


Figure 24 below shows the responses on the extent to which respondents put themselves in other people's shoes while listening to their views on national issues that directly affect them. While 59% of respondents said they do take this step, the other 41% indicated they mostly do not. Notably, in the full range of responses, the largest group of respondents (661/1,515 or 43.6%) said they would "always" put themselves in other people's shoes to better understand their position. The second largest group of respondents (21.8% or 331/1,515) said they would only do this occasionally.

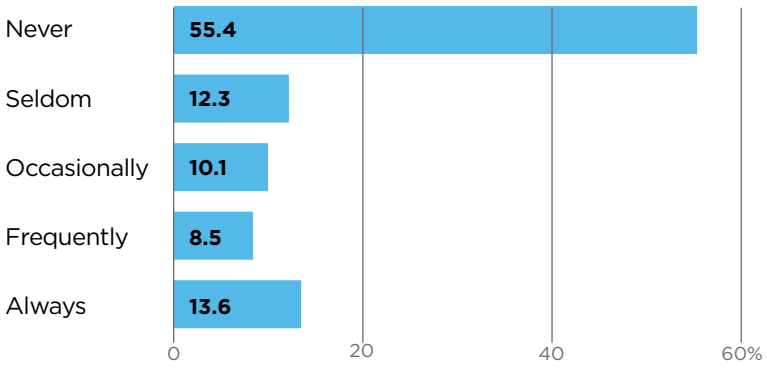
While differences within gender, age category, and religious affiliation were not statistically significant ($p>0.05$), differences by county were ($p=0.000$). In particular, respondents from Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties said that they were most likely to put themselves in other people's shoes (90.9% and 80.0% respectively for the positive sentiment category). On the contrary, respondents from Maryland were least likely to do so, with 96.7% selecting the negative category (see Table 2.14J in Appendix 13).

e. Extent of Ethnic Considerations when voting for President of Liberia

The weight respondents placed on the ethnicity of candidates in voting during elections is a pointer to the importance of ethnic bonds in political decision making. Ethnic cleavages have powerful implications on the effort to create inclusive systems of governance. This variable, therefore, sought to establish the extent to which Liberians consider the ethnic background of presidential candidates when they vote in elections.

A little more than half (55.4%) of respondents said they never consider the ethnic background of presidential candidates during elections. However, about one-fifth of respondents (22.1%) said they frequently or always take the ethnicity of presidential candidates into account when they vote (see Figure 25).

Figure 25: Ethnic considerations in voting for President



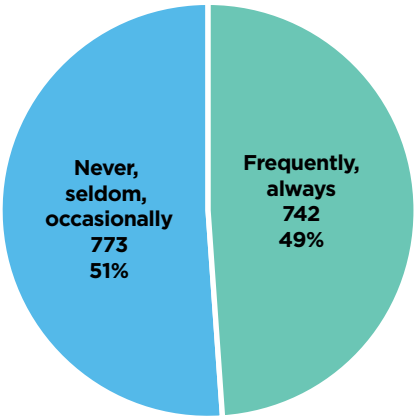
Cross tabulation of the responses by age category and gender did not yield statistically significant results; however, results by county and religion were significant ($p<0.05$). By county, 90% of respondents in Maryland and 83% in River Gee said they never consider ethnicity when voting for president. In contrast, nearly 40% of respondents from Lofa County said they frequently or always do, while 37% from the same county said they never do. Bomi, Grand Bassa, and Grand Kru join Lofa as more than one-third of their respondents indicated that ethnicity is a factor when selecting a president (see Table 2.14K in Appendix 13). Along faith categories, while more than a quarter (26%) of Muslim respondents indicated that they frequently or always consider the ethnic affiliation of presidential candidates, 14.3% of African Indigenous Religion and 12.2% of Christian respondents said the same thing (see Table 2.14L). In other words, ethnicity matters more for Muslim respondents than Liberians of other faiths.

f. Issues-based Voting for Legislative Representatives

In multiethnic settings, choice of candidates in elections to local and national legislative assemblies can trigger violent conflicts due to interethnic rivalries and power struggles. This variable, therefore, examined the criteria that respondents use in voting for senators or representatives in an election. Hence, respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they consider the ethnicity or the personality of the candidate, as opposed to the issues that the candidates stand for, when they vote for senators or representatives in Liberia's legislature.

The responses were split in the middle. While 51% of them said they never, seldom, or occasionally consider the issues candidates for senatorial or representative positions talk about as important as their personality or ethnic

Figure 26: Consider issues other than personality and ethnicity of candidate when voting



background, 49% said they consider the issues discussed in their voting choice. In the latter category, 30.5% said they always consider such issues, while 18.5% said they frequently do so (see Figure 26). No significant differences were found for gender, age, and education levels of respondents.

A breakdown of responses by county of interview provided statistically relevant results ($p<0.05$). Table 2.4M in Appendix 13 shows wide variations in the voting behavior across counties in the election of senators and representatives. Looking at counties, 93% of respondents in Maryland, 90% in River Gee, 71% in Margibi and 60% in Grand Gedeh said they never, seldom, or only occasionally consider issues in addition to personality and ethnicity when choosing senators or representatives. The answers to the questions in the other the counties fell between one-third for "yes" and one-third for "no".

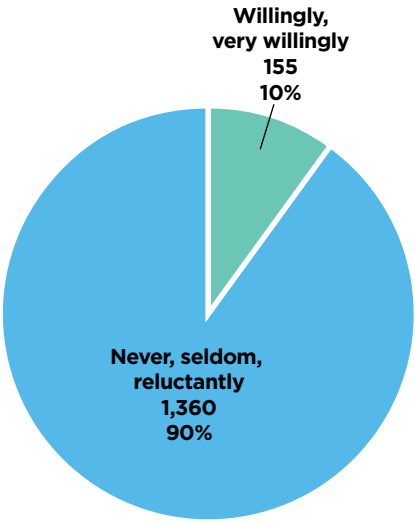
Irrespective of the degree of variation between counties, the results indicate that between one-third and up to 90% of respondents never, seldom, or only occasionally, consider the issues that candidates champion more than their personality and/or ethnic background. Given the chi-square significance level $p<0.05$, the findings most likely represent a trend in the general populations. Hence, in a country where interethnic rivalries have underwritten its political history and economic fortunes, the persistence of ethnicity or personality focused voting behaviors risks perpetuating the interethnic divides that can threaten peace and reconciliation. Further work will be required to explore ways how to nurture more performance- or issue-based voting behaviors in Liberia.

g. Migration and Intercultural Inclusion

Migration helps societies to embrace diversity; expand their cultural horizons; challenge, reform, and enrich their value systems; and reconstruct of new social, cultural, and national identities to create a new "we". In the context of divided societies, the willingness of citizens to accept job postings to any part of the country and to live and work in other cultural milieus helps to break down cultural barriers and stereotypes. It also reduces cultural isolationism and creates opportunities for bridging engagements that reinforce the cohesion of the national society. This variable evaluated the willingness of respondents to live and work in parts of the country other than their home region.

The vast majority of respondents (90%) said that they will never, seldom, or only reluctantly accept to go live and work in counties other than their home county. As indicated in Table 2.14N in Appendix 13, a quarter of respondents

Figure 27: Willingness to live and work in other counties



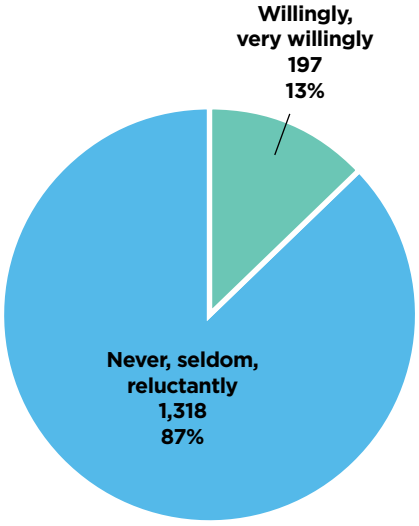
said they would never accept such postings, and 59% said they would accept them only seldom.

The differences were significant (with p=0.000) for county of interview and education level, but not for age, gender, or religion of respondent. Respondents from eight counties (Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Maryland, River Gee, Bong, Grand Bassa, and Montserrado) were the most unwilling to accept job postings that would have them live and work elsewhere in Liberia. In contrast, respondents from Gbarpolou were the most willingly to go live and work in other parts of Liberia (see Table 2.14O in Appendix 13). According to education level, less than 10% of respondents with secondary/high school or teacher training colleges and above were willing to accept postings other counties. On the opposite end, persons with much lower levels of education or no education at all were more willing to migrate (see Table 2.14P in Appendix 13). The results indicate that better educated Liberians are less inclined to move to other cultural settings, which could be explained by their stronger job security and professional networks in their home counties (a topic to be investigated further).

h. Support of Ethnic Intermarriages

Intermarriages build bonds and bridges that facilitate intercultural accommodation, incorporation and/or assimilation. Respondents have already indicated that interethnic marriages are permissible in Liberia. However, the degree to which the opportunity is used to create social and cultural bonds across ethnic groups and counties required investigation, since this is an important indicator of the willingness of Liberians to reshape or expand their cultural molds to create more inclusive societies. Hence, this variable explored the extent to which respondents would accept that family members marry people of other ethnic backgrounds.

Figure 28: Support of ethnic intermarriages of relatives



The vast majority of respondents provided negative answers to this question: 87% said they would never, seldom, or only reluctantly accept. Only 13% said they would willingly or very willingly support such relatives to marry outside of their ethnic group. Differences in responses

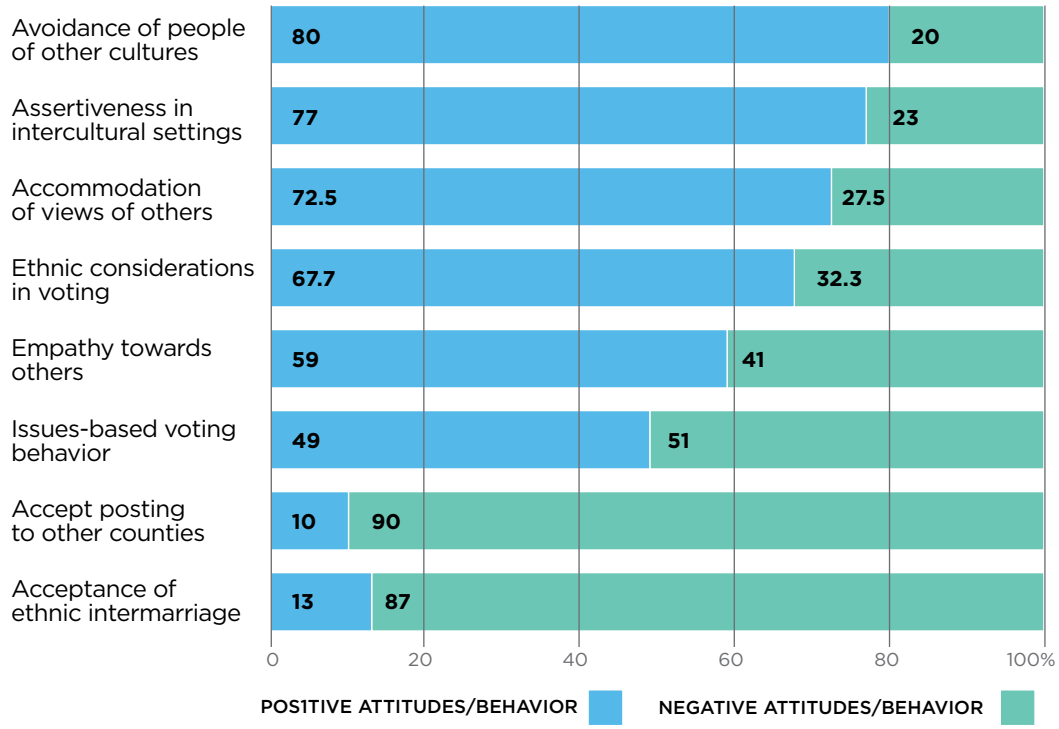
were not statistically significant for religion, gender, and age, but significant for county of interview and education level of respondents.

By county of interview, only in Gbarpolou County 50% of respondents indicated that they would willingly or very willingly support a relative marrying into a different ethnic group. In Bomi, Grand Kru, and Rivercess just over 20% of respondents shared this view (see Table 2.14Q in Appendix 13). Given the statistical significance of these findings, the observed reluctance of respondents to accept intermarriages of their relations, and the differences that exist between counties, the conclusion is still that by and large most Liberians are very reluctant to commit to long-term, cross-cultural engagements with people of other cultures. This point will be further developed in the summary of findings for this section of the study.

i. Summary of Attitudinal and Behavioral Traits of Respondents

The distinction between knowledge, perceptions, and beliefs, on the one hand, and actual attitudes, behaviors, and practices, on the other, in relation to the building of social cohesion in Liberia is summarized in Figure 29 below. It portrays a gradual decline in the positive responses of respondents from what they profess to know or believe to what they would personally do in practice. Starting from a high of 80% of respondents, who said they do not intentionally avoid mixing with people of other cultures in public settings, and the high percentage of respondents (77%), who do not insist on their views in discussions with people from other cultures, Figure 29 portrays a downward trend in positive responses as the questions move from measuring transient and non-committal attitudes to more personally engaging actions. The positive responses drop below the 50% mark when respondents assessed their

Figure 29 Summary of attitudinal and behavioral traits of respondents



behaviors relating to ethnic considerations in voting for presidential candidates; issues-based behavior in voting for legislative representatives; willingness to migrate and settle in other counties; and support for marriages between family members and people from other ethnic or identity groups.

Examination of respondent answers related to their perceptions and beliefs on intermarriage reveals the extent of the gap between belief and practice. The theme of interethnic marriages was queried with two questions in this study. The first question under Section 2.8 asked respondents if there is freedom to intermarry across ethnic and religious boundaries in Liberia, while the second question asked respondents how willing they are to allow their relatives to marry suitors from other ethnic groups. Cross tabulation of responses on the two survey questions on intermarriages was done to establish to what extent knowledge and beliefs translate into practices that can promote social cohesion, interethnic tolerance, and peace in Liberia.

Table 8 below shows that of the 897 respondents in the survey who agreed that Liberians have the freedom to marry people from other ethnic or religious groups, only 13.5% (121/897, green shading) said they would "willingly" or "very willingly" allow their relatives to marry suitors from other ethnic groups. In contrast, 81.5% of respondents who agreed that interethnic marriages are possible in Liberia (731/897, brown shading) said they would "never" (35.3%) or "seldom" (46.2%) allow their relatives to marry people not from their ethnic group. Consistent with their views, however, 84.2% of respondents (488/580, blue shading) who said the freedom to intermarry does not exist also said they would never or seldom allow family members to marry outsider their ethnic group. Notably, 11.72% (68/580, gray shading) of respondents who did not believe that intermarriages were permissible were nonetheless willing or very willing to support family members marrying outside their ethnic group.

TABLE 8: ACCEPTANCE OF INTERMARRIAGES OF RELATIVES (BY AGREEMENT ON FREEDOM OF INTERMARRIAGES)

ACCEPTANCE OF INTERMARRIAGE	FREEDOM OF INTERMARRIAGES		
	NO OPINION	NOT AGREED	AGREED
Never	17	248	317
	44.7%	42.8%	35.3%
Seldom	12	240	414
	31.6%	41.4%	46.2%
Reluctantly	1	24	45
	2.6%	4.1%	5.0%
Willingly	3	18	32
	7.9%	3.1%	3.6%
Very Willingly	5	50	89
	13.2%	8.6%	9.9%
Total	**38**	**580**	**897**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

In summary, irrespective of whether or not they believe interethnic marriages is allowed in Liberia, most people are not willing to allow intermarriages within their close relations. Notably, the majority of respondents who acknowledged that the cultures of ethnic groups in the country are open to accepting intermarriages across ethnic and religious lines are unwilling to allow their relatives to take advantage of such opportunities to create marital bonds across ethnic lines. This means that while Liberians would not object to other people intermarrying, they do not wish to see this happen to their family members, which has implications on how social cohesion can be built across ethnic groups.

TABLE 9: CROSS TABULATION: CULTURES ACCOMMODATE STRANGERS AND WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT POSTING IN ANOTHER COUNTY

ACCOMMODATION OF STRANGERS IN ALL ETHNIC GROUPS	ACCEPTING A POSTINGS TO OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY				
	NEVER	SELDOM	RELUCTANTLY	WILLINGLY	VERY WILLINGLY
No Opinion	18	24	2	5	2
	4.7%	2.7%	2.7%	6.2%	2.7%
Do Not Believe	44	123	13	10	14
	11.4%	13.7%	17.3%	12.5%	18.7%
Strongly Do Not Believe	31	38	0	6	6
	8.0%	4.2%	0.0%	7.5%	8.0%
Very Strongly Do Not Believe	10	10	2	1	0
	2.6%	1.1%	2.7%	1.2%	0.0%
Believe	126	394	30	31	14
	32.6%	44.0%	40.0%	38.8%	18.7%
Strongly Believe	82	213	20	14	19
	21.2%	23.8%	26.7%	17.5%	25.3%
Very Strongly Believe	76	94	8	13	20
	19.6%	10.5%	10.7%	16.2%	26.7%
Total	**387**	**896**	**75**	**80**	**75**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Similar trends are noted in respect to the view that all cultures in Liberia welcome strangers and the views on their willingness to accept job placements outside their home counties. Cross tabulation of the responses to the two questions shows that 71.6% of respondents (111/155, green shading) who indicated they would willingly or very willingly accept postings outside their home counties also indicated that they believed to different levels that the cultures of other ethnic groups are welcoming. Notably, however, 76.8% of

respondents (985/1,283, orange shading) who said that they would never or seldom accept job postings outside their home county indicated that they believed to various degrees that all cultures in Liberia accommodate strangers. On the other hand, the 23.87% (37/155, pink shading) of respondents who said they would willingly accept postings in other counties also indicated that they do not believe all cultures in Liberia welcome strangers in their midst. Under one-fifth of the respondents (19.95%, blue shading) who indicated they would never or seldom accept postings to counties outside their home also said that they do not believe that other cultures welcome strangers (see Table 9 below).

In sum, while Liberians believe that their cultures accept cross-ethnic marriages, they are nonetheless reluctant to accept such cross-cultural marriages within their families. Similarly, while most Liberians may believe that all cultures in the country are open and welcoming to strangers, they are still reluctant to leave their home counties to go and live and work among people of other ethnic groups in other counties. These findings are important for Liberia's peace and reconciliation efforts for a number of reasons, further discussed below in the next section.

3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

3.1 Key Issues and Implications

3.1.1 Perceptions of the State and the Nature of Peace in Liberia

The views and stories of this report highlight a crucial sentiment shared by Liberians across the country—the guns may be silent but the peace is negative, fragile, and unsustainable. The structural and systemic injustices that triggered and nurtured the war are still in place. Some of the key instigators and agents of the civil war have bounced back, gained democratic legitimacy, and are reconsolidating their hold on political and economic power. While Liberians appreciate the fact that the silence of the guns has given them some respite to try to rebuild their lives, they are apprehensive about the prospects for sustaining and growing the current peace. They view the high rate of youth unemployment as a major security risk factor. They have limited trust in the ability of government to secure the peace once UNMIL withdraws. The ability of the country's security services to take on the challenges of providing security across the entire country is broadly doubted due to several structural weaknesses: the quantitative and qualitative inadequacy of the security services (i.e., inadequate staffing of the various service units); limited to no presence of state security bodies in some parts of the country; poorly equipped personnel; and the unprofessional behavioral of members of the security services, reminiscent of the wartime culture.

Additionally, respondents noted that the civil war deepened old wounds and opened new ones. The prewar political power play that pitched citizens of different counties against each other has not been resolved. Hence, suspicions remain between the people of Nimba and Grand Gedeh, for instance. Within counties, such as Nimba and Lofa, the positions that Mandingoes took during the civil war pitted them against their neighbors and/or host communities. The conflated ethnic, economic, political and religious tensions resulted in the expulsion of Mandingoes from certain towns and cities and the seizure of their lands and property. It also introduced a Christian–Muslim conflict dichotomy that some are exploiting for political gains.

In the minds of respondents, all these factors make the prospects for peace uncertain. Added to this, they see no urgency or concrete plans for the government to create spaces for genuine dialogue, reconciliation, and related interventions that would avert a return to war. Many pin their hopes that the traumatic memories of the war, imprinted in the minds of many Liberians, will serve as the best deterrent against renewed civil strife. But respondents are equally wary that war-weariness is not enough to maintain the peace, if the structural and systemic issues of political and economic injustice and inequity are not addressed.

3.1.2 Perceptions on the State and Level of Reconciliation in Liberia

While recognizing that some reconciliation and healing may have happened or is happening, the responses highlight the assessment of these efforts as superficial, localized, and not transformative. Respondents are also divided on the extent to which all counties in the country experienced healing and reconciliation to the same extent

after the civil war. The impact of various state and non-state postwar reconciliation processes are not felt in all parts of the country with the same intensity. There is general agreement that the wounds of war are still deep and unhealed, and that genuine healing spaces or processes are lacking. More than 80% of respondents do not believe that people who suffered from the war received justice through these processes. Hence, most victims of the war do not feel they have received justice from the TRC process, the trials of offenders, or the payment of compensation. They do not see substantive legal and administrative reforms that can guarantee their safety and security; improve their life conditions; create new opportunities for victims to heal, reconcile, and regain their dignity; or enable marginalized groups (ethnic, gender, political, and religious) to feel accepted and included in society.

Respondents believe that part of the challenges for reconciliation in Liberia is due to the individualist approach to reconciliation, which runs counter to the communitarian world view of the African traditions of Liberians in which "your entire life is centered around the welfare of the community" (STE 27). In this world view, conflicts do not affect the main protagonists alone; they destroy relationships and bonds between entire social, political, and economic communities as well as families, clans, ethnic groups, and/or entire villages and towns. Therefore, focusing only on the protagonists in the conflicts overlooks and neglects the interests and concerns of the wider groups into which the protagonists are nested. The search for reconciliation is not an individual affair between the victims and the offenders; it has to be communitarian in intent and practice. In that process, customs, tradition, and faith play major roles. So strong were these factors in preserving peace that "if two communities were at war, for whatever reason, if the High Priest got there and says, 'Stop immediately', they will stop" (STE 27). This element is absent in the current state-centered efforts to reconcile Liberia after the war.

The prospects for peace in Liberia, therefore, do not lie in the arrest and trial of individuals or the enactment of retributive justice alone. Other parallel processes, like restorative justice, need to be initiated and reinforced. For example, restorative justice focuses on the culture and faith traditions of Liberians and engages the wider communities from both victims and offenders. This allows space for faith and values to lead the search for healing. In that process, spaces for personal healing and de-traumatization of even the perpetrators—especially former child soldiers, who are living with heavy psychological burdens—is essential. In sum, reconciliation in Liberia can happen, but it has to happen from within, not from above; it must come from the spaces that enable people to reach out to others and find common grounds for healing and forgiveness. Therefore, indigenous ways of healing and reconciliation must be part of the agenda for peace and reconciliation in Liberia.

3.1.3 Perceptions on the Risks of Recurrence of Violent Conflict in Liberia

Liberians are hopeful that the country is not at risk of returning to widespread violent conflict. However, they are also keenly aware that even though war fatigue is an important deterrent for relapsing into widespread violence, it is not enough to preempt the recurrence of violence. The war did not achieve the transformational changes many had anticipated, and this unclear outcome could serve both as a deterrent and

as a driver for renewed violent conflict. It is particularly noteworthy that even though more than half of all respondents (55%) in the survey said war is not possible, an almost equally high percentage felt that there is high to very risk of Liberia relapsing into violent nationwide conflict.

The seeming contradiction between the two sets of responses points to a distinction between hope and reality. While Liberians pray and hope that they would not return to war, they are equally conscious that the conditions that led them into war are still present and real. Therefore, while prayers and wishes can help, they know that concrete action is required to avert the decline into violent nationwide conflict. The following issues underscore their fears:

a. **Top trigger factors for potential violent conflicts:**

   Respondents feel that several factors can trigger a return to violent national-level conflicts, with the three most potent being corruption, land disputes, and youth unemployment. The government is not addressing the issues and the grievances of the people living in flashpoint counties. The actions taken regarding all three categories are too slow, half-hearted, or imperceptible. More proactive programs of action are required to deliver concrete results and prevent the relapse into violence.

b. **Persistent corruption:**

   Respondents see the persistence of high rates of corruption in the public sphere as evidence that Liberians fought for nothing: the political and economic structure did not change, and the old guard is back in charge of the country. In other words, the structural and systemic injustices and inequalities against which they fought remain and are still breeding anger and resentment.

c. **Widespread land disputes:**

   While the issue of corruption is a nationwide affair, land disputes and youth unemployment are particularly potent risks in the top three counties that respondents identified as potential flashpoints for triggering violent national conflicts. Land disputes are more acute in Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties, given the added conflict between the expelled Mandingoes and the natives who have taken over their lands and properties.

d. **High rates of youth unemployment:**

   High rates of unemployment among uneducated or poorly educated young people are a major conflict risk factor, especially considering their extensive experience with warfare. Many are adept in the use of sophisticated weapons of war, have remained connected to their wartime command structures, are still trapped in the culture of violence learned during their wartime socialization; and are looking for opportunities to make a living using what they know best—the gun and other weapons of war—to secure power, influence, and resources. Many are not work-ready, not only because of their limited knowledge and skills, but also because they are living with war-induced psychological traumas. Nimba, Grand Gedeh, and Montserrado counties are home to more than 50%

of the young people in the country. Nimba and Grand Gedeh were also the principal recruitment centers for various factions during the civil war; and Monrovia was the magnet for the disarmed and demobilized young fighters seeking alternative livelihoods. Large pools of disillusioned, disgruntled, and weapon-savvy young people can be easily turned into active fighters. These young people have already demonstrated their capacity for rapid mobilization when they overran the police during recent rioting, for example in Ghanta, Nimba County.

e. Weak national security apparatus:

Respondents are wary that some people might use the eventual full withdrawal of UNMIL as the opportunity for revenge attacks. They feel that UNMIL is the only barrier against such attacks.

f. Old and new wounds:

New frontlines of conflict have opened and/or are opening in the aftermath of the war. Respondents noted that the different permutation of ethnic alliances during the war introduced rifts between once friendly ethnic groups such as the Geos, Manos, and Krahns, on the one hand, and the Mandingoes, on the other hand. Given that the Mandingoes are predominantly Muslim, these rifts introduce a religious connotation that can feed into the larger disagreements over the Christianization agenda, which some view as an instrument for political exclusion.

g. Top flashpoints for potential violent conflict:

Nimba, Grand Gedeh, and Montserrado were cited as the top flashpoint counties for potential widespread violence, for both historical and contemporary reasons. The interethnic political rivalry between the people of Grand Gedeh and Nimba, a mobilizing factor in the civil war, remains. Little has been done to mend the broken natural and socioeconomic relationships between the two counties. Government actions and inactions have left the people of Grand Gedeh feeling penalized for their past deeds. Respondents from this county used very bitter and scathing language when recounting the inadequate government support efforts and relative deprivation, while not receiving an equitable share of the dividends of peace. They pointed to very poor road conditions, no television networks, poor telecommunication connectivity, and no electricity as markers for the neglect they suffer. They are quick to compare their deprivation to the apparent advancement of their rival county, Nimba, which has witnessed some tangible development in these domains. They attribute the government's apparent neglect of their county to their past and present political choices.

h. Top potential instigators of violence:

Many of the political actors who are vying for power and influence, especially in the run-up to the 2017 elections, belonged to the warring factions and still govern over intact command structures. These ex-commanders and leaders count on instrumentalizing the unresolved grievances of various identity groups to mobilize, re-energize, and rapidly re-engage loyal fighters in combat.

3.1.4 Respect for Basic Freedoms, Rights and Rule of Law Implications for Peace

Respondents acknowledged and appreciated the basic freedoms of speech, association, right to vote and others they enjoy during peacetime. However, they are also keenly aware that these freedoms can be misused to stoke conflict. In particular, abuses in freedom of the press were cited as a major risk factor. While they praised President Sirleaf for her tolerance and patience with such abuses, they are wary that a less tolerant leader may capitalize on such abuses to repress freedom in the name of preserving the peace.

The findings also show a high level of civic distrust in the ability of the state and its institutions to deliver services impartially, in particular, the ability and willingness of the judicial system to act as impartial arbiter in dispensing justice. Respondents are also skeptical about the willingness of state officials to uphold and act within the laws of the land. This lack of civic trust can widen the disconnect between the state and the citizens—a key factor hampering the effort to promote participation in governance. The level of distrust of the state by its citizens must be reduced for inclusive governance to emerge in Liberia.

3.1.5 Gender Equity, Justice, and Peace

Respondents acknowledged the key roles that the women of Liberia played in peacebuilding, as also symbolized by a decade of leadership by the country's first female president. However, they also recognize that Liberia is still a man's world. Women have more limited access to political and economic resources than men; they are less educated than men; they don't have the same opportunities for employment in the public and private sector; and they received less attention in the post-conflict reconciliation processes, where they existed, than men. Even the election of the first woman president in Liberia could prove to be a curse in disguise. Opportunities for women in leadership positions may actually shrink because men want to take back "their" world of politics. Some men argue against constitutional reform to institutionalize affirmative action positions for women in public life and are exerting pressure to make sure that no woman stands for the presidency in the 2017 elections.

While Liberia needs to pay greater attention to creating equalizing and enabling environments for women to contribute to rebuilding the social fabric of the country, respondents have cautioned against lumping all women together: the urban and the rural, the educated and the uneducated, etc. More focused attention must be paid to the special challenges and needs of rural women. Urban women need to see the world through the eyes of their rural counterparts, so that they can voice the concerns of this vulnerable group in a way that these women would like to present themselves in the public sphere. Otherwise, any ungrounded action risks widening the gap between the rural and the urban woman, which could make it even more difficult for rural women to navigate the male dominated cultural environment of Liberia.

3.1.6 Democratic Participation, Political Inclusion, Elections, and the Potential for Violence

The two post-conflict elections were crucial for advancing the peace and democratic governance in Liberia for a number of reasons. First, they served as important safety

valves for releasing interethnic tensions and competition over power. Given the freer political environment, Liberians now feel that they do not have to resort to violence for one unwilling group to cede power to another. Second, despite the challenges in conducting free, fair, and transparent elections, respondents believe that knowing that in principle a member of any ethnic group can contest the presidency redirects interethnic competition towards interethnic alliance building and away from the recourse to violence. Third, the fact that indigenous politicians reached the Senate and House of Representatives via the electoral process reinforces the hope that one day they can make it to the presidency. In short, the ballot box gained credibility as a viable tool for political participation and a gateway to political power.

Despite these achievements in democratic participation and inclusion, respondents are, nonetheless, keenly aware of the challenges for promoting more inclusive and participatory governance. First, they cite the fact that real power (political and economic) is still in the hands of the old elite—the Americo-Liberians. Second, political parties, which should have been the fulcra for rallying cross-identity constituents around shared trans-identity values, visions, and agendas, actually function more like personalized electioneering instruments. Third, Liberians now know not to expect too much from elected officials. Respondents mentioned the disconnect between voting and the benefits from good governance as an example. They do not see any changes in their lives as a result of the governments they have elected. The voter-fatigue syndrome, which threatens to empty the polling stations in 2017, is perhaps a sign of a disillusioned citizenry amid the absence of any dividends from democracy.

The 2017 election is, nonetheless, crucial for consolidating democracy and a sense of political inclusiveness in Liberia. Field encounters during the research suggest a groundswell of support for one candidate with roots in the indigenous ethnic groups. If elected, this will test the resolve of all Liberians to accept a democratically elected native man in power. This could trigger the Nelson Mandela effect, mobilizing the entire nation around a leader that the majority consider their own, and initiate processes of genuine reconciliation. If rejected, it could build off the George Weah example in the 2005 elections, and entrench the view that indigenous Liberians are systematically being excluded from accessing the ultimate state power through legitimate means. Respondents are keenly aware that having a native man or woman in power will not automatically resolve the interethnic power struggles that fueled the civil war, unless conscious actions are taken to build bridges of peace between Liberia's fractionalized ethnic groups.

To keep Liberians believing in, and working to improve their democratic processes, civic and voter education is essential to ensure that citizens have the knowledge and skills to make informed choices. Agenda-based rather than personality-based political parties can help re-channel current frustrations with the political order into political action groups that can make change happen.

3.1.7 Social Inclusion, Equity, Coexistence and Peace

Respondents reaffirmed the historical tradition of social cohesion among Liberians. Different degrees of interethnic marriages and interreligious coexistence; the non-

intrusive use of religion, in the lives of public officials and in the public space or as an instrument of discrimination, made part of the bonds that held Liberia together, despite the political and social tension. The civil war, however, severely strained these bonds, and some political leaders are trying to leverage the exposed ethnic and religious fault lines to their political advantage. Hence, the religious, cultural, and social threads that held Liberia together are now being stretched beyond their limits. If those threads snap, war is inevitable, warned respondents.

The challenges that Liberia faces in rebuilding social cohesion are how to depoliticize religion and its use as an instrument of political exclusion and marginalization; and how to create confidence in state institutions, especially the judicial system, so that Liberians can rebuild their belief in having equal treatment before the law. Liberia also needs to determine how marriages across identity lines can be reinstated as credible and mutually beneficial instruments that cements bonds and builds bridges within and between identity groups. Recognizing the unifying force of these elements and leveraging them at all levels to bring Liberians together is an essential precondition for enhancing social cohesion in Liberia. Fortunately, preexisting shared beliefs, values, and practices between ethnic groups provide launching pads for social reconstruction.

3.1.8 Role of Government in Promoting Peace

Respondents call into question the government's ability to create the required spaces and opportunities that promote peace at the community levels. More importantly, the study highlights the concerns of Liberians about the capacity of the state's security apparatus to assume responsibility for their safety and security to the same level—if not higher than—what UNMIL has been providing over the last 12 years. They are apprehensive that some elements in society might take advantage of the weakened security network, either for criminal purposes or vengeful attacks on the people they see as having hurt them in one way or the other during the war. Respondents also fear that not enough has been done to rebuild trust in the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms undermined by the war. As a result, limited access to grievance resolution processes at community level adds to the increasing sense of insecurity with the impending withdrawal of the peacekeepers.

Dispelling citizen fears and gaining their trust and confidence in the state's ability to fulfill its mandate to keep them safe and secure will require more than promises. Concrete action is required to demonstrate will and, more importantly, capacity. This is vital, especially since the UNMIL drawdown may be completed before the crucial 2017 general election. An essential part of that confidence building is increasing government presence and visibility throughout the country—especially in peripheral counties and communities where state bodies are hardly present. Part of that process will require increasing the attention paid to the communication limitations that pose threats to security. The poor road network reduces state presence, penetration, visibility, and influence in most places. It limits rapid response capabilities of the security services to threats. It also reinforces interethnic exclusion as it limits travel and cross-cultural encounters within and between counties and ethnic groups. Limited penetration of national radio and television broadcasts reinforces isolation, which can only breed parochial perceptions and appreciation of national issues. This fractured landscape

does not foster the development of shared national aspirations, the basis for building social cohesion building, peace, and reconciliation.

3.1.9 Role of the State in Conflict Resolution

The GoL faces an uphill task to persuade citizens that it has the capacity to act as neutral arbiter in intercommunal conflicts—especially in flashpoint counties. Citizens of counties that fought against the government in the war read into the actions and inactions of the state a "we versus them" mindset, which adds to the challenges of regaining civic trust on the part of the government. At the same time, the state needs to reassert its legitimacy and influence in these communities as a precondition for bringing them into the national reconciliation and social cohesion–building process. This requires more concrete and concentrated efforts to demonstrate equity and fairness in the distribution of and implementation of development projects. Without it, the collective feeling of political victimization in these counties will continue to fuel anti-state sentiments.

To reverse this trend, the government must demonstrate greater transparency and equity in the allocation of development projects and resources, as well as, court the active participation of communities in the management of sensitive issues such as the granting of land concessions. Involving the communities will enable them stake their claims in the shared development of the country's natural resources. This will help dispel some of the perceptions of corruption and the expropriation of resources for the exclusive gain of multinationals and state officials. Maintaining active communication lines between the government and disaffected communities is also essential for ensuring information sharing and rebuilding trust between the state and the citizens in the affected counties. The GoL and its development partners must give serious attention to harnessing mass communication platforms (such as radio, television, and other newer communication technologies) to keep people informed and solicit their participation in shaping government policies and programs.

3.1.10 Role of the Private Sector

According to the findings from this research, Liberia's private sector is an influential but politically untapped actor in the dynamics of peace, governance and conflict. Influential because it holds the purse strings of the economy, and untapped because it does not have a grounded stake in the country's political and economic fortunes. All three of the main domestic business actors can easily leave Liberia if things go terribly wrong. The Americo-Liberians already have their homes in the US and elsewhere and only regard Liberia as their farm, find the respondents. The Indian and Lebanese business owners hold no citizenship and no interest in making investments that cannot be easily liquidated. They are ready at any time to pick up their belongings and financial assets, and leave. Indeed, during the war, movements of this group in and out of Monrovia became good predictors of potential flashes or lulls in the fighting, according to respondents. Finally, many Mandingo business men and women, the third category of private sector actors, left for Guinea, Sierra Leone and other countries during the war, amid the expulsion of their community from Nimba and tensions elsewhere.

While respondents did not give a lot of credit to the direct role of private sector actors in the political life of the country, their activities impact peace and stability (directly or indirectly). The perceived extractive nature of their operations make the indigenous population feel expropriated of their resources and exploited for generating wealth for someone else. This, respondents feel, is a recipe for violence, especially with the younger generations of Liberians who do not feel obliged to honor previous land deals made without their involvement. The inability of non-Americo-Liberian expatriate business owners to own landed property limits their capacity to invest in certain sectors of the economy. This impacts the job-creation capacities of such businesses and feeds the high unemployment challenges among the youth.

To protect and grow the peace and to build a shared vision of the common good, the Americo-Liberian group needs to do more to demonstrate interest in investing in and developing Liberia as their home. Government needs to create the enabling environment for non-Liberian businesses to find it safe and rewarding to make long-term investments that create jobs and wealth for all Liberians. Similarly, enabling conditions and frameworks should be created for other local businesses to feel safe and secured in investing in their businesses. In particular, the impasse between the Mandingo business communities and their hosts needs to be addressed—a key element for restoring hope, peace, and social cohesion in the affected areas and Liberia at-large.

The findings in the quantitative component of the study indicate that different counties held different views on the role of the private sector in Liberia's politics and the dynamics of peace and conflict. As KII did not cover all the counties, we can only speculate on the difference in encounters and experiences with the private sector. Hence, future research could focus on isolating these differences in experiences and distilling lessons for designing informed programing that addresses these concerns.

3.1.11 Religion and Peace in Liberia

Irrespective of the political, cultural, social, or economic purposes that religion serves, respondents agree that it plays an important role in keeping Liberians together in peace. Respondents repeatedly cite the role that interfaith collaboration played in securing peace as a high point of the importance of religion in Liberia. In addition, whether overtly or indirectly, religion plays a pervasive role in the lives of Liberians, be it through the orthodox faith traditions of Christianity and Islam, or through the use of the Masonic Craft by the non-indigenous communities and/or the traditional secret societies (the Poro and the Sande) by the indigenous communities (STE 002).

Religion has a very real, strong and worldly influence on the lives of Liberians. It is not seen as abstract worship of an eternal being in preparation for the afterlife—the interventions of the supernatural entities being worshipped to address temporal needs are what is important. Hence, religion is instrumentalized at the personal and political levels. At the personal level, the practice of religion is viewed as a magical process through which practitioners expect immediate, temporal results. The simultaneous adherence to and practice of multiple faiths is acceptable as it maximizes opportunities for resolution of temporal problems while incidentally accumulating credit for the afterlife. In the public domain, politicians have used and continue to seek opportunities

to use religion as a weapon for accessing and retaining power. The Christianization agenda is one manifestation of this instrumentalization of religion. But, as the respondents also note, this agenda presents a high-risk factor for conflict, given the current global and regional contexts in which faith-inspired conflicts are spreading and increasing in intensity. As one respondent noted, with the Christianization agenda "we are inviting Al-Qaeda to come" (STE 015).

In summary, religious leaders in Liberia are highly respected and wield considerable influence that can be leveraged to promote peace and reconciliation, serving as a force for good if properly harnessed and supported. The question that remains to be answered is if and when will religious leaders take back religion from the hands of the politicians, so that it is not misused for power-grabbing.

3.1.12 Culture, Tradition, Customs and Peace

The study establishes that there are cultural traits across the 16 ethnic groups in Liberia that offer positive frameworks for peace, reconciliation, and social cohesion. A common denominator for all the indigenous cultures is the use of the Poro and Sande societies as training schools, instilling the values and behaviors needed for leading a responsible adult life. This practice gives the cultures of Liberia the potential and potency to prevent or mitigate conflict. However, this power of culture was undermined by war acts that destroyed the foundations of legitimacy—respect for elders, customs, and traditions. Nonetheless, the influence of culture is still pervasive, especially in more rural areas where state presence and operations are limited. Even among urban inhabitants, the Poro and Sande rites of passage are considered important, especially for people seeking careers in politics and other competitive environments. A respondent's suggestion to integrate some positive elements of the traditional system into formal school education is worth serious consideration. If it is expected that everyone in position of power or authority should undergo the traditional training, why not mainstream it?

An essential part in harnessing culture to promote peace and reconciliation in Liberia would also consist of revamping and integrating indigenous ADR mechanisms into conflict mitigation practices. This effort includes equipping and supporting chiefs, to enable them to carry out their conflict mediation duties more efficiently. Such intervention would ensure that communities have their own local capacities for peace that reflect their worldview on how conflicts should be managed.

3.1.13 Personal Attitudes, Behaviors, and Practice for Social Cohesion

While the majority of respondents indicate that they would willingly accommodate and give equal value to the views of people of other ethnic groups in discussing important national issues, and freely comingle with people from other ethnic groups in public settings, they are decidedly reluctant to make personal commitments to long-term interaction with members of other ethnic groups. Nine out of ten respondents would not accept relocating to a different county to live and work there, and almost the same proportion (87%) would not accept that their relatives marry into different ethnic groups.

While emphasizing the distinction between theory and practice in their personal lives, these findings point to the kind of cultural distance and isolationism that can only reinforce the sense of difference between members of Liberia's 16 ethnic groups. Both reactions limit opportunities for cross-cultural encounters and the possibilities building bridges within and between the ethnic groups; all essential for fostering social cohesion, peace, and reconciliation in this divided nation. However, this cultural isolationism is understandable, given the limited opportunities for national and cross-county information exchange and encounters due to the poor communication infrastructure. There are certainly other compounding factors, but the need to create spaces of cross-ethnic encounters that break down stereotypes and fears of the other is an essential first step in advancing a genuine peace and reconciliation agenda. Harnessing the power of radio and other electronic communication services (which are comparatively smaller investments than building up road infrastructure) will be a necessary first step to dismantle the cultural barriers that breed and sustain the fear of the other.

3.2 Areas for Further Research

Deep understanding of differences between counties: Findings from the survey component turned up numerous statistically significant results that showed significant variations between counties. Unfortunately, the parallel data collection design for the survey and key informant interviews did not allow us to cover all counties. Hence, the KII study was unable to clarify all the reasons behind the variations. Other qualitative tools, such as focus group discussions, could be considered for providing a deeper understanding why respondents from different counties presented substantially different perspectives. This information is particularly important for the design of customized interventions to meet specific local needs.

Greater insights into resistance to interethnic marriages: The findings show that while respondents believe that in principle intermarriages are allowed across ethnic lines, the majority of respondents are reluctant to accept their family member marrying out of their ethnic group. This is significant for peace and reconciliation because in most African cultures, marriages create bonds and bridges of relationships not only between the couples, but their respective families, lineages, clans, and indeed, entire ethnic groups. It creates corridors of interethnic interactions and builds long-term bonds that are essential for fostering social integration of the different ethnic groups. For divided societies looking for ways to reconnect or rebuild new bridges for sustainable peace and reconciliation, intermarriages offer the opportunity for the reconstruction of more inclusive cultural identities and narratives. For design reasons cited above, this research was unable to delve into the reasons behind this strong reluctance. Follow up work is required to better inform programs that help Liberian's manage any psychosocial barriers that limit the use of this opportunity to embrace diversity and build a more accommodating society.

Uncovering the drivers behind reluctant interethnic cohabitation and mobility: Similar to the case with interethnic marriages, respondents recognized that it is possible for all Liberians to migrate to and settle in areas outside their home county. However, the majority of respondents indicated they would not take on job postings outside their home county. Limited interethnic contacts reinforce cultural and social distance,

which in turn perpetuates negative stereotypes of other groups. They preserve the boundaries of ignorance of the other, which limit the opportunities for people looking to rebuild social cohesion from redefining common values that transcend ethnic boundaries. The opportunities for creating a sense of belonging and a shared destiny are also lost through such isolationist tendencies.

The observed disparity between the respondent's belief in and the practice of voluntary relocation outside of their home counties signal the reluctance of Liberians to live with people of other cultures in the same physical or socio-cultural spaces. This is evident in settlement patterns even in some cities. For instance, Monrovia and its environs is the only place that attracts migrants from all other counties in the country; however, even in this very cosmopolitan area, residents tend to congregate around ethnic settlements or enclaves of their ethnic group or counties of origin. Hence, settlements such as Bassa Town, Kru Town, New Kru Town house people predominantly from the same ethnic groups. This has implications for rebuilding bridges of trust between ethnic groups, especially those that fought on opposite sides of the civil war. Additional investigation is needed to uncover the reasons behind this preference for living in ethnic settlements and guide effective programing that lays the pathways for genuine reconciliation and sustainable peace.

Improved understanding of the issues facing young people: This study highlights that Liberia's young people face a double stigma—as victims and as perpetrators of violence. The levels of unemployment and unemployability are often cited as high-risk factors for the return of nationwide violence. Additionally, respondents within the 18-35 age range were the largest group of participants in the survey (47.7%), with the 36-54 category second with 41.7%. This means that 89.4% (1,148/1,516) of survey participants either grew up during the war or shortly thereafter, meaning that they have direct experiences and/or memories of the war era. Incidentally, respondents in the 36-54 age range, who would have been old enough to directly experience the war or even participated in it, were the least positive about the achievement of reconciliation. A youth-focused study is planned as a follow up to this research, to uncover the peculiar issues faced by young Liberians and to gather their voices and thoughts on what actions would help meet their needs for healing, reconciliation, and reintegration into the workforce.

Enhanced understanding of the challenges regarding gender discrimination and women's participation in public life: Findings from this study highlight the role that women in Liberia played in establishing and maintaining the peace in the country. At the same time, the research points out challenges that women face in accessing and taking more active roles in the public sphere. It cites the reluctance of men to create conditions that allow women to be active players in the political process. Further work is required to understand the reasons behind men's resistance of women taking more prominent roles in public life. This information would be invaluable for any effective gender programing that seeks to create equity for women in the governance structures of Liberia.

4 REFLECTIONS ON PERCEPTIONS OF PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND CONFLICT

This study examined a broad range of issues to provide greater understanding of the state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in Liberia. The mix of qualitative and quantitative methodological tools, along with the technique of exploring the same topic through differently worded survey questions, revealed several views and attitudes shared throughout Liberia and across religious, ethnic and gender lines.

On the continuum between peace and conflict, Liberians see the country as stuck in the middle: it crossed the threshold into non-violence but is not progressing with determination towards secure and sustainable peace. Liberians deeply cherish the silence of the guns during the past thirteen years, but are also keenly aware that the peace they have is fragile and negative. Although respondents think that the war trauma—still fresh in the minds of most Liberians—provides a strong enough deterrent against violent national-level conflicts, they are keenly aware of several high-risk factors that can ignite another round of widespread violence: persistent and increasing levels of corruption in public offices; disputes over land ownership and concessions; and the large number of unemployed and unemployable young people with extensive war experience. Also, the structural and systemic conditions that triggered the war have not been fully addressed. The Christianization agenda, pushed by some politicians, and possible disputes over the 2017 general elections are the main immediate flashpoints. Nimba, Montserrado, and Grand Gedeh counties are identified as risk areas that can ignite national-level violence in Liberia.

Respondents appreciate the basic freedoms of democratic peace, but worry that they are fragile and incomplete. Abuse of the freedom of the press and speech by some citizens and groups, could provide the pretext for politicians to rollback democracy. Similarly, while they applaud the opportunity to change their leaders through the ballot box, they worry that the challenges of organizing free, fair, and transparent elections could tempt some actors to reach for the gun as a tool for seizing power. The upcoming general elections in 2017 were repeatedly highlighted as the highest risk event in the near future. They will offer the first opportunity since 1884 for Liberians to transition from one democratic government to another through the ballot box, but they can also reignite violence, especially if organized without the protection of UNMIL (scheduled to drawdown before the elections). Respondents fear that Liberia's own security apparatus is too understaffed and under-resourced to successfully take over UNMIL's role.

Taking a closer look at reconciliation, the broad consensus view among respondents was that national reconciliation did not penetrate deep or wide enough into the social fabric to create genuine spaces for healing. The TRC processes did not extend to the level of communities and below, and thus did not reach the people who bore the brunt of the war. Dealing with war trauma demands readiness, openness and active participation by both the victims and the perpetrators. In the case of Liberia, however, many individuals widely perceived as organizers and/or perpetrators of the violence

still deny their responsibility and do not show any remorse for their actions. Some have even openly boasted about their roles in the war and their wartime "accomplishments". Respondents also expressed cynicism about the intentions of the government to push the reconciliation agenda through, citing a lack of sincerity and commitment. Many feel that the conditions for meaningful reconciliation are not there, because the structural and systemic injustices—which fueled the war in the first place—remain entranced in Liberian society.

Even when acknowledging successes in addressing animosities within and between different groups, reconciliation is not seen as deep and widespread enough to rebuild relationships ("many Liberians still have hatred in their hearts"). Respondents express equally ambivalent views on the experience of peace and reconciliation at the personal and intercommunal levels.

At the individual level, they highlighted the position of vulnerable groups, in particular women and ex–child combatants. Many of the young people who today struggle to secure a livelihood were pressed into servitude by the warring factions. As child combatants, they committed and witnessed unspeakable acts of terror, suffered severe psychological traumas, and were deprived of a childhood, education and employable skills. This combination of unaddressed wartime trauma, unemployment and unemployability, and extensive war experience make the youth a potential high-risk factor for renewed violence. Women were at the forefront of the struggle to end the war, but did not receive a fair share of the peace dividends. Persistent gender inequity in access to justice, economic opportunities, and the platforms of postwar peace and reconciliation (e.g., the TRC) disregarded women's concerns in the postwar healing and reconciliation processes. The horrific physical and emotional abuses during the war (including widespread rape, amputations, and servitude) worsened the already engrained culture of domestic violence against women during peace time. Politically women are marginalized with severely constrained representation and participation in public offices, despite the decade-long rule of the first ever woman President. Indeed, respondents believe that now men are even more reluctant to create spaces for women to participate in the public sphere, given their desire to recapture the realms of politics seen as reserved for men.

At the intercommunal level, even though Liberians now feel freer to move around the country, many are still wary about building long-term business or private relationship with people outside of their ethnic group. Although respondents profess that all Liberian ethnic groups welcome strangers and that intermarriages are allowed across all cultures, they nonetheless are very reluctant to accept to live and work in a different county other than their own or to support relatives intermarrying. Challenges with communication infrastructure such as road, telecommunication, radio, and television networks further limit the opportunities for cross-cultural engagements, exchanges, and learning that could break down the cultural barriers and contribute to stereotype reduction between ethnic groups, within and across counties.

The common theme in the research questions was a focus on the main actors and their roles in advancing peace and reconciliation in Liberia. First, respondents find that GoL has insufficient capacity to create the relevant local institutional frameworks for peace.

Shortcomings in the professional readiness of the security services and reservations about the neutrality of government in managing conflicts between ethnic parties underscore this view. Next, government resource allocation policies and programs have aroused perceptions of bias and vindictive punishment of counties that appear not to support the sitting government. Respondents also perceived collusion between segments of the private sector and the government against the common interest of Liberia and its citizens: the cronyism that allows Americo-Liberians to continue their domination of both the political and economic spheres; the lack of transparency in granting mining and logging concessions; and business interests not being firmly grounded in Liberia.

Common strands of beliefs and values in the cultures and religions of Liberians provided the threads that stitched Liberian society together. The war demystified and delegitimized the foundations of many of these values and eroded the power of traditional authority figures—elders, chiefs, and religious leaders—to resolve conflicts and maintain peace. Respondents note that both culture and religion are now susceptible to being hijacked and misused for political purposes. The traditional authority system, the only form of sanctioned authority in areas where state presence is frail or absent, is delegitimized, wakened and cannot exercise its role effectively due to limited logistical and administrative capacities. Additionally, respondents believed that attempts to co-opt the chieftaincy institution through the formation of the National Traditional Council as well as the efforts to instrumentalize religion through the Christianization agenda are strong warning signs that some political actors seek to appropriate traditional authorities for their own political aims.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are divided into two categories: short-term and medium to long-term. Where appropriate, we provide background information and justifications, to illustrate the relevance and feasibility of the recommended actions in the local context, and pointers to resources for elaborating and implementing the recommendations.

1. Encourage free and fair elections in 2017

The 2017 general elections will mark an important milestone in Liberia's political development. Election observation by credible and independent third parties can play a crucial role in preventing ballot box irregularities and encourage acceptance of the outcomes. Based on experience elsewhere in Africa, it is recommended that Liberian civil society join ongoing efforts to recruit, train and deploy observers, and to publish the electoral results and observations in real time.

1.1 Organize and administer a nation-wide election observation mission: Liberian civil society organizations including the Justice and Peace Commissions (JPC) of the Catholic Church should form a coalition to recruit, train and deploy election observers across the country. The Catholic Church should leverage its extensive network of parishes and associations, and also capitalize on good relations with civil society faith-based groups. The experience of sister churches on the continent can support this effort.

1.2 Conduct parallel vote tabulation at district and national levels: Providing an alternative, verifiable source of electoral outcomes will improve confidence in and acceptance of the results, and greatly diminish the opportunity for violent mass-mobilization by dissatisfied parties. The JPC, together with the leadership of CABICOL and other faith-based (FBOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs), should secure the authorization to carry out parallel vote tabulations, in dialogue with the National Election Commission and political parties.

1.3 Develop and administer nation-wide civic and voter education campaigns: To improve participation and voter engagement in the electoral process, to diffuse ethno-regional tensions as well as to dissuade politicians from using ethnicity, religion and other emotionally charged cleavages in their campaigns, it is strongly recommended that Liberian civil society develops and launches voter education campaigns. The Catholic Church can harness its extensive network of parishes and communication infrastructure, particularly Radio Veritas, to develop and disseminate these messages.

1.4 Organize exchanges between communities and politicians: The JPC should organize public debates, town hall discussions, radio call-ins, and other forms of exchanges between politicians and communities, preferably in collaboration with other FBOs and CSOs. These contacts enable candidates to present and explain their platforms, offer the electorate opportunities to voice their needs and opinions, and ultimately strengthen vertical social cohesion.

2. Foster meaningful and profound reconciliation across Liberia

The conflict analysis demonstrates that reconciliation within and between communities remains a distant prospect. It is recommended that the following actions be taken to broaden and deepen national reconciliation:

2.1 Create safe spaces for healing and reconciliation: Civil society can create safe and secure spaces for psycho-social counseling, emotional healing, victim–offender encounters and reconciliation dialogues. Trauma awareness and resilience therapy allow for collective recognition of mutual injury, expression and acceptance of remorse as well as healing and reconciliation.

2.2 Support multiple avenues to healing and reconciliation: Victims and offenders should be reached through multiple, inter-faith efforts by Catholic and Protestant Churches, by Muslim leaders, through African Indigenous Religious practices and non-faith-based community support. It is recommended that donors provide financial and material resources to support healing and reconciliation services.

2.3 Create opportunities to identify and employ suitable indigenous reconciliation mechanisms: Mainstream organizations should work with traditional leaders to research, identify and promote African Indigenous Religion (AIR) reconciliation mechanism and incorporate them into healing services. The survey emphasized the importance of AIR practices among Liberians, irrespective of their Christian or Islamic beliefs.

2.4 Support women-focused support and programming: Given the deeply rooted patterns of discrimination and gender inequity, CSOs should mainstream gender concerns into existing programming, and support women to vie for public positions and to seek equal access to justice, vocational training, livelihoods and property.

MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS: PEACE AND CONFLICT

1. Institutionalize a culture of a peace through education programs in schools and communities

Respondents repeatedly mentioned that the war entrenched a culture of violence in Liberian society. They highlighted the need for re-establishing a culture of peace and “deprogramming” the wartime values and mindsets, especially among young people. To promote this transformation, it is recommended that CSOs:

1.1 Develop peace and education activities focused on young people: Various types of youth-centered activities such as sports, music, drama and youth clubs should be supported in communities across the country. Youth camps can be organized to rebuild community infrastructure, create opportunities to heal and to re-establish a sense of self-worth.

MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS: DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

1. Promote transparency, stewardship and accountability in public resource management

The study highlights pervasive corruption as one of the primary barriers to peace and equitable development in Liberia. Respondents called upon the Church to advocate for vulnerable communities, which are neglected and marginalized. CSOs can:

1.1 Support initiatives that increase transparency and accountability in public resource management: CSOs should actively sponsor and champion activities that aim to increase transparency and accountability in the management and reporting of government revenues and other public resources. Several best practices such as Publish What You Pay (PWYP) and Publish What You Earn (PWYE) campaigns, government budget monitoring and expenditure tracking schemes as well as Catholic Church internal governance capacity building in Rwanda provide inspiration and guidance.

1.2 Establish and promote the use of community accountability forums: The JPC, through its network of organizations and civil society partners, and CSOs should consider developing and institutionalizing community social accountability tools, structures and forums at county, district and/or community level. These events bring elected and appointed government officials together with their constituents, to present ongoing projects, report on progress and discuss future policy directions and state–community collaboration pathways.

2. Promote transparent land management and property dispute resolution

The study identifies land tenure and property rights conflicts as key flashpoints for violent conflict, due to poor and inadequate documentation of title deeds as well as lack of transparency on land user rights. To address these shortcomings, it is recommended that CSOs:

2.1 Support the development of comprehensive land title documentation processes: Unambiguous land boundary demarcation and documentation procedures need to be developed, institutionalized and rolled out across the country. Using low-cost, handheld GPS devices and/or appropriate ArcGIS software mounted on Android devices, trained community members can easily demarcate their land boundaries to facilitate title documentations. CSOs should train and deploy community agents and engage with relevant agencies to decentralize the process and make it more affordable and accessible to rural populations.

2.2 Build community capacity for land use negotiations: Communities have limited capacities to effectively participate in negotiating land concessions and takeovers with multinationals, local businesses, and government agencies. CSOs should cooperate with legal professionals to provide pro bono trainings on

land ownership laws, leasing and sale as well as negotiation skills to local land management committees. Potential partners include the Liberian National Bar Association, the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia, Catholic Lawyers Association of Liberia and the Liberian Law Society.

3. Create opportunities for Liberia's youth to advance their livelihoods

A key finding of this study is that many young people in Liberia suffer from high unemployment and low employability. This disadvantage, combined with unaddressed wartime trauma and extensive exposure to violence, presents Liberia with a huge reservoir of high-risk youth vulnerable to manipulation by conflict entrepreneurs. CSOs can:

3.1 Gain insights into the issues and challenges affecting young people: CSOs should conduct a youth-focused study to gather insights how to better provide young people with opportunities to heal and rebuild their lives, and rejoin Liberian society as productive citizens.

3.2 Provide capacity building and other opportunities to improve youth employability: Reintegrating young people requires retraining and equipping them with knowledge, skills and tools that correspond to job market needs and reflect their interests and capacities. Individualized and interest-based capacity building are much more effective than blanket vocational training. In the agriculture sector, vegetables, fruits, flowers and other high value crops with long value chains are a good entry points. CRS' Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) have proven successful in helping people of all ages learn to manage, save and invest money into small businesses.

4. Promote community dispute resolution mechanisms

According to the findings of the study, Liberia's justice system does not reach all parts of the country; its resources are overstretched; and it is viewed as corrupt and inaccessible to the poor. Although the war weakened the authority of chiefs and traditional justice system institutions, these courts remain the first choice for redressing grievances and resolving conflicts in most communities. To sustain these initiatives and mainstream the judicial processes and outcomes of the traditional courts, it is essential to build up and institutionalize the traditional justice system. Accordingly, it is recommended that CSOs:

4.1 Advocate for the establishment of chiefs' courts as Community-based Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms (CADRMs): CRS Liberia and its partners should support legal and judicial reform efforts to integrate chiefs' courts into the formal justice system as part of the ADR mechanism. Formal recognition and integration of the traditional systems into the national justice framework will enhance the image and capacities of these grassroots channels and ensure that chiefs' decisions are legally binding add enforceable (and also subject to ratification and/or appeal in higher courts).

4.2 Improve the capacity of chiefs to dispense justice: Regardless of the outcomes of the legal reforms, chiefs will continue to fulfil the role of arbitrators in their respective communities. Enhancing capacities through trainings (in laws, procedures, mediation etc.) and equipment (transport and other material support) will improve their performance as well as the credibility and effectiveness of the traditional courts. Also, the chiefs' legitimacy and authority in the community will be revitalized, thereby strengthening their valuable contribution to conflict prevention, which was greatly eroded during the civil wars.

4.3 Research and integrate best practices from traditional legal systems: Certain types of cases may be better handled through indigenous legal practices that promote restorative justice, in contrast to the retributive justice emphasized in the conventional court systems. However, while the principles and rationale of indigenous justice systems may cut across several ethnic groups, the specific practices and procedures can be quite different. To increase transparency, predictability and acceptance of these practices across different cultures, it is essential to identify, isolate and codify best practices to be integrated into community conflict resolution mechanisms.

MEDIUM TO LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS: SOCIAL COHESION

1. Increase trust and cooperation between government and citizens

The study reports high levels of civic distrust in some counties, due to perceived marginalization and favoritism in the allocation of development projects and resources. Victimization intensifies mistrust of government and weakens the social contract between citizens and the state. It is recommended that CSOs:

1.1 Advocate for greater transparency in policy formulation and implementation: Often citizens do not engage with government representatives and other decision-makers because they lack information and skills how to present their concerns and suggestions. CSOs can enhance community participation in policy-making and local policy discussion through research and support by Justice and Peace Commissions and other organizations that can provide the needed data, policy options and advocacy training.

1.2 Facilitate community encounters with decision-makers: To reduce distrust and perceptions of bias in the allocation of resources, it is recommended that CSOs organize town hall meetings, radio programs with phone-in and text-in audience feedback and questions, as well as other discussion forums that enhance citizen–state trust and vertical capital.

1.3 Conduct social cohesion strengthening workshops: CRS has already developed social cohesion strengthening approaches and tools, in the Philippines, the Central African Republic and elsewhere. These best practices can be readily applied in Liberia. CRS' flagship social cohesion training guide, "The Ties that Bind:

Building Social Cohesion in Divided Communities", includes a training of trainers module and will be available from January 2017.

2. Promote intercultural communication and exchanges

2.1 Identify and develop cultural connectors for peace: Liberia's 16 ethnic groups can be categorized into three linguistic groups with mutually intelligible dialects, shared histories and core values, and unifying rituals and practices that hold their societies together. CSOs should explore ways to leverage these connectors by identifying and strengthening cross-cutting cultural traits—especially values that emphasize diversity, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and respect for authority.

2.2 Promote cultural encounters and inter-county migration, especially among young people: The study highlights respondents' reluctance to move to other counties or engage with other ethnic communities in deeper, long-term interactions (like marriage of a relative). CSOs can work with state and non-state actors to create spaces for cultural encounters, especially among young people. Liberia's National Youth Service Program, for example, could provide housing, basic equipment and community hosting for graduates of the country's tertiary institutions who wish to take up youth service assignments in other counties.

3. Support youth trauma healing and socialization

3.1 Offer opportunities for healing and social reintegration: CSOs should develop special youth-focused trauma and psycho-social healing programs that offer young people opportunities to address trauma and encourage inner transformation.

3.2 Institutionalize peace education in schools: CSOs should consider developing and integrating peace education curricula into primary and secondary level education institutions. The revised learning plans would emphasize the positive aspects of Liberian heritage, counter inflammatory narratives and socialize youth on a path of coexistence and collaboration for the benefit of all in the country.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1: DETAILED RESEARCH QUESTION AND THEMATIC AREAS OF INVESTIGATION

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Core Research Question: How do Liberians perceive the state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in the country since the end of the civil war?

The following three sub-questions guided the research:

1. How do ordinary Liberians assess the current state of post-conflict healing, reconciliation, and peace in the country?
    a. Perceptions of the state and nature of peace in Liberia
    b. Perceptions on the state and level of reconciliation in Liberia
    c. Perceptions on the risks of recurrence of violent conflict in Liberia
2. What do ordinary Liberians see as the critical issues and actors that need to be addressed in order to secure and grow peace in the country, create opportunities for healing and reconciliation, and promote integrated and inclusive development?
    a. Respect for basic freedoms, rights and rule of law
    b. Gender equity, justice, and peace
    c. Democratic participation, political inclusion, elections, and the potential for violence
    d. Social inclusion, equity, coexistence and peace
    e. Religion and peace in Liberia
    f. Culture, tradition, customs and peace
3. What roles, if any, do Liberians believe that different actors and decision makers (the government, faith-based organizations, private sector businesses, civil society groups, community-based organizations, etc.) have in promoting authentic and sustainable peace and development?
    a. Role of the government in promoting peace
    b. Role of the state in conflict resolution
    c. Role of the private sector
    d. Personal attitudes, behaviors, and practice for social cohesion

APPENDIX 2: CLUSTER SAMPLING METHODOLOGY AND STUDY SAMPLE SIZE

1. Sample size

Sample sizes were calculated with the following formula: n = z2(pq)/d2; where n = sample size; z = statistical certainty chosen; p = estimated prevalence/coverage rate/ level to be investigated; q = 1 - p; and d = precision desired. The value of p was defined by the coverage rate that requires the largest sample size (p = 0.5). The value d was based on the precision, or margin of error, desired (in this case d = 0.1). The statistical certainty was chosen to be 95% (z = 1.96). Given the above values, the sample size (n) was set as 96 (see calculation below):

n = (1.96 x 1.96)(0.5 x 0.5)/(0.1 x 0.1)

n = (3.84)(0.25)/0.01

n = 96

The random selection of an individual from the survey population (to be repeated 96 times for this sample) is time consuming, and this effort can be minimized by through a 30-cluster sample survey, in which several individuals within each cluster are selected to reach the required sample size. However, in order to compensate for the bias due to interviewing persons from clusters, rather than as randomly selected individuals, experience has shown that a minimum sample of 210 (7 per cluster) should be used given the values of p, d, and z above (Henderson, et. al., 1982). In general, when using a 30-cluster sample survey, the sample size should be approximately double the value n, when: n = (z x z)(pq)/(d x d). In this case, a sample size of 300 (10 per cluster) has traditionally been selected using the JHU 30-Cluster method to ensure that sub-samples would be large enough to obtain useful management type information.

The estimates of confidence limits for the survey results were calculated using the following formula: 95% confidence limit = p + z(square root of pq/n); where: p = proportion in population found from survey; z = statistical certainty chosen (if 95% certainty chosen, then z = 1.96); q = 1 - p; and n = sample size.

As noted above, traditionally, the 30-cluster sampling methodology aimed for 300 respondents in a survey. However, in nationwide surveys, such as the Afrobarometer studies, a sample size of 1,200 to 2,400 is usually determined to be adequate for ensuring representativeness of the study population and validity of the outcomes. For example, Afrobarometer's "randomly selected sample of 1,200 cases allows inferences to national adult populations with a margin of sampling error of no more than plus or minus 3% with a confidence level of 95 percent" (Asunka et al., 2008, p. http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/ studies/33883). In this study, a sample size of 1,500 (n= 1,500) is used. This "...substantially larger sample size [is required] to achieve the same level of accuracy as a simple random sample" (Murphy & Schulz, 2006, p. 6).

2. Selection of study sites for the quantitative survey

The quantitative study carried out a nationwide survey to ensure that views and insights from across the country were taken into account in the assessment of the state of reconciliation, peace, and conflict in Liberia. The cluster sampling methodology was used to select the cluster sites or polling areas from which respondents were drawn. The study planned to use the most recent population data from the national population census to determine the proportional distribution of the 50 study sites per county. However, the most recent population census was conducted in 2008, which is outdated data for the purposes of sampling. Additionally, the national population census data provided information on population distribution per county, but not down to community level. In contrast, the national electoral roll used for the 2011 general elections, obtained from the website of the National Elections Commission (NEC), provided the most comprehensive and in-depth proportional distribution of Liberia's population across the country. It shows population distribution down to the level of electoral districts and further down to the specific polling stations. Also, it provides maps of the electoral districts and GPS locations of the polling stations. This data was, therefore, seen as a better fit for determining the location of study sites.

In the absence of direct access to the national electoral register, the survey compiled data from the online District Electoral Maps used in the 2011 elections as the data source for its sampling. Based on this data, the sample frame (n) was determined to comprise the total registered voter population of Liberia for the 2011 elections, which is 1,798,930 (National Electoral Commission, 2011). Given the large variation in population concentrations per county (Montserrado alone accounts for 33% of the national population) and to ensure equitable representation of all counties, the study used an adaptation of the 30-Cluster Sampling methodology to select 50 study sites out of the 1,780 polling stations across the country as the points of entry for the study. This larger number of study sites is also necessary to compensate for the clustering effect in the sampling process, given the anticipated wide variations in socioeconomic backgrounds of respondents between constituencies: rural versus urban, differing levels of literacy across regions, different experiences of poverty across regions, cultural variations across regions, etc. (Murphy & Schulz, 2006).

3. Polling area sampling frame for quantitative survey

The total registered population for each selected polling station constituted the sampling frame for the selection of individuals to participate in the survey. Only persons 18 years or older who live or regularly work within the catchment area of the selected polling station were eligible to participate in the survey. Procedures for determining specific households from which interviewees were picked as well as the process for identifying and selecting specific individuals for the interviews were discussed at the data collection training that took place in Gbarnga 10-11 March 2016. Data collection and upload started on 12 March 2016.

APPENDIX 3: TEST OF REPRESENTATIVENESS OF SURVEY SAMPLE

Since the survey was based on a sample, additional verification and validation steps were used to ensure the adequacy and representativeness of the data for a national level study. The study employed the interval estimation procedures for sample means (2012) to estimate the actual proportion of the Liberians who would have provided similar views as expressed respondents in the survey. The table below presents the descriptive statistics for the sample of the study.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF SURVEY SAMPLE

N	VALID	1,515
	MISSING	1
Mean		8.73
Std. Deviation		3.688
Minimum		1
Maximum		15

Since the standard deviation of the larger Liberian population is not known, the formula below was applied to compute the confidence interval based on the mean of the sample (Formula 7.2 in Healey, 2012, Kindle Version) to determine the confidence interval of a large sample. Table 2 provides the Mean of the sample, the standard deviation and the sample size used in the computation. The procedure for the computation was as follows:

$$\text{Confidence interval} = X \pm \frac{Z(s)}{\sqrt{N-1}}$$

From the descriptive statistics in Table 2:

i) The sample mean of the variable belief that Ghana is peaceful (X) = 8.73

ii) The Standard deviation (s) = 3.688

iii) The Sample Size = 1515

iv) Given a P_u = 0.05, therefore Z = 1.96

Substituting the above in the equation,

$$\text{Confidence Interval} = 8.73 \pm \frac{1.96(3.688}{\sqrt{N-1}}$$

N-1 = 1515-1 = 1514 □ √1514 = 38.91

$$\text{Confidence interval} = 8.73 \pm \frac{1.96(3.688)}{38.91} = 8.73 \pm 1.96(0.18) =$$

Confidence interval = 8.73 ± 0.35

The confidence interval indicates that if multiple samples are taken from the Liberian population the mean value of their responses will fall between 8.38 and 9.08, in 95% of cases. Since the sample mean of 8.73 falls within this range, we are confident that the sample used in this study is representative of the Liberian population—the responses given to the questions in the survey are representative of the views of the wider Liberian population with a 95% confidence interval.

APPENDIX 4: PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION OF ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AND POLLING SITES

The following guideline outlines the process used to select the electoral districts and polling sites for the sampling.

Step 1: Determine the total population of the study sites—in this case, total registered voters by electoral districts for the 2011 General Elections (1,798,930).

Step 2: Compute the cumulative population for all the electoral districts, starting from the first listed down to the last one. Check to be sure the cumulative population for the last electoral district is the same as the total population of all the electoral districts (i.e., the sampling frame).

Step 3: Determine the sampling interval (SI) by dividing the total population by the number of study sites needed:

$$SI = \frac{1{,}798{,}930}{50} = 35{,}978.6 \text{ (rounded off to } 35{,}979)$$

Step 4: Choose a random number that has the same number of digits as the SI, but is less than or equal to the S.I. In this case, the RN was chosen from a currency bill of Liberia by counting five digits from the left on the serial number of the randomly selected dollar bill. The result was 21,192.

Step 5: Use the random number to locate the community whose cumulative population figure is greater than or equal to the random number. Mark that community as the first selected site for the study.

Step 5: Add the random number to the sampling interval calculated earlier (21,192 + 35,979 = 57,171). Use this result to locate the electoral district with cumulative population greater than or equal to this number. This is the second selected study site.

Step 6: Add the SI to the results of the addition in Step 5 (35,979 + 57,171 = 93,150). Use the result to locate the electoral district with a cumulative population greater than or equal to the product of the addition. The identified electoral district is the third study site selected.

Step 7: Repeat step 6 by adding the SI to the product of the previous computations to obtain the number to be used in selecting study site 4 and then the other subsequent sites until all 50 have been identified (see Appendix 1a below for the full list of sites). Of course, the additions could have been done automatically using an Excel Spread sheet as indicated in table in Appendix 1b below; however, the workshop design used manual processing to train the participants in this sampling procedure.

APPENDIX 5A: LIST OF SELECTED ELECTORAL DISTRICTS AND POLLING STATIONS

CLUSTER	COUNTY	ELECTORAL DISTRICT	VR CODE	POLLING STATION	REGISTERED VOTERS	NO. OF INTERVIEWS
1	Bomi	2	3026	Goghen Palava Hut	606	30
2	Bong	1	6052	Zowienta Public School	2043	**150**
3		2	6157	Lelekpayea Comm. Sch.	1665	
4		4	6031	Naama Public School	1146	
5		5	6107	Suakoko Center High	1654	
6		7	6061	Haindii Clinic	1970	
7	Gbarpolu	2	45024	Palakwelle Palava Hut	765	**30**
8	Grand Bassa	1	9090	Civil # 1 Comp. Admin Building	1098	**120**
9		3	9125	Pillar of Fire School	1118	
10		4	9049	Charles Johnson Town Pal. Hut	889	
11		5	9157	Yarweah Village Palava Hut	327	
12	Grand Cape Mount	2	12064	Islamic Model	1109	**30**
13	Grand Gedeh	1	15064	Women/Children Rehabilitation Resource Center (Wochirrc)	1087	**30**
14	Lofa	1	21003	Porluma Town Hall	2511	**150**
15		2	21043	Kimbaloe Public School	1155	
16		3	21067	Mbabahun Public School	866	
17		4	21107	Marverkonnedu Public School	365	
18		5	21092	Yarpuah Public School	1030	
19	Margibi	2	24074	Cotton Tree Community School	1774	**90**
20		3	24035	Division 37 Office	737	
21		4	24116	Conquerors Pentecostal Sch.	939	
22	Maryland	1	27074	Cape Palmas High School	1306	**60**
23		3	27069	Henogbe Elem. School	316	

CLUSTER	COUNTY	ELECTORAL DISTRICT	VR CODE	POLLING STATION	REGISTERED VOTERS	NO. OF INTERVIEWS
24	Montserrado	1	30436	Pleemu Public School	1459	**510**
25		3	30092	Aaron G. Burgess Momerial Aca.	2363	
26		3	30288	Paynesville Central Aca.	3600	
27		4	30129	Nathan E. Gibson School	2845	
28		5	30287	Kalita School	3257	
29		6	30323	Carver Mission School	2999	
30		7	30376	National Housing Bank	1369	
31		8	30410	G.W. Gibson High School	2119	
32		9	30395	Fiama Calvary Baptist School	801	
33		10	30134	St. Andrew Lutheran School	1966	
34		11	30090	Grace Baptist Church School	2399	
35		12	30172	Wisdom Home Heritage School	955	
36		13	30220	Christiana Comfort Bedell Preparatory School	1993	
37		14	30254	Timosa Elementary School	2101	
38		15	30136	Samuel T. Kun School	1250	
39		16	30089	God is Our Light School	874	
40		17	30207	FAWE School of Excellence	1381	
41	Nimba	1	33077	Vision International School	1585	**180**
42		3	33021	Bonla Public School	631	
43		4	33065	Gbonwea (Old Town) School	983	
44		5	33166	Tiaplay Public School	986	
45		7	33058	Gblah Public School	1370	
46		8	33110	Kpein Public School	2134	
47	River Gee	1	42003	Dweaken Town Hall	798	**30**
48	Rivercess	1	36025	Bogeezay Town Hall	1004	**30**
49	Sinoe	2	39011	Karquekpo Palava Hut	1072	**30**
50	Grand Kru	1	18039	Denteken Town Hall	1032	**30**
Total number of interviews to be conducted nationwide						**1,500**

APPENDIX 5B: DISTRIBUTION OF STUDY SITES, INTERVIEWS, AND DATA CLERKS PER DIOCESE

DIOCESE	STUDY SITES	INTERVIEWS	DATA CLERKS
Monrovia	28	840	14
Gbarnga	16	480	8
Cape Palmas	6	180	3
Totals	**50**	**1,500**	**25**

APPENDIX 6: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF LIBERIA
JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES FOR RESEARCH ON CONFLICT TRIGGERS IN LIBERIA

First schedule

Date ___/___/2016 Time: _____
(dd / mm)

Tel: _____, _____

Rescheduled interview

Date_____/____/2016 Time: _____
(dd / mm)

Tel: _____, _____

County_____ **Electoral District _____**

Name of Constituency _____

Polling Station Number _____

Name of Community where interview takes place_____House No._____

Name of Interviewer _____

Supervisor _____

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

I would now like to begin by getting to know you better. Would you mind if I ask:

1. To which gender category would you say you belong?

1 Male ☐

2 Female ☐

3 Other ☐ (specify) _____

2. How old were you on your last birthday?

1 (Please indicate age in years) _____

2 Don't know my age (please mark) ☐

3. What is the highest level of education you attained? (Check one)

1	Never been to school	☐
2	Less than six years of Primary Education	☐
3	Primary Education up to the Middle School/Junior Secondary School	☐
4	Completed Secondary School or Teacher Training College	☐
5	Tertiary institution up to Diploma/Higher National Diploma	☐
6	University Degree up to Bachelor's level	☐
7	University Degree up to the Master's level	☐
8	University Degree up to the Doctorate level	☐
9	Other (specify) _____	☐

4. Which county in Liberia would you normally call your home county?

1	Bomi	☐
2	Bong	☐
3	Gbarpolu	☐
4	Grand Bassa	☐
5	Grand Cape Mount	☐
6	Grand Gedeh	☐
7	Grand Kru	☐
8	Lofa	☐
9	Margibi	☐
10	Maryland	☐
11	Montserrado	☐
12	Nimba	☐
13	River Gee	☐
14	Rivercess	☐
15	Sinoe	☐

5. In what kind of locality have you been living in the last two years?

1	National Capital City	☐
2	County Capital	☐
3	Town outside national or county capital	☐
4	Village or rural community	☐
5	Other (specify)_____	☐

6. What religion do you consider yourself to belong to?

1	African Indigenous Religion	☐
2	Agnostic (I do not know if there is a God)	☐
3	Atheist (I do not believe there is a God)	☐
4	Baha'i	☐
5	Buddhism	☐
6	Christianity	☐
7	Hinduism	☐
8	Islam	☐
9	Other (specify)_____	☐

7. How would you describe your current primary occupation?

NO.	EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY	PLEASE TICK ONE (✓)
1	Farmer (crop production, animal husbandry, fishing, etc.)	
2	Housewife	
3	Elected or Appointed Political Leader (e.g., Senator, Representative, Government Minister, County Superintendent)	
4	Political Party Leader (e.g., National, County, or Precinct Executive of a Political Party)	
5	Civil or Public Servant (i.e., works in a government ministry, department or agency)	
6	Academic (e.g., Lecturer, Researcher, or Teaching Assistant in an Academic institution)	
7	Corporate Business Executive (Managing Director, Manager, Chief Executive Officer, Other [specify])_____	
8	Professional (Certified Accountant, Architect, Auditor, Banker, Medical Officer, Lawyer, Nurse, Paramedic, Teacher)	
9	Paramount chief, Village Chief, Clan Chief/Elder, other traditional leader	
10	Religious leader (Archbishop, Bishop, Pastor, Imam, Priest of the African Traditional Religion)	
11	Member of the Security Services (Armed Forces of Liberia, Police Service, Immigration Services, Fire Service, Customs, Excise, and Preventive Services	
12	Student in Polytechnic, University or other Tertiary or Secondary level	
13	Worker in the NGO Sector	
14	Self-Employed (owner), Private Businessman or Businesswoman	
15	Employee in a Private Sector Company	
16	Self-Employed Informal Sector (Mason, Carpenter, Hairdresser, Seamstress, Trader)	
17	Unemployed (i.e., no regular place of work)	
18	Other (specify) _____	

PERCEPTIONS OF THE STATE AND NATURE OF PEACE IN LIBERIA

8. How would you describe Liberia's state of peace today?

1	Very peaceful	☐
2	Peaceful	☐
3	Somewhat peaceful	☐
4	Not peaceful	☐
5	Not at all peaceful	☐
6	Don't know	☐
7	Can't tell	☐

9. How peaceful is Liberia today compared to the period before the civil war?

1	More peaceful than before the war	☐
2	As peaceful as before the war	☐
3	Somewhat as peaceful as before the war	☐
4	Less peaceful than before the war	☐
5	Not at all as peaceful as before the war	☐
6	Don't know	☐
7	Can't tell	☐

10. Peace is often described as negative peace or positive peace. Negative peace means that even though people are not openly fighting, they live under situations (repressive laws, rules, and regulations, poverty, discrimination, etc.) that can inflict suffering or bodily harm. Positive peace means that there is no open fighting and there are no such dangerous situations. Based on these concepts of peace, how would you describe the peace you witness in Liberia?

1	Positive peace	☐
2	Negative Peace	☐
3	I don't know	☐
4	I can't tell	☐
5	Other (specify) _____	

PERCEPTIONS ON THE STATE AND LEVEL OF RECONCILIATION IN LIBERIA

11. To what extent do you agree with the view that Liberians have reconciled with each other after the civil war?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

12. What is your view on the statement that the activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Liberia enabled all Liberians to know the truth of what happened during the civil war?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

13. To what extent do you agree that all counties in Liberia have experienced healing and reconciliation to the same extent after the end of the war?

1	Very strongly agree	☐	Skip next question
2	Strongly agree	☐	Skip next question
3	Mildly agree	☐	Skip next question
4	Agree	☐	Skip next question
5	Mildly disagree	☐	
6	Disagree	☐	
7	Strongly disagree	☐	
8	Very strongly disagree	☐	
9	No opinion	☐	

14. Do you agree on the statement that since the end of the war, persons who afflicted harm on others in Liberia have acknowledged their deeds and accepted responsibility for what happened?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

15. Which county would you say has the highest need for reconciliation?

1	Bomi	☐
2	Bong	☐
3	Gbarpolu	☐
4	Grand Bassa	☐
5	Grand Cape Mount	☐
6	Grand Gedeh	☐
7	Grand Kru	☐
8	Lofa	☐
9	Margibi	☐
10	Maryland	☐
11	Montserrado	☐
12	Nimba	☐
13	River Gee	☐
14	Rivercess	☐
15	Sinoe	☐

16. To what extent do you agree that Liberians who suffered violence, losses, and abuses during the war have received justice from the following processes?

NO.	PROCESS	VERY HIGH	HIGH EXTENT	MODER-ATELY HIGH EXTENT	MOD-ERATE EXTENT	MODER-ATELY LOW EXTENT	LOW EXTENT	VERY LOW EXTENT	NOT AT ALL	CAN'T TELL
1	**TRC processes**									
2	**Trials and punishment of perpetrators of violence**									
3	**Payment of compensations to surviving victims of violence and abuses**									
4	**Legal and administrative reforms that ensure the injustices that led to the war do not happen again**									
5	**Creation of opportunities for victims and perpetrators to meet and reconcile**									
6	**Better opportunities for people who suffered discrimination**									

17. Do you agree with the view that since the end of the war, people who committed acts of violence and abuses have openly or privately expressed remorse, rendered apologies, regretted their acts, or accepted their guilt for their actions?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

18. What is your view of the statement that individuals and groups that suffered violence, losses, and abuses during the war have had the opportunity to openly or privately accept the expressions of remorse, regret and requests for forgiveness from those who hurt them?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

19. What do you think of the view that victims of acts of violence during the civil war now feel safe, secure, and assured that they will not experience the same level of violence and abuse in the future?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

PERCEPTIONS ON THE RISKS OF RECURRENCE OF VIOLENT CONFLICT IN LIBERIA

20. Do you believe that Liberia can descend into another violent national-level conflict?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

21. What is your assessment of the risk that Liberia can still descend into a violent national-level conflict, such as civil war, despite the peace it currently enjoys?

1	Very high risk	☐
2	High risk	☐
3	Moderately high risk	☐
4	Moderate risk	☐
5	Moderately low risk	☐
6	Low risk	☐
7	Very low risk	☐
8	Not at all	☐
9	Can't tell	☐

22. Which county do you think has the highest risk for the start of widespread violence?

1	Bomi	☐
2	Bong	☐
3	Gbarpolu	☐
4	Grand Bassa	☐
5	Grand Cape Mount	☐
6	Grand Gedeh	☐
7	Grand Kru	☐
8	Lofa	☐
9	Margibi	☐
10	Maryland	☐
11	Montserrado	☐
12	Nimba	☐
13	River Gee	☐
14	Rivercess	☐
15	Sinoe	☐

23. To what extent can the following factors cause the recurrence of widespread violence or civil war in Liberia?

NO.	PROCESS	VERY HIGH	HIGH EXTENT	MODER-ATELY HIGH EXTENT	MOD-ERATE EXTENT	MODER-ATELY LOW EXTENT	LOW EXTENT	VERY LOW EXTENT	NOT AT ALL	CAN'T TELL
1	**Limited access to basic services, such as health and education**									
2	**Corruption in public offices**									
3	**Disputes over land ownership**									
4	**High levels of unemployment among the youth**									
5	**High dependence of Liberians on imported food**									
6	**Disputes over the results of the elections in 2017**									
7	**Interreligious conflicts**									
8	**Differences in access to justice**									
9	**Interethnic competition for power**									
10	**Extra judicial arrests, detentions, torture, and disappearances of people.**									
11	**Limited opportunities for reconciliation after the war**									
12	**Ethnic politics**									
13	**Controlling influence and interests of private business in politics**									
14	**Excesses of freedom of speech in the media**									
15	**Withdrawal of UNMIL**									

24. To what extent are the categories of persons in the list below possible instigators or contributors to the recurrence of violent conflicts or civil war in Liberia?

NO.	PROCESS	VERY HIGH	HIGH EXTENT	MODER-ATELY HIGH EXTENT	MOD-ERATE EXTENT	MODER-ATELY LOW EXTENT	LOW EXTENT	VERY LOW EXTENT	NOT AT ALL	CAN'T TELL
1	**Political Leaders**									
2	**Business Leaders**									
3	**Traditional Leaders**									
4	**Religious Leaders**									
5	**Ex-Child Soldiers**									
6	**The Media, including radio, newspapers, and social media**									
7	**Security services in Liberia, including the AFL and the police**									
8	**Victims of violence who have not received justice**									
9	**Civil Society Organizations**									
10	**Unemployed Youth**									
11	**Women who suffered rape and abuse in the war**									
12	**Others:**									

RESPECT FOR BASIC FREEDOMS, RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW IMPLICATIONS FOR PEACE IN LIBERIA

25. To what extent do the following factors contribute to peace in Liberia today?

NO.	CATEGORY	VERY HIGH	HIGH EXTENT	MODER-ATELY HIGH EXTENT	MOD-ERATE EXTENT	MODER-ATELY LOW EXTENT	LOW EXTENT	VERY LOW EXTENT	NOT AT ALL	CAN'T TELL
1	**Liberians express themselves freely in all media**									
2	**Newspapers, radio, TV stations and other media houses operate freely**									
3	**Liberians are free to join any political party**									
4	**Liberians can vote the way they want**									
5	**Liberians can join any association or group that they want**									
6	**Liberians respect the law at all times**									
7	**Judges are free from corruption**									
8	**Judges make their decisions freely**									
9	**Liberians respect the decisions made by the law courts in the country**									
10	**Government officials and public servants always make decisions and act in accordance with the laws of Liberia**									
11	**Government agencies always respect the views of citizens when the make and implement policies**									

GENDER EQUITY, JUSTICE, AND PEACE

26. Do you agree with the view that male and female victims of violence, loss, and abuses during the war received the same level of compensation?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

27. What do you think of the view that men and women had equal opportunities to participate in post-conflict truth telling, healing, and reconciliation processes at the national, county, and community levels?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

28. Would you agree that in the post-conflict rehabilitation, reintegration, and reconciliation processes the concerns of women received the same attention as those of men?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

29. Would you say that male and female victims and survivors of violence, abuse, and losses were given the same access to economic opportunities (loans, contracts, financial services, markets for their produce, etc.) to rebuild their lives?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

30. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Liberian women have the same employment opportunities in the public and civil services as men?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

31. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Liberia's peace is due to the fact that women play active roles in mediating conflicts at all levels?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

32. To what extent do you believe that the differences in the way men and women are treated in Liberia can contribute to widespread violence or conflict in Liberia?

1	I very strongly believe	☐
2	I strongly believe	☐
3	I believe	☐
4	I do not believe	☐
5	I strongly do not believe	☐
6	I very strongly do not believe	☐
7	No opinion	☐

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION, POLITICAL INCLUSION, ELECTIONS, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE

33. To what extent would you agree that in Liberia people from all ethnic groups have equal chances of being elected as President of the country?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

34. To what extent do you agree that Liberians do not consider the ethnic backgrounds of candidates when deciding for whom to vote?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

35. To what extent do you agree that elections in Liberia are usually free, fair, and transparent?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

SOCIAL INCLUSION, EQUITY, COEXISTENCE AND PEACE

36. To what degree do you agree that in Liberia people from all backgrounds are treated fairly and equally before the law?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

37. To what degree do you agree that in Liberia people are not discriminated against on the basis of their religion when they are looking for employment, business opportunities, or admissions to schools?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

38. To what extent do you agree that in Liberia people of different faiths can live together without any problem?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

39. To what extent would you agree that in Liberia politicians do not use interreligious differences in their campaigns?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

40. To what degree do you agree or disagree with the statement that in Liberia families readily allow their relatives to marry people from different religious backgrounds?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN PROMOTING PEACE

41. How would rate the capacity of the Government of Liberia to maintain peace and security in the country after the withdrawal of UNMIL?

1	Very low extent	☐
2	Low extent	☐
3	Moderately low extent	☐
4	Moderate extent	☐
5	Moderately high extent	☐
6	High extent	☐
7	Very high extent	☐
8	Not at all	☐
9	Can't tell	☐

42. To what degree would you agree that the Government of Liberia has since the end of the civil war created opportunities for Liberians to work with state institutions to sustain and grow the peace?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

43. To what degree would you agree that Liberia now has the institutional mechanisms at the local levels to resolve conflicts before they escalate into large-scale violence?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

44. How would you rate the neutrality of the Government of Liberia in handling conflicts between different ethnic, political, or religious groups?

1 Always neutral ☐
2 Frequently neutral ☐
3 Occasionally neutral ☐
4 Seldom neutral ☐
5 Never ☐
6 Can't tell ☐

ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

45. To what extent do you believe that private businessmen and -women, Liberians and non-Liberians have a strong influence in the politics of Liberia?

1 I very strongly believe ☐
2 I strongly believe ☐
3 I believe ☐
4 I do not believe ☐
5 I strongly do not believe ☐
6 I very strongly do not believe ☐
7 No opinion ☐

46. To what extent do you see the role of the private business men and women in Liberia as contributors to building peace in the country?

1 Very low extent ☐
2 Low extent ☐
3 Moderately low extent ☐
4 Moderate extent ☐
5 Moderately high extent ☐
6 High extent ☐
7 Very high extent ☐
8 Not at all ☐
9 Can't tell ☐

47. To what extent do you think the following issues can be the cause of violent conflicts in Liberia?

	PROCESS	VERY HIGH RISK	HIGH RISK	MODERATELY HIGH RISK	MODERATE RISK	MODERATELY LOW RISK	LOW RISK	VERY LOW RISK	NO RISK AT ALL	CAN'T TELL
1	**Differences in access to political power by different ethnic groups**									
2	**Differences in access to political power by different religious groups**									
3	**Voting for candidates on the basis of their ethnicity alone**									
4	**Perceived unfairness in elections**									
5	**Activities of private business men and women**									
6	**Activities of marginalized or hard to reach youth**									

RELIGION AND PEACE IN LIBERIA

48. How important is religion in the lives of Liberians?

1 Not at all important ☐
2 Not very important ☐
3 Somewhat important ☐
4 Important ☐
5 Very important ☐
6 Not sure ☐
7 I don't know ☐

49. What is your opinion on the assertion that faith leaders in Liberia have a strong influence on their followers that they can use to promote peace, not violent conflicts?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

50. To what extent would you agree that in Liberia religious leaders of all faiths and denominations can work together to ensure that conflicts are resolved peacefully?

1	Very strongly agree	☐
2	Strongly agree	☐
3	Mildly agree	☐
4	Agree	☐
5	Mildly disagree	☐
6	Disagree	☐
7	Strongly disagree	☐
8	Very strongly disagree	☐
9	No opinion	☐

51. Do you believe that religious differences can be a source of violent conflicts in Liberia?

1	Very high extent	☐
2	High extent	☐
3	Low extent	☐
4	Very low extent	☐
5	Not at all	☐
6	Can't tell	☐

CULTURE, TRADITION, CUSTOMS AND PEACE

52. To what extent do you believe that the values and traditions of all ethnic groups in Liberia welcome strangers and treat them on equal terms as their fellow citizens?

1 I very strongly believe ☐
2 I strongly believe ☐
3 I believe ☐
4 I do not believe ☐
5 I strongly do not believe ☐
6 I very strongly do not believe ☐
7 No opinion ☐

53. How effective have traditional leaders been in ensuring that different ethnic, political, and religious groups living within their jurisdictions feel at home?

1. Very effective ☐
2. Effective ☐
3. Somehow effective ☐
4. Somehow ineffective ☐
5. Ineffective ☐
6. Very ineffective ☐
7. Can't tell ☐

54. How would you respond to the view that Liberia risks falling into civil war again because the cultures of its various ethnic groups promote violence as a means to resolving conflicts?

1 Very strongly agree ☐
2 Strongly agree ☐
3 Mildly agree ☐
4 Agree ☐
5 Mildly disagree ☐
6 Disagree ☐
7 Strongly disagree ☐
8 Very strongly disagree ☐
9 No opinion ☐

55. To what degree do you accept that the culture and traditions of all ethnic groups in Liberia can train their members to be peaceful?

1 Very high extent ☐
2 High extent ☐
3 Low extent ☐
4 Very low extent ☐
5 Not at all ☐
6 Can't tell ☐

56. To what extent do you believe that the cultures and traditions of all ethnic groups in Liberia have strong sanctions that they can use against their members who stir up violence or breach the public peace?

1 I very strongly believe ☐
2 I strongly believe ☐
3 I believe ☐
4 I do not believe ☐
5 I strongly do not believe ☐
6 I very strongly do not believe ☐
7 No opinion ☐

57. To what extent do you believe that traditional rulers have tight control over members of their ethnic groups and can prevent them from going to war with other ethnic groups?

1 I very strongly believe ☐
2 I strongly believe ☐
3 I believe ☐
4 I do not believe ☐
5 I strongly do not believe ☐
6 I very strongly do not believe ☐
7 No opinion ☐

PERSONAL ATTITUDES, BEHAVIORS, AND PRACTICE FOR SOCIAL COHESION

58. When I am engaged in activities with people from other cultures, I _____ insist on my views.

1 Never ☐ 2 Seldom ☐ 3 Occasionally ☐
4 Frequently ☐ 5 Always ☐

59. Whenever I meet people from other ethnic groups, I _____ try to stay away from them for fear of getting into trouble.

1 Never ☐ 2 Seldom ☐ 3 Occasionally ☐
4 Frequently ☐ 5 Always ☐

60. When discussing important national issues with people from other parts of the country, I let them know their views, feelings, or experiences are_____ mine.

1 More important than ☐ 2 Equally important as ☐ 3 somewhat important as ☐
4 Less important than ☐ 5 Not as important as ☐

61. When I listen to people from other ethnic groups express their views on national issues that affect them directly, I_____ put myself in their shoes in order to understand the issues from their perspective.

1 Never ☐ 2 Seldom ☐ 3 Occasionally ☐
4 Frequently ☐ 5 Always ☐

62. Whenever I vote for President in elections I_____ consider the ethnic background of the candidates before I choose for whom to vote.

1 Never ☐ 2 Seldom ☐ 3 Occasionally ☐
4 Frequently ☐ 5 Always ☐

63. When I vote for a candidate as a senator or representative, I _____consider the issues they talk about as important as their personality and background.

1 Never ☐ 2 Seldom ☐ 3 Occasionally ☐
4 Frequently ☐ 5 Always ☐

64. I would _____ accept work in any part of the country other than my home county.

1 Very willingly ☐ 2 Willingly ☐ 3 Reluctantly ☐ 4 Seldom ☐ 5 Never ☐

65. If a relative of mine plans to marry a person from another ethnic group, I will _____ support him or her.

1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Reluctantly ☐
4 Willingly ☐ 5 Very Willingly ☐

Thank you.

APPENDIX 7: SELECTION CRITERIA FOR DATA COLLECTION CLERKS

The following constitute the basic criteria for the selection of data clerks for this study.

i) ***Selection criteria for data clerks***

Data clerks will be needed to carry out the interviews for the collection of data in the field. The JPC Coordinators will be responsible for identifying and recruiting the number of data clerks who meet the requirements and can carry out complete, accurate, and timely interviews. The following criteria were established for the selection of data clerks:

- Individuals with education levels not below the Senior Secondary level. Undergraduate and graduate level students or post-qualification individuals would be preferred.
- Prior experience with participation in research is an advantage.
- Familiarity with research principles and procedures is highly recommended, though not required.
- Possession of own smart phone running on Android platform is required.
- Ability to use smart phones for data collection is required.
- Willingness to travel to remote or difficult areas is essential.
- Good command of the English language is required.
- Willingness to work at times convenient to the interviewee is required.

ii) ***Working Equipment***

- Phones with large screens (at least 5 inches) are highly recommended.
- Cell phone must have long battery lifespan or support from power banks.
- Cell phones must have large data storage capabilities, either internally built or complemented with SD cards or other mobile storage facilities.
- Phone must have GPS connectivity capabilities.
- Phones with more than one SIM Card preferred to ensure access to cellphone connectivity at all times across different networks during data collection and upload. This is a preference but not a precondition for participation in the survey work.

APPENDIX 8: CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN A STUDY ENTITLED

Title of study: Peace and Conflict Assessment in Liberia

What is the study about? This research aims to understand the opinion of Liberians on the state of peace and conflict in the country today. The outcome of the study will help the Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Church and all other interested parties to better design initiatives that support the building of sustainable peace in Liberia.

The study has two components. The quantitative component is a survey of 1,500 respondents selected from 50 Electoral Districts around Liberia. The second component is the qualitative one, in which the study will interview 50 key informants. You are participating in the **qualitative** component.

Why are you asking me? You are invited to participate in this study because you are an adult Liberian who has participated in national decision-making processes such as presidential and parliamentary elections. Your knowledge, opinions, and perceptions are important for helping us understand the current state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in Liberia.

What will I be doing if I agree to be in the study? You will be asked to provide answers to a number of questions concerning your knowledge, perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes that help explain the state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in Liberia today. Your responses to the questions in this interview are the only requests that I will make of you in this research.

How much time will I be required to spend in this study? The interview will last approximately 60 minutes. This is the only time commitment that is required of you. You may choose to interrupt the interview at any point in time and reschedule an appropriate time to continue with it, if need be.

Is there any audio recording? This research project will include audio recording of the interview. This audio recording will be available to be heard by the researcher, Dr. Hippolyt Pul, who will transcribe using earphones to guard your privacy. The recording will be kept securely in Dr. Pul's office in a locked cabinet, in Ghana. The recording will be kept for 36 months from the end of the study. The recording will be destroyed after that time by shredding the tape. Because your voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who hears the recording, your confidentiality for the things you say on the recording cannot be guaranteed although the researcher will try to limit access to the tape as described in this paragraph.

Is there any video recording? There will be no video recording of the interview sessions.

What are the dangers? There are no known physical risks from this study beyond those associated with routine daily life. Minimal psychological risks associated with

the recall of uncomfortable historical incidents in answer to some questions, however, may occur. You are absolutely free to choose not to answer any question that you feel uncomfortable about. You may also choose to terminate the interview at any point in time without any penalties or loss of benefits to you. All information you provide will be treated as confidential and all identity information (such as your name, contact information, house number) recorded in this interview will not be linked to the responses you give. No statement you make in this interview or provide in any documented information will ever be identified with you personally; however, due to the audio recording of the interviews total confidentiality cannot be promised. However, everything shall be done to ensure that no one except those specified in this study would have access to the audio recordings.

Should you require further information on this research, your rights, or if you experience any discomfort as a result of your participation in this research, you may contact Dr. Hippolyt Pul at +233-244-311-098 or Mr. Pilate Johnson, Acting National Coordinator of the Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Church, Phone +231886540521/ +231776341085 or Email at pilatej@gmail.com

Are there any benefits to me for taking part in this research study? There are no benefits to you for participating.

Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything to participate in the study? There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

How will you keep my information private? All information related to your name and contact details will be deleted and discarded as soon as the researcher verifies all responses to be complete. All information you provide in this study will be treated with strict confidentiality, unless disclosure is mandated by law. Your name will not appear in the transcripts of the interview or in any publication, conference papers or other products of this research. A pseudonym will be used in the write up of the findings of the research and no statement you make in this study will ever be associated with your true name and identity. In the event that the information you provide is cited in the form of direct quotes, your anonymity will be preserved through the use of pseudonym.

All written materials, consent forms, and audio tapes collected during this research will be stored in a locked location in my home and destroyed thirty-six (36) months after the completion of the study. In the event that you agree to have the interview audio-recorded, the audio recording will be transferred to a CD-ROM and held in a secured place. The version on the audio recorder will be erased to prevent unintended access to anyone. The CD-ROMs will be destroyed after the thirty-six months pass.

What if I want to leave the study? Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are under no obligation to participate in this study or to complete the interview process once you have started. You will not suffer any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled if you choose not to participate in the study. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to stop your participation in the study at any point, the information you would have provided up to

the point you decide to stop your participation will be kept in the research records for 36 months from the conclusion of the study and may be used as part of the data for the study. It will be disposed of as and when the information from other participants is disposed of as stated above.

Other Considerations: If the researcher learns anything that might change your mind about participating in the study, you will be told of this information.

Summary of Results: A summary of the results of this research will be supplied to you, at no cost, upon request.

Voluntary Consent: By signing below, you indicate that

- this study has been explained to you
- you have read this document or it has been read to you
- your questions about this research study have been answered
- you have been told that you may ask the researchers any study related questions in the future or contact them in the event of a research-related injury
- you have been told that you may ask Institutional Review Board (IRB) personnel questions about your study rights
- you are entitled to a copy of this form after you have read and signed it
- you voluntarily agree to participate in the study entitled

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant's Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 9: SELECTION CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPANTS IN KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL TRADITIONAL COUNCIL	ELECTED OR APPOINTED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS (4), INCLUDING SERVING AND FORMER SENATORS, LAWMAKERS AND OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS, COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS
Catholic priest (2)	Chairman of Muslim Council
Human rights and civil rights activist, and civil society leaders	Development economist, gender and human rights activist
Development expert	Human rights advocate
Humans right commissioner	Journalism (2)
Law enforcement police	Professionals, including accountant, lawyers, county attorneys
Health professionals, including nurses and health workers, union members	Private businessman, previously accountant at the port in Sinoe
Radio journalist	Researcher and administrator
Retired civil servant, helping with education	Senior imam for Nimba County and a trader
Social worker	Social worker and broadcast journalist
Teacher and peacebuilder	Teacher, facilitator
Teaching	Civil or public servants (3)
Academic (3)	Traditional leader
Christian and Islamic religious leader (3)	Members of security services
Women leaders including gender activists	Youth leaders
Other not specified (9)	

APPENDIX 10: GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

1. Liberia has been through 14 years of civil war. Before 1989, could anyone have foreseen that Liberia would descend into such level of violence? How and why?
2. How would you describe the state of Liberia today—peaceful or not peaceful, and why?
3. The war has been over for more than 10 years now. Have Liberians fully recovered from the experiences of the war and reconciled with each other? Why?
4. Peace is often described as negative peace or positive peace. Negative peace means that even though people are not openly fighting, they live under situations (repressive laws, rules, and regulations, poverty, discrimination, etc.) that can inflict hardship. Positive peace means that there is no open fighting and there are no such dangerous situations. Based on these concepts of peace, how would you describe the peace in Liberia today? Why?
5. What would you say are the major challenges to building sustainable peace in Liberia?
6. Since 2005, elections in Liberia have been hotly contested. How important are elections to maintaining peace in Liberia? Why?
7. Strong institutions are credited with keeping countries at peace. What is your assessment of the capacity of Liberia's institutions to sustain and promote peace in the country? How?
8. Culture plays an important role in all communities. Does culture play any part in Liberia's past, present, and future peace? How and why?
9. Religion is an important factor for peace or war. What role, if any, does religion play in Liberia's experience of peace or conflict?
10. How would you assess the effect of youth actions in Liberia on the peace in the country?
11. What role, if any, do women have in preserving peace in Liberia?
12. How do you see the role of political parties in supporting peace in the country?
13. How do you assess the role of the media in Liberia's peace?
14. Does Liberia face any risks to again descend into a violent, national-level conflict such as civil war?
15. What are the major risk factors that can trigger the recurrence of widespread violence or civil war in Liberia?
16. Are there any other thoughts or closing comments that you would like to share on the current and future state of peace in Liberia?

Thank you for your time and responses.

APPENDIX 11: LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. **Sample size:** Time and budgetary constraints were major determinants on the size of the study. Hence, even though the PPS sampling process ensured equitable chance of representation of all ethnic and political population groupings in the country, the study nonetheless recognizes that the number of clusters used (50) and the sample size of 1,500 are not large enough to provide widely generalizable findings for a country wide study. What the findings in this research do is to capture and present insights on the perceptions, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes of respondents that the Church and its partners need to initiate programing actions. It also presents a base on much larger confirmatory studies can be built.

2. **Distances:** The selected sites were located far from each other, even when several were selected in the same county. In more rural areas, selected polling areas were often more than 30 kilometers from their county capitals. These distances had implications for the data clerks' commute time between their places of residence and the polling areas, as well as between polling areas. Data clerks often required many hours to travel between their stations and the research communities. This affected the duration of the study, extending it beyond the 10 days initially planned.

3. **Road networks:** All selected polling areas outside county capitals and off the trunk roads were often located in rough, difficult to reach terrain. Access by motorcycles was the only way to get to and from these communities. The long travel times for reaching these communities further reduced the planned number of interviews per day.

4. **Center identification:** The sampling procedure used population and community identification data from the 2011 Electoral District database of the National Elections Commission (NEC). The data provided the names and GPS locations of the polling stations, with maps for their respective coverage areas. Data clerks were trained to use the names of the polling centers to locate the survey area and plot their household selection from there. However, research teams experienced difficulties in locating some of the selected polling stations for several reasons. First, some of the centers, especially those located within premises of private schools, had underwent multiple changes in ownership and names of the schools since the elections. Therefore, the names of the schools on the ground did not match those on the database, even though the same center would have been used for the elections. Second, the 2011 database was an update of the 2005 version. However, in some cases the actual place of voting had shifted to different communities within the polling area between 2005 and 2011, even though the name of the original place of voting remained on the register. Data clerks lost time in verifying the true sampled community before embarking on the research. Third, some schools had migrated to different parts of the area, sometimes outside the sampled electoral district. Again, time was lost in tracing down the actual sampled electoral district for the interviews. Fourth, the spelling and pronunciation of the names of some polling centers were different from those used by the local people. Where the names of adjacent communities were similar, care was required to ensure that the sampled communities participated in the survey. Fortunately, pre-survey field reconnaissance visits revealed some of these challenges. Although

the information was factored into the training of data clerks, some clerks still lost considerable time finding the start point for their surveys.

5. **Cell phone connectivity:** The cellphone mounted data collection method of Poimapper required access to internet for the download of GPS coordinates to register the points of interview, as well as for the upload of completed surveys. Of the 1,558 interviews uploaded, 266 (or 14.5%) did not have GPS coordinates, due to very weak or total absence of cell phone connectivity at the interview sites. Due to this problem, several data clerks lost interviews in the process of uploading. In some cases, they received interview upload failure error messages when they tried to upload their completed interviews, even though the interviews were successfully uploaded. In these cases, data clerks either uploaded the same interviews multiple times as they tried to upload or, in some cases, considered the interviews as lost, and conducted and uploaded additional interviews to make up for the lost ones. Lofa County was the most affected in this regard.

   A thorough review of the final data downloaded revealed that while some interviews were indeed lost, others successfully uploaded had missing interview segments due to data transmission losses. Some of the interviews, though complete, were uploaded multiple times. The situation required a time consuming thorough review of the data to eliminate some of the multiple uploads, incomplete interviews or interviews found with other defects that would have made their inclusion in the dataset inadvisable. Interviews without GPS coordinates were retained, if they had no other serious defects. Similarly, where a given survey site had one or two more interviews uploaded to compensate for presumed lost interviews, such additional interviews were scrutinized to ensure they were not duplicates of interviews uploaded earlier. Where it was determined that such interviews were unique, they were admitted into the research data set and included in the analysis. These procedures explain why the sample size (n) for the research was reduced from the 1,558 interviews down to 1,516—which is nonetheless higher than the 1,500-interview sample targeted in the study.

6. **Audio-to-text transcription challenges:** KII interviews were conducted in public places—offices, hotels, cafes, etc. Consequently, interference of ambience noise in the recordings was inevitable in several cases. The noise pollution, in a couple of cases affected the audibility of the recordings during transcription. Second and more importantly, although all the interviews were conducted in English and audio-recorded with prior consent from the interviewees, lack of familiarity with the accent and lingua of spoken Liberian English considerably slowed down the transcription of the audio recordings into text. Transcribers had to listen multiple times to recordings or portions thereof to ensure that they were hearing the words clearly and correctly. While absolute care was taken to ensure that transcribed texts are faithful to the oral recordings, it is acknowledged that a word or phrase may have been omitted here and there in the texts in cases where the audio tapes were impossible to decipher.

7. **Interviewee cooperation:** In general, field data collection encountered little resistance or lack of cooperation from the selected interviewees. One data clerk, however, reported that in one of the sampled electoral districts in Monrovia, people appearing to be Muslims by their dress codes declined requests to participate in the interviews. They offered no reasons. In other places, data clerks met hostile reactions from prospective interviewees, who claimed they had interview fatigue because they had participated in many of such interviews without any tangible benefits to them personally and the country as a whole. Such reactions were, however, very rare, and many of these interviewees dropped their objections and participated in the interviews when the subject matter of the study was explained to them.

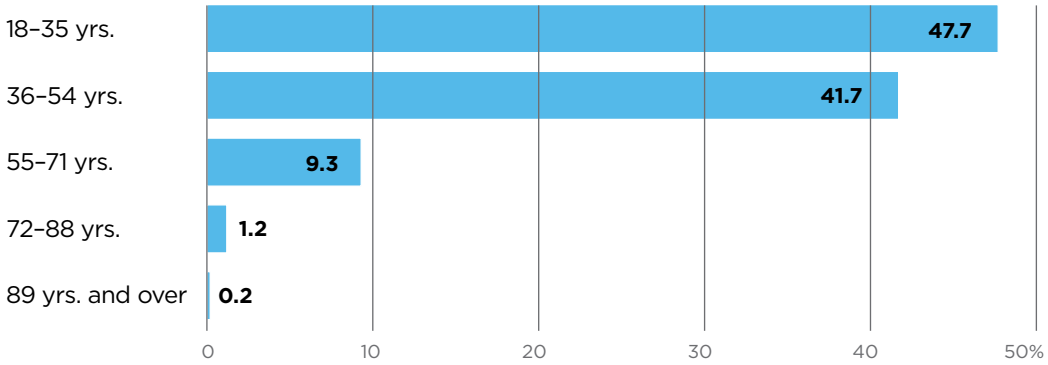
APPENDIX 12: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

1 Profile of survey respondents

The survey component of the study targeted 1,500 interviewees located in 50 electoral districts proportionally distributed across all 15 counties of Liberia. The cluster sampling methodology was used in the selection of the study sites. Trained data clerks used systematic procedures to select and interview persons 18 years or older who lived or worked within the mapped areas of the selected electoral districts. Due to challenges with data upload outlined in Appendix 12, data clerks uploaded a total of 1,558 interviews. After careful scrutiny, we identified 1,516 fully completed, error-free interviews, which served as the survey sample.

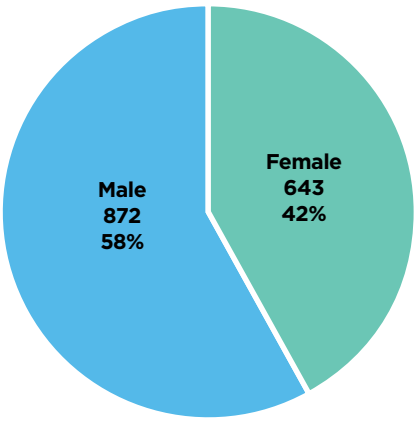
Age of respondents: More than 89% of respondents were within the age range of 18 to 54 years. Interviewees in the 18-35 age categories were the modal group. The numbers of respondents older than 54 years dropped off sharply, with two respondents aged 89 years or older participating in the survey. The range of respondents enables the research to access a broad range of experiences. The 18-year-olds, born towards the end of the war, did not directly experience the war, but are living with the aftereffects. The group of young people between 19 and 23 years of age comprises respondents who were 8-10 years old during the war; old enough to have felt the effects of the war and retain memories of it. The 24- to 27-year-olds had between 11 and 14 years during the war, which makes them old enough to have directly experienced or even participated in the war. Respondents older than 27 were 15 years and older during the war. These adolescents and adults represent respondents who knew what life was before the war; directly experienced or even participated in the war; or if they were not in the country at the time, have heard or read about the events during that time. In sum, the respondents have different knowledge and experiences of the war years and the evolution of the peace process to date, which brings a variety of perspectives on the state of peace, reconciliation, and conflict in the country today.

Figure 2: Age of respondents



Gender of respondents: Figure two presents the gender distribution of respondents. A cross tabulation of gender with religious affiliation of respondents did not produce statistically significant results (p>0.05). Both Christian and Muslim respondents, the

Figure 3: Gender of respondents



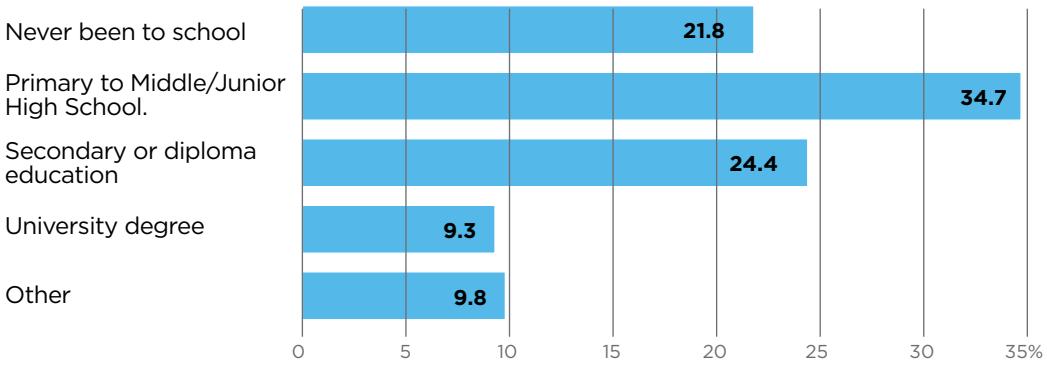
two largest faith groups in the survey, had about the same proportions of men and women respondents (57.2% male respondents for Christians and 56.8% for the Muslim group).

Religion of respondents: 87.5% of the respondents were Christians, 9.6% self-reported as Muslims and 2.3% said they were adherents of African Indigenous Religions (AIR). Other faith groups came in with less than 1% each.

Primary occupation of respondents: 30.7% (465/1,515) of respondents said they were farmers; 14.8% (224/1,515) said they were unemployed; 11.9% (181/1,515) were housewives; and 10.6% indicated they were self-employed artisans and traders. Men dominated in categories such as religious leaders, security services, elected leaders, and civil service with consistently more than 80% of respondents in these categories being men. Women dominated in the self-employment category (61.5%). Appendix 10 provides a profile of the respondents' primary occupation.

Education of respondents: The modal group of respondents (34.7%) had education up to the middle school or junior high school levels. respondents with education up to the secondary school or teacher training college level came second. Respondents who said they had never been to school were the third largest group. Less than 10% of respondents had education up to the university level.

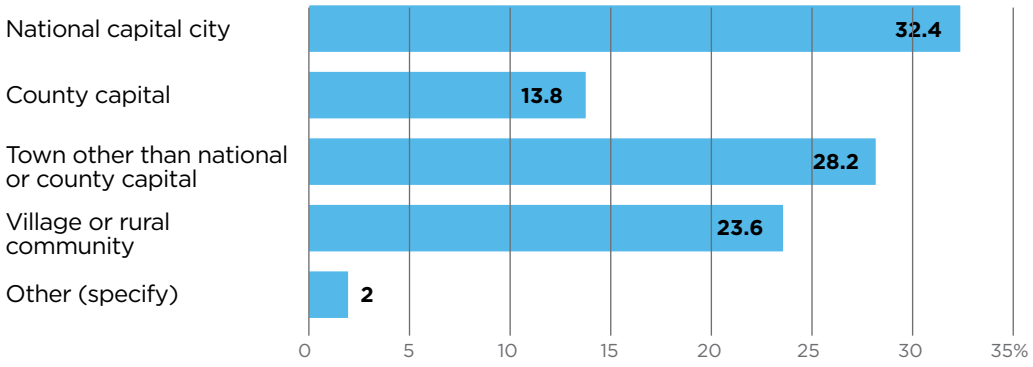
Figure 4: Percentage distribution of education levels of respondents



Location of residence of respondents: At least 32% of interviewees lived in the national capital—Monrovia and its environs. This is consistent with the national population data which puts about one-third of the population of the country in and around Monrovia. Another 28% lived in towns other than the national or county capitals, with a little over 20% of respondents residing in villages or rural communities across the country.

The findings on the education level of respondents as well as their places of abode indicate a broad representation of Liberian society in the study. Notably, 56.5% of all respondents have education below the university level and 51.8% live in communities outside the national and country capitals. In other words, the study captured the opinions of ordinary citizens living outside Monrovia and the county capitals.

Figure 5: Locality of residence of respondents



2 Profile of key informant interviewees

Based on a preliminary list of prospective interviewees generated by JPC staff, the study conducted 47 interviews in total using snowball sampling, with interviewees from the original list suggesting additional participants.

Age of respondents: Respondents in this segment of the study tended to be older. Of the 47 participants, 35 were in the 36-71 age range. The modal group was 38-54-year-olds with 18 participants. Two respondents did not indicate their ages.

TABLE 1: AGE OF KI INTERVIEWEES

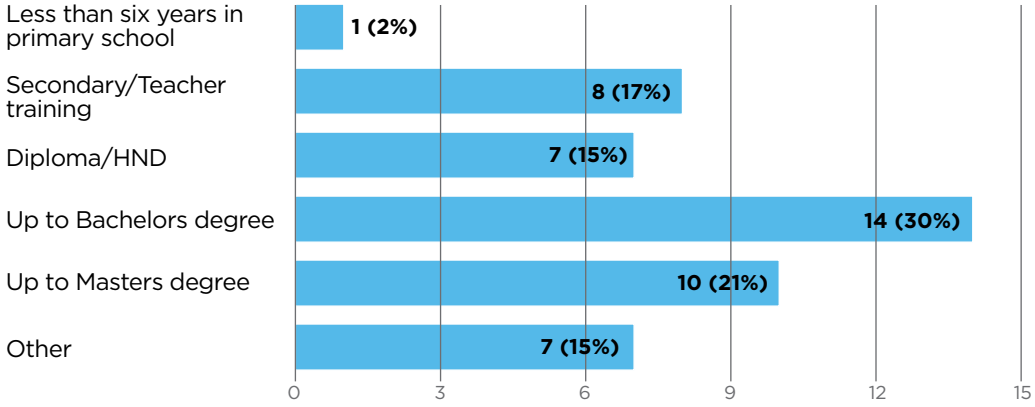
AGE CATEGORY	FREQ.	%
18-35 years	8	17.8
36-54 years	18	40.0
55-71 years	17	37.8
72-88 years	2	4.4
Total	45	100.0
System Missing	2	
Total	47	

Gender of respondents: In total, 37 out of the 47 respondents were male, with the remaining 10 females. Nine of the female respondents were Christian, and one was Muslim.

Religion of respondents: Most respondents (40 out of 47, 85.1%) were Christians; five were Muslim.

Education of respondents: Figure 6 presents a spread of the education levels of respondents in the KII. Unlike in the survey, most KII respondents (24 out of 47, or 51%) had completed tertiary education. Another 32% (15 out of 47) had secondary or post-secondary education. In other words, 83% of the KII participants had completed secondary education or higher. This distribution is not unexpected; the snowball sampling frame targeted key informants who had education and professional experience, in order to gather informed views, opinions and analysis on the research topics.,Primary occupation of respondents: Table 1 below presents the primary occupation of respondents. As expected, nearly all of them are serving officers in middle to senior level positions in various sectors. There is, nonetheless, substantial variety in the professional background and experience of the respondents, which provides wide and varied perspectives.

Figure 6: Education level of KII participants



Primary occupation of respondents: Table 1 below presents the primary occupation of respondents. As expected, nearly all of them are serving officers in middle to senior level positions in various sectors. There is, nonetheless, substantial variety in the professional background and experience of the respondents, which provides wide and varied perspectives.

TABLE 1: PRIMARY OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENT

PRIMARY OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Farmer	465	30.7
House Wife	181	11.9
Elected or Appointed Political Leader	11	0.7
Political Party Leader	10	0.7
Civil or Public Servant	63	4.2

PRIMARY OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Academic	43	2.8
Corporate Business Executive	18	1.2
Professional	62	4.1
Traditional Leader	74	4.9
Religious Leader	25	1.7
Member of Security Services	13	0.9
Student	94	6.2
Employee in Private Sector	71	4.7
Self-employed artisan or trader	161	10.6
Unemployed	224	14.8
Total	1,515	100.0
Missing System	1	
Total	**1,516**	

The variations in background of respondents in the survey and key informant interviews provide a good blend of opinions that form the basis of the findings of the study. The broad range of consensus between the two categories of study participants on many of the subjects of inquiry in the survey provides a measure of internal validity for the outcomes of the survey.

APPENDIX 13: SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES FOR SECTION 2.2

TABLE 2.2A: CURRENT STATE OF THE PEACE IN LIBERIA

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Can't tell	20	1.3
Don't know	13	.9
Not at all peaceful	29	1.9
Not peaceful	106	7.0
Somewhat peaceful	363	24.0
Peaceful	804	53.1
Very peaceful	180	11.9
Total	**1,515**	**100.0**

TABLE 2.2B: STATE OF PEACE COMPARED TO BEFORE WAR

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Don't Know	94	6.2
Not at all as peaceful as before the war	105	6.9
Less peaceful than before the war	143	9.4
Somewhat as peaceful as before the war	257	17.0
As peaceful as before the war	291	19.2
More peaceful than before the war	625	41.3
Total	**1,515**	**100.0**

TABLE 2.2C: TYPE OF PEACE IN LIBERIA

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Positive peace	510	33.7
Negative peace	1,005	66.3
Total	**1,515**	**100.0**

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES FOR SECTION 2.3

TABLE 2.3A: RECONCILIATION IN POSTWAR LIBERIA (BY GENDER OF RESPONDENT)

		GENDER		TOTALS
		MALE	FEMALE	
Reconciliation has happened	n	445	307	752
	%	51.1%	47.9%	49.7%
Reconciliation has not happened	n	426	334	760
	%	48.9%	52.1%	50.3%
Total	**n**	**871**	**641**	**1,512**
	%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.3B RECONCILIATION IN POSTWAR LIBERIA (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	LEVEL OF RECONCILIATION				TOTAL
	NOT RECONCILED		RECONCILED		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	31	43.7%	40	56.3%	71
Bong	117	53.2%	103	46.8%	220
Gbarpolou	18	30.5%	41	69.5%	59
Grand Bassa	104	53.1%	92	46.9%	196
Grand Cape Mount	36	52.9%	32	47.1%	68
Grand Gedeh	31	54.4%	26	45.6%	57
Grand Kru	38	48.7%	40	51.3%	78
Lofa	77	32.5%	160	67.5%	237
Margibi	25	52.1%	23	47.9%	48
Maryland	44	46.8%	50	53.2%	94
Montserrado	30	60.0%	20	40.0%	50
Nimba	155	71.1%	63	28.9%	218
River Gee	6	21.4%	22	78.6%	28
Rivercess	19	59.4%	13	40.6%	32
Sinoe	27	51.9%	25	48.1%	52
Other	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	4
Total	**760**	**50.3%**	**752**	**49.7%**	**1,512**

TABLE 2.3C: CROSS TABULATION VIEWS OF RECONCILIATION AND EDUCATION LEVEL

VICTIMS HAVE RECEIVED JUSTICE FROM POSTWAR RECONCILIATION PROCESSES. (FILTERED AT ≥6.5	EDUCATION LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS								TOTAL
	NO FORMAL SCHOOLING	LESS THAN SIX YEARS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL	PRIMARY EDUCATION UP TO MIDDLE SCHOOL/ JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	COMPLETED SECONDARY/ HIGH SCHOOL OR TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE	TERTIARY EDUCATION UP TO DIPLOMA OR HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA	UNIVERSITY DEGREE (BACHELORS)	UNIVERSITY DEGREE (MASTERS)	NO FORMAL SCHOOLING	
Disagree	260	143	283	253	76	102	19	135	1,271
	78.8%	80.3%	81.3%	92.0%	80.9%	83.6%	100.0%	90.6%	83.9%
Agree	70	35	65	22	18	20	0	14	244
	21.2%	19.7%	18.7%	8.0%	19.1%	16.4%	0.0%	9.4%	16.1%
Total	**330**	**178**	**348**	**275**	**94**	**122**	**19**	**149**	**1,515**
	21.8%	**11.7%**	**23.0%**	**18.2%**	**6.2%**	**8.1%**	**1.3%**	**9.8%**	**100.0%**

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES FOR SECTION 2.4

TABLE 2.4A: CAN LIBERIA SLIDE BACK INTO ANOTHER VIOLENT CONFLICT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL? (FILTERED AT ≥7.5)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
No Opinion	114	7.5%
Do Not Believe	843	55.6%
Believe	558	36.8%
Total	**1,515**	**100**

TABLE 2.4B: RISK OF RETURNING TO A STATE OF WAR (FILTERED AT ≥7.5)

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Can't Tell	86	5.7
No risk to low risk	662	43.7
High to very high risk	767	50.6
Total	**1,515**	**100.0**

TABLE 2.4C: RISK OF RETURNING TO A STATE OF WAR (FILTERED AT ≥7.5) (BY GENDER)

	GENDER		TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE	
No risk to low risk	441	307	748
	50.6%	47.7%	49.4%
Moderate to very high risk	431	336	767
	49.4%	52.3%	50.6%
Total	**872**	**643**	**1,515**
	57.6%	**42.4%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.4D: POTENTIAL TRIGGER FACTORS FOR VIOLENT CONFLICT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL (RATED HIGH TO VERY HIGH)

POTENTIAL TRIGGER FACTORS:	HIGH TO VERY HIGH EXTENT
Corruption	80.4%
Land disputes	77.6%
Youth unemployment	69.8%
Dependence on imported food	60.5%
Basic needs	58.3%
Extra-judicial arrests, detentions, torture, etc.	56.7%
Differences in access to justice	55.6%
Excess of freedom of the press	53.6%
Disputes over 2017 general elections	53.2%
Interreligious conflicts	48.3%
Interethnic competition for power	45.1%
Limited opportunities for reconciliation	43.9%
Ethnic politics	39.2%
Withdrawal of UNMIL	38.0%
Private sector influence in politics	35.6%

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES FOR SECTION 2.9

TABLE 2.9A: CAPACITY OF GOL TO SECURE THE PEACE AFTER UNMIL WITHDRAWAL

	FREQUENCY	VALID PERCENT
Do not agree	1,182	78.0
Agree	333	22.0
Total	**1,515**	**100.0**

TABLE 2.9B: CAPACITY OF GOL TO SECURE THE PEACE AFTER UNMIL WITHDRAWAL (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	DO NOT AGREE		AGREE		TOTAL	
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N	PERCENT
Bomi	20	64.5%	11	35.5%	31	2.0%
Bong	105	68.6%	48	31.4%	153	10.1%
Gbarpolou	16	55.2%	13	44.8%	29	1.9%
Grand Bassa	92	76.0%	29	24.0%	121	8.0%
Grand Cape Mount	26	83.9%	5	16.1%	31	2.0%
Grand Gedeh	22	73.3%	8	26.7%	30	2.0%
Grand Kru	22	71.0%	9	29.0%	31	2.0%
Lofa	107	72.3%	41	27.7%	148	9.8%
Margibi	51	60.7%	33	39.3%	84	5.5%
Maryland	49	81.7%	11	18.3%	60	4.0%
Montserrado	429	82.3%	92	17.7%	521	34.4%
Nimba	166	88.8%	21	11.2%	187	12.3%
River Gee	27	90.0%	3	10.0%	30	2.0%
Rivercess	25	86.2%	4	13.8%	29	1.9%
Sinoe	25	83.3%	5	16.7%	30	2.0%
Total	***1,182***	***78.0%***	***333***	***22.0%***	***1,515***	***100.0%***

TABLE 2.9 C: CHI-SQUARE TESTS

MEASURES	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	62.551	14	.000
Likelihood Ratio	61.049	14	.000
N of Valid Cases	**1,515**		

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES FOR SECTION 2.10

TABLE 2.10A: CHI-SQUARE TESTS ON PERCEIVED NEUTRALITY OF GOL IN RESOLVING CONFLICTS

MEASURES	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	181.036a	14	.000
Likelihood Ratio	190.291	14	.000
N of Valid Cases	**1,515**		

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES FOR SECTION 2.11

TABLE 2.11A: CROSS TABULATION OF VIEWS ON PRIVATE SECTOR INFLUENCE IN POLITICS (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	DO NOT BELIEVE		BELIEVE		TOTAL
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	25	80.6%	6	19.4%	31
Bong	72	47.1%	81	52.9%	153
Gbarpolou	5	17.2%	24	82.8%	29
Grand Bassa	89	73.6%	32	26.4%	121
Grand Cape Mount	26	83.9%	5	16.1%	31
Grand Gedeh	28	93.3%	2	6.7%	30
Grand Kru	18	58.1%	13	41.9%	31
Lofa	96	64.9%	52	35.1%	148
Margibi	43	51.2%	41	48.8%	84
Maryland	33	55.0%	27	45.0%	60
Montserrado	287	55.1%	234	44.9%	521
Nimba	155	82.9%	32	17.1%	187
River Gee	27	90.0%	3	10.0%	30
Rivercess	19	65.5%	10	34.5%	29
Sinoe	8	26.7%	22	73.3%	30
Total	**932**	**61.5%**	**584**	**38.5%**	**1,516**

TABLE 2.11B: CHI-SQUARE TESTS

RESULTS	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	146.422a	15	.000
Likelihood Ratio	157.719	15	.000
N of Valid Cases	**1,516**		

TABLE 2.11C: ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR IN POLITICS AND PEACEBUILDING (FILTERED AT ≥ 7)

1 No Opinion	164	29
	14.9%	7.0%
2 Do Not Believe	334	179
	30.4%	43.0%
3 Strongly Do Not Believe	57	16
	5.2%	3.8%
4 Very Strongly Do Not Believe	110	42
	10.0%	10.1%
5 Believe	134	45
	12.2%	10.8%
6 Strongly Believe	163	72
	14.8%	17.3%
7 Very Strongly Believe	137	33
	12.5%	7.9%
Total	**1,099**	**416**

TABLE 2.11D: CHI-SQUARE TESTS – ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR IN POLITICS AND PEACEBUILDING

MEASURES	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	37.540a	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	39.243	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.736	1	.391
N of Valid Cases	**1,515**		

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES FOR SECTION 2.12

TABLE 2.12A: IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION IN EVERYDAY LIFE (FILTERED AT ≥ 5.5) (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION				TOTAL
	NOT IMPORTANT + DON'T KNOW		IMPORTANT		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	2	6.5%	29	93.5%	31
Bong	11	7.2%	142	92.8%	153
Gbarpolou	20	69.0%	9	31.0%	29
Grand Bassa	24	19.8%	97	80.2%	121
Grand Cape Mount	2	6.5%	29	93.5%	31
Grand Gedeh	2	6.7%	28	93.3%	30
Grand Kru	17	54.8%	14	45.2%	31
Lofa	29	19.6%	119	80.4%	148
Margibi	26	31.0%	58	69.0%	84
Maryland	21	35.0%	39	65.0%	60
Montserrado	148	28.4%	373	71.6%	521
Nimba	34	18.2%	153	81.8%	187
River Gee	6	20.0%	24	80.0%	30
Rivercess	2	6.9%	27	93.1%	29
Sinoe	16	53.3%	14	46.7%	30
Total	**360**	**23.8%**	**1,155**	**76.2%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.12B: CROSS TABULATION OF RESPONSES ON RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION (FILTERED AT ≥ 6.5) (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	DISAGREE OR NO OPINION		AGREE		TOTAL	
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Bomi	17	54.8%	14	45.2%	31	2.0%
Bong	65	42.5%	88	57.5%	153	10.1%
Gbarpolou	25	86.2%	4	13.8%	29	1.9%
Grand Bassa	74	61.2%	47	38.8%	121	8.0%
Grand Cape Mount	28	90.3%	3	9.7%	31	2.0%
Grand Gedeh	6	20.0%	24	80.0%	30	2.0%
Grand Kru	20	64.5%	11	35.5%	31	2.0%
Lofa	77	52.0%	71	48.0%	148	9.8%
Margibi	29	34.5%	55	65.5%	84	5.5%
Maryland	21	35.0%	39	65.0%	60	4.0%
Montserrado	241	46.3%	280	53.7%	521	34.4%
Nimba	148	79.1%	39	20.9%	187	12.3%
River Gee	4	13.3%	26	86.7%	30	2.0%
Rivercess	9	31.0%	20	69.0%	29	1.9%
Sinoe	12	40.0%	18	60.0%	30	2.0%
Total	**776**	**51.2%**	**739**	**48.8%**	**1,515**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.12C: CROSS TABULATION OF RESPONSES ON RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION (BY GENDER)

	GENDER		TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE	
Disagree or No opinion	456	320	776
	52.3%	49.8%	51.2%
	30.1%	21.1%	51.2%
Agree	416	323	739
	47.7%	50.2%	48.8%
	27.5%	21.3%	48.8%
Total	**872**	**643**	**1,515**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**
	57.6%	**42.4%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.12D: CHI-SQUARE TESTS FOR CROSS TABULATION ON RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION (BY GENDER)

TEST RESULTS	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.818a	8	.045
Likelihood Ratio	15.847	8	.045
Linear-by-Linear Association	.042	1	.838
N of Valid Cases	1,515		

TABLE 2.12E: RECODING OF RESPONSES ON RELIGION AS A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF CONFLICT (FILTERED AT ≥ 5)

RESPONSE CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	VALID PERCENT
Can't tell	100	6.6
Not a source of conflict	94	6.2
Low to very low extent	447	23.3
High or very high extent	969	63.9
Total	**1,516**	**100.0**

TABLE 2.12F: RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES AS A CONFLICT RISK FACTOR IN LIBERIA (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	RELIGION IS NOT A RISK FACTOR		RELIGION IS A RISK FACTOR		TOTAL
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	16	51.6%	15	48.4%	31
Bong	22	14.4%	131	85.6%	153
Gbarpolou	27	93.1%	2	6.9%	29
Grand Bassa	41	33.9%	80	66.1%	121
Grand Cape Mount	10	32.3%	21	67.7%	31
Grand Gedeh	22	73.3%	8	26.7%	30
Grand Kru	26	83.9%	5	16.1%	31
Lofa	61	41.2%	87	58.8%	148
Margibi	28	33.3%	56	66.7%	84
Maryland	23	38.3%	37	61.7%	60
Montserrado	170	32.6%	351	67.4%	521
Nimba	49	26.2%	138	73.8%	187
River Gee	28	93.3%	2	6.7%	30
Rivercess	7	24.1%	22	75.9%	29
Sinoe	17	56.7%	13	43.3%	30
Total	**547**	**36.1%**	**969**	**63.9%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.12G: INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	LEVEL OF AGREEMENT				TOTAL
	NO STRONG INFLUENCE		STRONG INFLUENCE		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	4	12.9%	27	87.1%	31
Bong	43	28.1%	110	71.9%	153
Gbarpolou	21	72.4%	8	27.6%	29
Grand Bassa	33	27.3%	88	72.7%	121
Grand Cape Mount	8	25.8%	23	74.2%	31
Grand Gedeh	0	0.0%	30	100.0%	30
Grand Kru	24	77.4%	7	22.6%	31
Lofa	28	18.9%	120	81.1%	148
Margibi	22	26.2%	62	73.8%	84
Maryland	11	18.3%	49	81.7%	60
Montserrado	115	22.1%	406	77.9%	521
Nimba	88	47.1%	99	52.9%	187
River Gee	0	0.0%	30	100.0%	30
Rivercess	8	27.6%	21	72.4%	29
Sinoe	17	56.7%	13	43.3%	30
Total	**422**	**27.9%**	**1,093**	**72.1%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.12H: VIEWS ON INTERFAITH COLLABORATION FOR PEACE (FILTERED ≥ 6.5) (BY COUNTY)

COUNT OF INTERVIEW	RESPONSE CATEGORIES [3] 6.5				TOTAL
	NO OPINION AND DISAGREE		AGREE		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	1	3.2%	30	96.8%	31
Bong	31	20.3%	122	79.7%	153
Gbarpolou	4	13.8%	25	86.2%	29
Grand Bassa	30	24.8%	91	75.2%	121
Grand Cape Mount	2	6.5%	29	93.5%	31
Grand Gedeh	1	3.3%	29	96.7%	30
Grand Kru	19	61.3%	12	38.7%	31
Lofa	40	27.0%	108	73.0%	148
Margibi	8	9.5%	76	90.5%	84
Maryland	17	28.3%	43	71.7%	60
Montserrado	126	24.2%	395	75.8%	521
Nimba	100	53.5%	87	46.5%	187
River Gee	1	3.3%	29	96.7%	30
Rivercess	10	34.5%	19	65.5%	29
Sinoe	9	30.0%	21	70.0%	30
Total	**399**	**26.3%**	**1,116**	**73.7%**	**1,515**

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES FOR SECTION 2.13

TABLE 2.13A: CROSS TABULATION OF ACCOMMODATION OF STRANGERS IN ETHNIC GROUPS (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	NO OPINION		DO NOT BELIEVE		BELIEVE		N
Bomi	0	0.00%	1	3.23%	30	96.77%	31
Bong	1	0.65%	20	13.07%	132	86.27%	153
Gbarpolou	0	0.00%	5	17.24%	24	82.76%	29
Grand Bassa	3	2.48%	8	6.61%	110	90.91%	121
Grand Cape Mount	0	0.00%	2	6.45%	29	93.55%	31
Grand Gedeh	0	0.00%	1	3.33%	29	96.67%	30
Grand Kru	6	19.35%	8	25.81%	17	54.84%	31
Lofa	3	2.03%	11	7.43%	134	90.54%	148
Margibi	0	0.00%	41	48.81%	43	51.19%	84
Maryland	0	0.00%	6	10.00%	54	90.00%	60
Montserrado	18	3.45%	68	13.05%	435	83.49%	521
Nimba	19	10.22%	122	65.59%	45	24.19%	186
River Gee	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	30	100.00%	30
Rivercess	1	3.57%	3	10.71%	24	85.71%	28
Sinoe	0	0.00%	12	40.00%	18	60.00%	30
Total	**51**	**3.37%**	**308**	**20.36%**	**1,154**	**76.27%**	**1,513**

TABLE 2.13B: ROLE OF CULTURE IN PROMOTING VIOLENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION PRACTICES (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	DOES CULTURE IN LIBERIA PROMOTE THE USE OF VIOLENCE?				TOTAL
	DOES NOT PROMOTE VIOLENCE		DOES PROMOTE VIOLENCE		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	27	87.1%	4	12.9%	31
Bong	83	54.2%	70	45.8%	153
Gbarpolou	10	34.5%	19	65.5%	29
Grand Bassa	79	65.3%	42	34.7%	121
Grand Cape Mount	18	58.1%	13	41.9%	31
Grand Gedeh	15	50.0%	15	50.0%	30
Grand Kru	16	51.6%	15	48.4%	31
Lofa	58	39.2%	90	60.8%	148
Margibi	33	39.3%	51	60.7%	84
Maryland	20	33.3%	40	66.7%	60
Montserrado	336	64.5%	185	35.5%	521
Nimba	134	71.7%	53	28.3%	187
River Gee	9	30.0%	21	70.0%	30
Rivercess	15	51.7%	14	48.3%	29
Sinoe	15	50.0%	15	50.0%	30
Total	**868**	**57.3%**	**647**	**42.7%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.13C: ROLE OF CULTURE IN PROMOTING VIOLENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION PRACTICES (BY RELIGION)

	RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENT							TOTAL
	AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION	ATHEIST	BUDDHISM	CHRISTIANITY	HINDUISM	ISLAM	OTHER (SPECIFY)	
Culture does not promote violence	28	0	1	757	0	81	1	868
	80.0%	0.0%	33.3%	57.1%	0.0%	55.5%	50.0%	57.3%
Culture does promote violence	7	1	2	568	3	65	1	647
	20.0%	100.0%	66.7%	42.9%	100.0%	44.5%	50.0%	42.7%
Total	**35**	**1**	**3**	**1,325**	**3**	**146**	**2**	**1,515**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.13D: ROLE OF CULTURE IN PROMOTING PEACE (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	CULTURE CANNOT TRAIN FOR PEACE		CULTURE CAN TRAIN FOR PEACE		TOTAL
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	7	22.6%	24	77.4%	31
Bong	28	18.3%	125	81.7%	153
Gbarpolou	13	44.8%	16	55.2%	29
Grand Bassa	30	24.8%	91	75.2%	121
Grand Cape Mount	10	32.3%	21	67.7%	31
Grand Gedeh	2	6.7%	28	93.3%	30
Grand Kru	22	71.0%	9	29.0%	31
Lofa	47	31.8%	101	68.2%	148
Margibi	19	22.6%	65	77.4%	84
Maryland	18	30.0%	42	70.0%	60
Montserrado	140	26.9%	381	73.1%	521
Nimba	170	90.9%	17	9.1%	187
River Gee	5	16.7%	25	83.3%	30
Rivercess	15	51.7%	14	48.3%	29
Sinoe	13	43.3%	17	56.7%	30
Total	**540**	**35.6%**	**976**	**64.4%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.13E: ROLE OF CULTURE IN PROMOTING PEACE (BY GENDER)

	GENDER		TOTAL
	MALE	FEMALE	
Culture cannot train for peace	330	209	540
	37.8%	32.5%	35.6%
Culture can train for peace	542	434	976
	62.2%	67.5%	64.4%
Total	**872**	**643**	**1,516**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.13F: CHI-SQUARE TESTS – ROLE OF CULTURE IN PROMOTING PEACE (BY GENDER)

MEASURES	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.411a	2	.041
Likelihood Ratio	6.690	2	.035
N of Valid Cases	1,516		

TABLE 2.13G: ROLE OF CULTURE IN PROMOTING PEACE (BY RELIGION)

	RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENT							
	AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION	ATHEIST	BUDDHISM	CHRISTIANITY	HINDUISM	ISLAM	OTHER (SPECIFY)	TOTAL
Culture cannot train for peace	31	0	0	463	2	43	1	540
	88.6%	0.0%	0.0%	34.9%	66.7%	29.5%	50.0%	35.6%
Culture can train for peace	4	1	3	863	1	103	1	976
	11.4%	100.0%	100.0%	65.1%	33.3%	70.5%	50.0%	64.4%
Total	**35**	**1**	**3**	**1,326**	**3**	**146**	**2**	**1,515**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.13H CHI-SQUARE TESTS – ROLE OF CULTURE IN PROMOTING PEACE (BY RELIGION)

MEASURES	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	49.156a	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	50.314	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	33.494	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1,516		

TABLE 2.13I: PRESENCE OF CULTURAL NORMS THAT PROMOTE CONFLICT OR PEACE (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	CULTURE DOES NOT SANCTION		CULTURE SANCTIONS		TOTAL
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	9	29.0%	22	71.0%	31
Bong	30	19.6%	123	80.4%	153
Gbarpolou	18	62.1%	11	37.9%	29
Grand Bassa	24	19.8%	97	80.2%	121
Grand Cape Mount	8	25.8%	23	74.2%	31
Grand Gedeh	1	3.3%	29	96.7%	30
Grand Kru	20	64.5%	11	35.5%	31
Lofa	33	22.3%	115	77.7%	148
Margibi	16	19.0%	68	81.0%	84
Maryland	3	5.0%	57	95.0%	60
Montserrado	111	21.3%	410	78.7%	521
Nimba	156	83.4%	31	16.6%	187
River Gee	1	3.3%	29	96.7%	30
Rivercess	10	34.5%	19	65.5%	29
Sinoe	13	43.3%	17	56.7%	30
Total	**453**	**29.9%**	**1,062**	**70.1%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.13J: PRESENCE OF CULTURAL NORMS THAT PROMOTE CONFLICT OR PEACE (BY RELIGION)

	RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENT							
	AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION	ATHEIST	BUDDHISM	CHRISTIANITY	HINDUISM	ISLAM	OTHER (SPECIFY)	TOTAL
Culture does not sanction	24	0	0	393	2	34	0	453
	68.6%	0.0%	0.0%	29.7%	66.7%	23.3%	0.0%	29.9%
Culture sanctions	11	1	3	932	1	112	2	1,062
	31.4%	100.0%	100.0%	70.3%	33.3%	76.7%	100.0%	70.1%
Total	**35**	**1**	**3**	**1,325**	**3**	**146**	**2**	**1,515**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.13K: EFFECTIVENESS OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN PROMOTING INCLUSIVENESS (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	NOT EFFECTIVE		EFFECTIVE		TOTAL
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	11	35.5%	20	64.5%	31
Bong	55	35.9%	98	64.1%	153
Gbarpolou	26	89.7%	3	10.3%	29
Grand Bassa	27	22.3%	94	77.7%	121
Grand Cape Mount	11	35.5%	20	64.5%	31
Grand Gedeh	17	56.7%	13	43.3%	30
Grand Kru	29	93.5%	2	6.5%	31
Lofa	32	21.6%	116	78.4%	148
Margibi	59	70.2%	25	29.8%	84
Maryland	51	85.0%	9	15.0%	60
Montserrado	303	58.2%	218	41.8%	521
Nimba	165	88.2%	22	11.8%	187
River Gee	29	96.7%	1	3.3%	30
Rivercess	4	13.8%	25	86.2%	29
Sinoe	22	73.3%	8	26.7%	30
Total	**841**	**55.5%**	**674**	**44.5%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.13L: ROLE OF TRADITIONAL RULERS IN PREVENTION OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	EXTENT OF INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS				TOTAL
	HAVE NO CONTROL		HAVE CONTROL		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31
Bong	152	99.3%	1	0.6%	153
Gbarpolou	29	100.0%	0	0.0%	29
Grand Bassa	106	87.6%	15	8.4%	121
Grand Cape Mount	29	93.5%	2	1.1%	31
Grand Gedeh	30	100.0%	0	0.0%	30
Grand Kru	17	54.8%	14	7.8%	31
Lofa	137	92.6%	11	6.1%	148
Margibi	81	96.4%	3	1.7%	84
Maryland	60	100.0%	0	0.0%	60
Montserrado	494	94.8%	27	15.1%	521
Nimba	85	45.5%	102	57.0%	187
River Gee	30	100.0%	0	0.0%	30
Rivercess	25	86.2%	4	2.2%	29
Sinoe	30	100.0%	0	0.0%	30
Total	**1,336**	**88.2%**	**179**	**100.0%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.13M: ROLE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN PREVENTION OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS (BY RELIGION)

EXTENT OF INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS	RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENT							TOTAL
	AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION	ATHEIST	BUDDHISM	CHRISTIANITY	HINDUISM	ISLAM	OTHER (SPECIFY)	
Have no control	15	1	3	1,173	3	140	2	1,337
	42.9%	100.0%	100.0%	88.5%	100.0%	95.9%	100.0%	88.2%
Have control	20	0	0	153	0	6	0	179
	57.1%	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%	11.8%
Total	**35**	**1**	**3**	**1,326**	**3**	**146**	**2**	**1,516**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES FOR SECTION 2.14

TABLE 2.14A: PERSONAL ASSERTIVENESS IN INTERCULTURAL SETTINGS (BY COUNTY)

COUNTRY OF INTERVIEW	PERSONAL ASSERTIVENESS IN INTERCULTURAL SETTINGS				TOTAL
	NEVER, SELDOM, OCCASIONALLY		FREQUENTLY, ALWAYS		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	22	71.0%	9	29.0%	31
Bong	115	75.2%	38	24.8%	153
Gbarpolou	29	100.0%	0	0.0%	29
Grand Bassa	101	83.5%	20	16.5%	121
Grand Cape Mount	15	48.4%	16	51.6%	31
Grand Gedeh	29	96.7%	1	3.3%	30
Grand Kru	27	87.1%	4	12.9%	31
Lofa	85	57.4%	63	42.6%	148
Margibi	75	89.3%	9	10.7%	84
Maryland	58	96.7%	2	3.3%	60
Montserrado	356	68.3%	165	31.7%	521
Nimba	179	95.7%	8	4.3%	187
River Gee	28	93.3%	2	6.7%	30
Rivercess	28	96.6%	1	3.4%	29
Sinoe	25	83.3%	5	16.7%	30
Total	**1,172**	**77.4%**	**343**	**22.6%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.14B: PERSONAL ASSERTIVENESS IN INTERCULTURAL SETTINGS (BY GENDER)

		GENDER		TOTAL
		MALE	FEMALE	
Never, Seldom, Occasionally	n	693	479	1,172
	%	79.5%	74.5%	77.4%
Frequently, Always	n	179	164	343
	%	20.5%	25.5%	22.6%
Totals		**872**	**643**	**1,515**
		100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.14C: PERSONAL ASSERTIVENESS IN INTERCULTURAL SETTINGS (BY AGE)

	AGE OF RESPONDENTS					TOTAL
	18-35 YRS.	36-54 YRS.	55-71 YRS.	72-88 YRS.	89+ YRS.	
Never, Seldom, Occasionally	451	417	93	7	2	970
	73.6%	77.9%	78.2%	46.7%	100.0%	75.5%
Frequently, Always	162	118	26	8	0	314
	26.4%	22.1%	21.8%	53.3%	0.0%	24.5%
Total	**613**	**535**	**119**	**15**	**2**	**1,284**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.14D: PERSONAL ASSERTIVENESS IN INTERCULTURAL SETTINGS (BY RELIGION)

	RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENT							TOTAL
	AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION	ATHEIST	BUDDHISM	CHRISTIANITY	HINDUISM	ISLAM	OTHER (SPECIFY)	
Never, Seldom, Occasionally	28	1	1	1,049	2	90	1	1,172
	80.0%	100.0%	33.3%	79.2%	66.7%	61.6%	50.0%	77.4%
Frequently, Always	7	0	2	276	1	56	1	343
	20.0%	0.0%	66.7%	20.8%	33.3%	38.4%	50.0%	22.6%
Total	**35**	**1**	**3**	**1,325**	**3**	**146**	**2**	**1,515**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.14E: AVOIDING PEOPLE FROM OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	AVOIDING PEOPLE FROM OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS				TOTAL
	NEVER, SELDOM, OCCASIONALLY		FREQUENTLY, ALWAYS		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	19	61.3%	12	38.7%	31
Bong	146	95.4%	7	4.6%	153
Gbarpolou	18	62.1%	11	37.9%	29
Grand Bassa	92	76.0%	29	24.0%	121
Grand Cape Mount	15	48.4%	16	51.6%	31
Grand Gedeh	28	93.3%	2	6.7%	30
Grand Kru	25	80.6%	6	19.4%	31
Lofa	98	66.2%	50	33.8%	148
Margibi	66	78.6%	18	21.4%	84
Maryland	54	90.0%	6	10.0%	60
Montserrado	405	77.7%	116	22.3%	521
Nimba	177	94.7%	10	5.3%	187
River Gee	30	100.0%	0	0.0%	30
Rivercess	12	41.4%	17	58.6%	29
Sinoe	20	66.7%	10	33.3%	30
Total	**1,205**	**79.5%**	**310**	**20.5%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.14F: AVOIDING PEOPLE FROM OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS (BY RELIGION)

	RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENT							
	AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION	ATHEIST	BUDDHISM	CHRISTIANITY	HINDUISM	ISLAM	OTHER (SPECIFY)	TOTAL
Never, Seldom, Occasionally	27	1	3	1,070	3	99	2	1,205
	77.1%	100.0%	100.0%	80.8%	100.0%	67.8%	100.0%	79.5%
Frequently, Always	8	0	0	255	0	47	0	310
	22.9%	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%	0.0%	32.2%	0.0%	20.5%
Total	**35**	**1**	**3**	**1,325**	**3**	**146**	**2**	**1,515**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.14G: ACCOMMODATION OF OTHER'S VIEWS ON NATIONAL ISSUES

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Not Important	417	27.5
Important	1,098	72.5
Total	**1,515**	**100.0**

TABLE 2.14H: ACCOMMODATION OF OTHER'S VIEWS ON NATIONAL ISSUES (BY AGE)

	AGE OF RESPONDENT					TOTAL
	18-35 YRS.	36-54 YRS.	55-71 YRS.	72-88 YRS.	89+ YRS.	
Not Important	184	148	38	6	2	378
	30.0%	27.7%	31.9%	40.0%	100.0%	29.4%
	14.3%	11.5%	3.0%	0.5%	0.2%	29.4%
Important	429	387	81	9	0	906
	70.0%	72.3%	68.1%	60.0%	0.0%	70.6%
	33.4%	30.1%	6.3%	0.7%	0.0%	70.6%
Total	**613**	**535**	**119**	**15**	**2**	**1,284**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.14I: ACCOMMODATION OF OTHER'S VIEWS ON NATIONAL ISSUES (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	ACCOMMODATION OF OTHER'S VIEWS ON NATIONAL ISSUES				TOTAL
	NOT IMPORTANT		IMPORTANT		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	5	16.1%	26	83.9%	31
Bong	38	24.8%	115	75.2%	153
Gbarpolou	13	44.8%	16	55.2%	29
Grand Bassa	73	60.3%	48	39.7%	121
Grand Cape Mount	11	35.5%	20	64.5%	31
Grand Gedeh	4	13.3%	26	86.7%	30
Grand Kru	18	58.1%	13	41.9%	31
Lofa	50	33.8%	98	66.2%	148
Margibi	25	29.8%	59	70.2%	84
Maryland	10	16.7%	50	83.3%	60
Montserrado	141	27.1%	380	72.9%	521
Nimba	16	8.6%	171	91.4%	187
River Gee	5	16.7%	25	83.3%	30
Rivercess	2	6.9%	27	93.1%	29
Sinoe	6	20.0%	24	80.0%	30
Totals	**417**	**27.5%**	**1,098**	**72.5%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.14J: EMPATHY TOWARDS OTHERS (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	PUTTING YOURSELF IN THE OTHER'S SHOES				TOTAL
	PART OCCASIONALLY, SELDOM, OR NEVER		PART OCCASIONALLY, FREQUENTLY, OR ALWAYS		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	12	38.7%	19	61.3%	31
Bong	72	47.1%	81	52.9%	153
Gbarpolou	13	44.8%	16	55.2%	29
Grand Bassa	47	38.8%	74	61.2%	121
Grand Cape Mount	13	41.9%	18	58.1%	31
Grand Gedeh	6	20.0%	24	80.0%	30
Grand Kru	16	51.6%	15	48.4%	31
Lofa	62	41.9%	86	58.1%	148
Margibi	31	36.9%	53	63.1%	84
Maryland	58	96.7%	2	3.3%	60
Montserrado	233	44.7%	288	55.3%	521
Nimba	17	9.1%	170	90.9%	187
River Gee	17	56.7%	13	43.3%	30
Rivercess	12	41.4%	17	58.6%	29
Sinoe	9	30.0%	21	70.0%	30
Total	**618**	**40.8%**	**897**	**59.2%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.14K: ETHNIC CONSIDERATIONS IN VOTING (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	DO YOU CONSIDER THE ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES WHEN VOTING IN ELECTIONS?										TOTAL
	NEVER		SELDOM		OCCASIONALLY		FREQUENTLY		ALWAYS		
	FREQ.	%	FREQ.	%	FREQ.	%	FREQ.	%	FREQ.	%	N
Bomi	9	29.0%	3	9.7%	9	29.0%	2	6.5%	8	25.8%	31
Bong	83	54.2%	33	21.6%	16	10.5%	9	5.9%	12	7.8%	153
Gbarpolou	14	48.3%	6	20.7%	2	6.9%	3	10.3%	4	13.8%	29
Grand Bassa	60	49.6%	15	12.4%	6	5.0%	20	16.5%	20	16.5%	121
Grand Cape Mount	8	25.8%	4	12.9%	3	9.7%	3	9.7%	13	41.9%	31
Grand Gedeh	21	70.0%	4	13.3%	5	16.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	30
Grand Kru	10	32.3%	4	12.9%	6	19.4%	6	19.4%	5	16.1%	31
Lofa	55	37.2%	14	9.5%	20	13.5%	24	16.2%	35	23.6%	148
Margibi	58	69.0%	14	16.7%	7	8.3%	2	2.4%	3	3.6%	84
Maryland	54	90.0%	2	3.3%	1	1.7%	1	1.7%	2	3.3%	60
Montserrado	309	59.3%	64	12.3%	44	8.4%	34	6.5%	70	13.4%	521
Nimba	102	54.5%	14	7.5%	24	12.8%	23	12.3%	24	12.8%	187
River Gee	25	83.3%	3	10.0%	2	6.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	30
Rivercess	20	69.0%	2	6.9%	3	10.3%	1	3.4%	3	10.3%	29
Sinoe	12	40.0%	5	16.7%	5	16.7%	1	3.3%	7	23.3%	30
Total	**840**	**55.4%**	**187**	**12.3%**	**153**	**10.1%**	**129**	**8.5%**	**206**	**13.6%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.14L: ETHNIC CONSIDERATIONS IN VOTING (BY RELIGION)

DO YOU CONSIDER THE ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES WHEN VOTING IN ELECTIONS?	RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENT							
	AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RELIGION	ATHEIST	BUDDHISM	CHRISTIANITY	HINDUISM	ISLAM	OTHER (SPECIFY)	TOTAL
Never, Seldom, Occasionally	30	1	3	1,164	1	108	2	1,309
	85.7%	100.0%	100.0%	87.8%	33.3%	74.0%	100.0%	86.4%
Frequently, Always	5	0	0	161	2	38	0	206
	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	12.2%	66.7%	26.0%	0.0%	13.6%
Total	**35**	**1**	**3**	**1,325**	**3**	**146**	**2**	**1,515**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.14M: WILLINGNESS TO LIVE AND WORK IN OTHER COUNTIES

WILLING TO LIVE AND WORK IN OTHER COUNTIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Never	388	25.6
Seldom	897	59.2
Reluctantly	75	5.0
Willingly	80	5.3
Very Willingly	75	5.0
Total	**1,515**	**100.0**

TABLE 2.14N: CONSIDER ISSUES OTHER THAN PERSONALITY OF CANDIDATE WHEN VOTING (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	CONSIDER ISSUES OTHER THAN PERSONALITY OF CANDIDATE WHEN VOTING				TOTAL
	NEVER, SELDOM, OCCASIONALLY		FREQUENTLY, ALWAYS		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	14	45.2%	17	54.8%	31
Bong	59	38.6%	94	61.4%	153
Gbarpolou	9	31.0%	20	69.0%	29
Grand Bassa	39	32.2%	82	67.8%	121
Grand Cape Mount	14	45.2%	17	54.8%	31
Grand Gedeh	18	60.0%	12	40.0%	30
Grand Kru	10	32.3%	21	67.7%	31
Lofa	79	53.4%	69	46.6%	148
Margibi	60	71.4%	24	28.6%	84
Maryland	56	93.3%	4	6.7%	60
Montserrado	308	59.1%	213	40.9%	521
Nimba	62	33.2%	125	66.8%	187
River Gee	27	90.0%	3	10.0%	30
Rivercess	8	27.6%	21	72.4%	29
Sinoe	10	33.3%	20	66.7%	30
Total	**773**	**51.0%**	**742**	**49.0%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.14O: WILLINGNESS TO LIVE AND WORK IN OTHER COUNTIES (BY COUNTY)

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	WILLINGNESS TO LIVE AND WORK IN OTHER COUNTIES				TOTAL
	NEVER, SELDOM, RELUCTANTLY		WILLINGLY, VERY WILLINGLY		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	N
Bomi	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31
Bong	141	92.2%	12	7.8%	153
Gbarpolou	5	17.2%	24	82.8%	29
Grand Bassa	116	95.9%	5	4.1%	121
Grand Cape Mount	31	100.0%	0	0.0%	31
Grand Gedeh	30	100.0%	0	0.0%	30
Grand Kru	24	77.4%	7	22.6%	31
Lofa	131	88.5%	17	11.5%	148
Margibi	63	75.0%	21	25.0%	84
Maryland	60	100.0%	0	0.0%	60
Montserrado	484	92.9%	37	7.1%	521
Nimba	168	89.8%	19	10.2%	187
River Gee	30	100.0%	0	0.0%	30
Rivercess	24	82.8%	5	17.2%	29
Sinoe	22	73.3%	8	26.7%	30
Total	**1,360**	**89.8%**	**155**	**10.2%**	**1,515**

TABLE 2.14P: WILLINGNESS TO LIVE AND WORK IN OTHER COUNTIES (BY EDUCATION LEVEL)

WILLINGNESS TO LIVE AND WORK IN OTHER COUNTIES	EDUCATION LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS								
	NO FORMAL SCHOOLING	LESS THAN SIX YEARS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL	PRIMARY EDUCATION UP TO MIDDLE SCHOOL/ JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL	COMPLETED SECONDARY/ HIGH SCHOOL OR TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE	TERTIARY EDUCATION UP TO DIPLOMA OR HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA	UNIVERSITY DEGREE (BACHELORS)	UNIVERSITY DEGREE (MASTERS)	OTHER (SPECIFY)	TOTAL
Never, Seldom, Reluctantly	291	154	293	253	91	115	19	144	1,360
	88.2%	86.5%	84.2%	92.0%	96.8%	94.3%	100.0%	96.6%	89.8%
Willingly, Very Willingly	39	24	55	22	3	7	0	5	155
	11.8%	13.5%	15.8%	8.0%	3.2%	5.7%	0.0%	3.4%	10.2%
Total	**330**	**178**	**348**	**275**	**94**	**122**	**19**	**149**	**1,515**
	100.0%	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

TABLE 2.14Q: SUPPORT FOR INTERETHNIC MARRIAGES IN LIBERIA

COUNTY OF INTERVIEW	SUPPORT INTERMARRIAGE OF A RELATIVE?				TOTAL
	NEVER, SELDOM, RELUCTANTLY		WILLINGLY, VERY WILLINGLY		
	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	
Bomi	24	77.4%	7	22.6%	31
Bong	134	87.6%	19	12.4%	153
Gbarpolou	13	44.8%	16	55.2%	29
Grand Bassa	112	92.6%	9	7.4%	121
Grand Cape Mount	30	96.8%	1	3.2%	31
Grand Gedeh	30	100.0%	0	0.0%	30
Grand Kru	23	74.2%	8	25.8%	31
Lofa	133	89.9%	15	10.1%	148
Margibi	72	85.7%	12	14.3%	84
Maryland	59	98.3%	1	1.7%	60
Montserrado	439	84.3%	82	15.7%	521
Nimba	169	90.4%	18	9.6%	187
River Gee	30	100.0%	0	0.0%	30
Rivercess	22	75.9%	7	24.1%	29
Sinoe	28	93.3%	2	6.7%	30
Total	**1,318**	**87.0%**	**197**	**13.0%**	**1,515**

APPENDIX 14: SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURES

Figure 2.3A: Perception of progress towards reconciliation (by age)

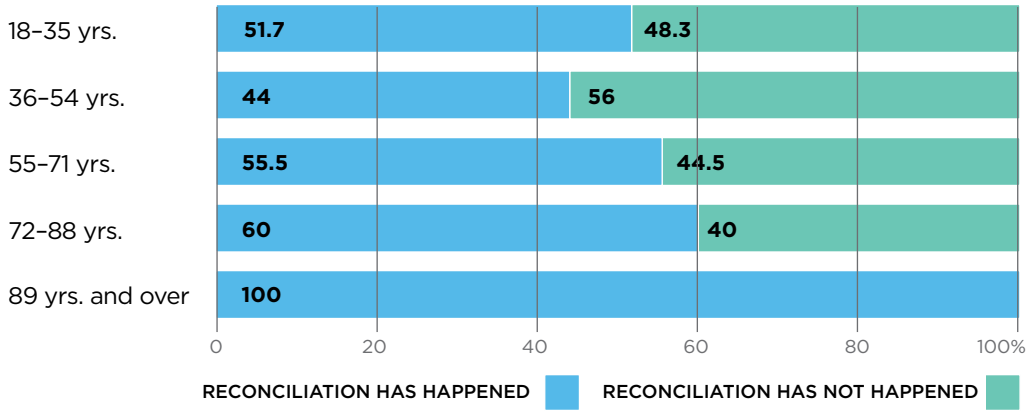


Figure 2.4A: Perception of the risk that war can return (by county)

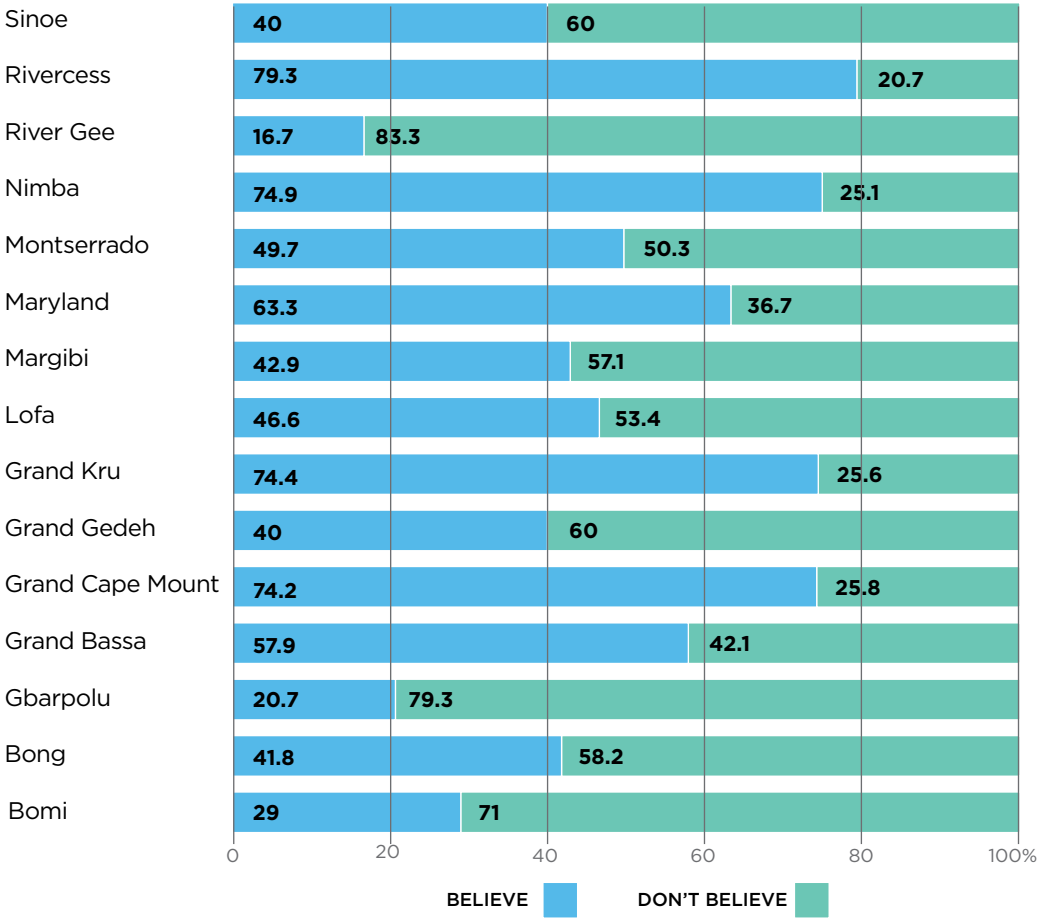


Figure 2.4B: Which county is most at risk for reoccurrence of widespread violence?

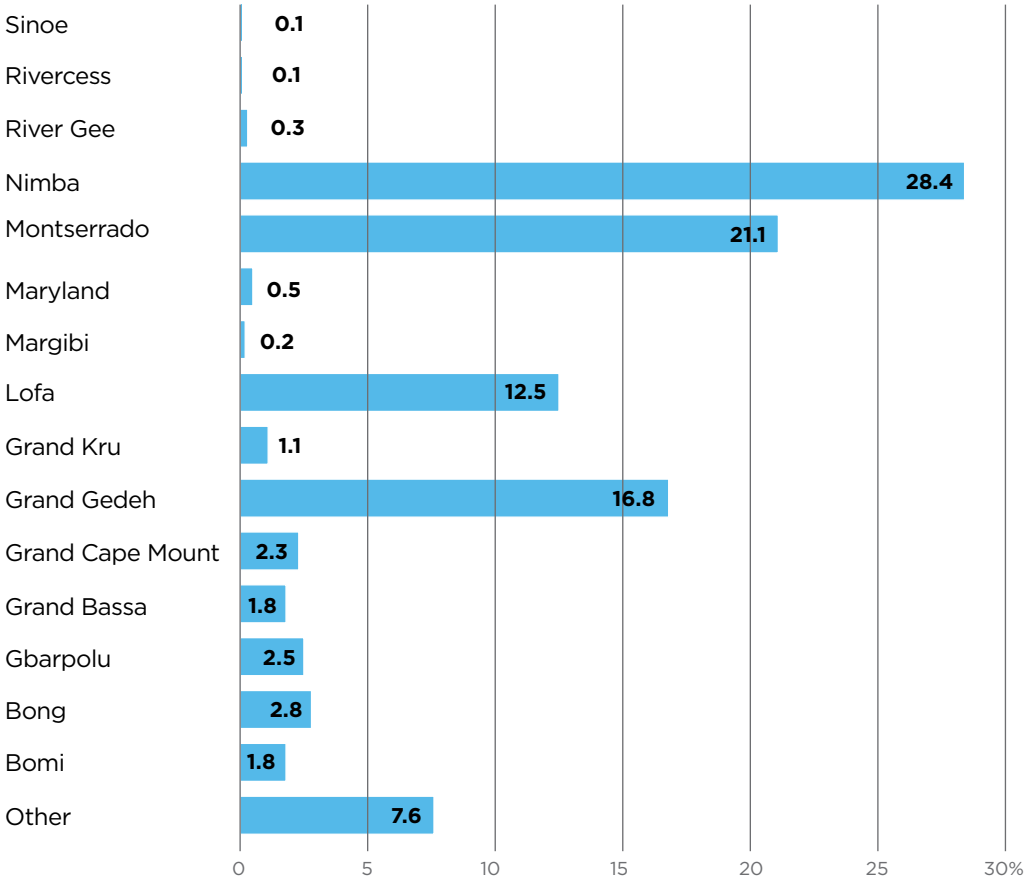


Figure 2.4C: Perceptions of the potential impact of factors on reigniting violent conflict

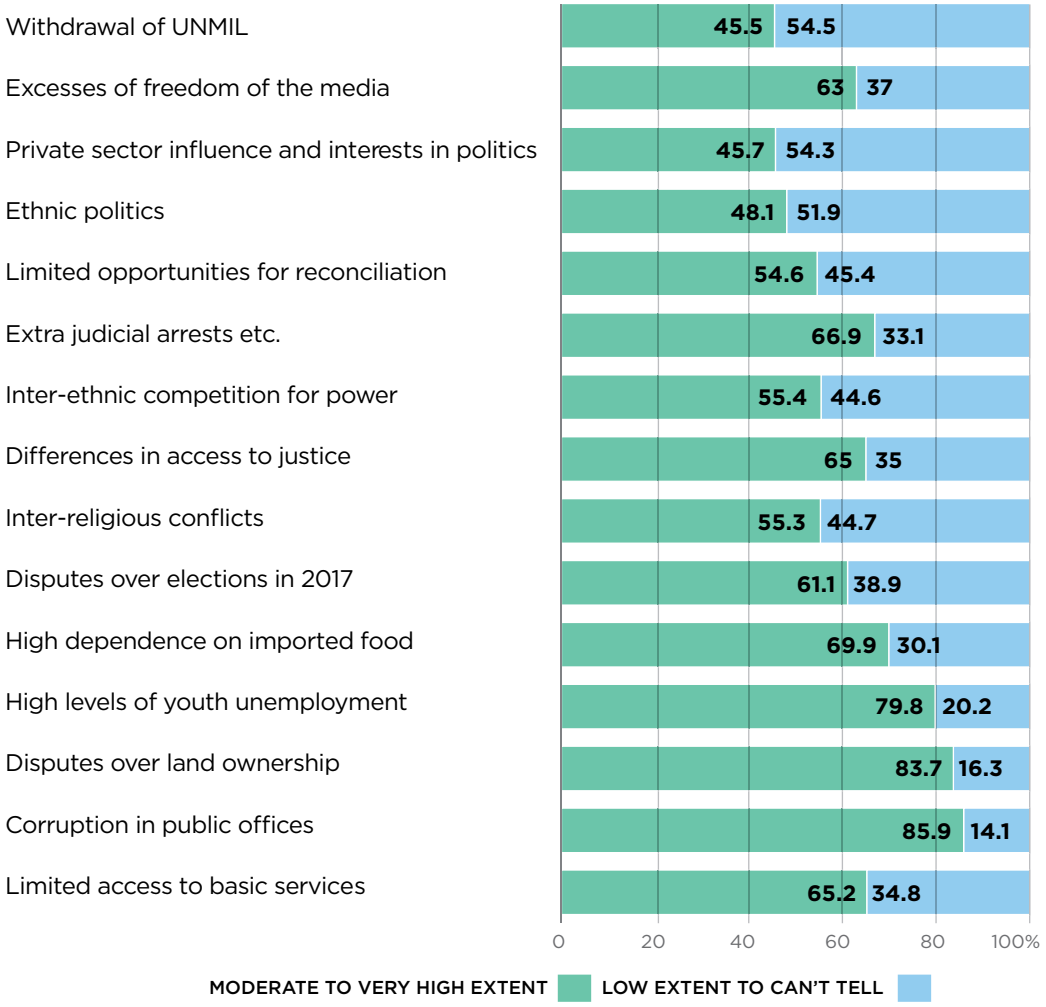


Figure 2.5A: Perceived contribution of various factors to peace in Liberia today

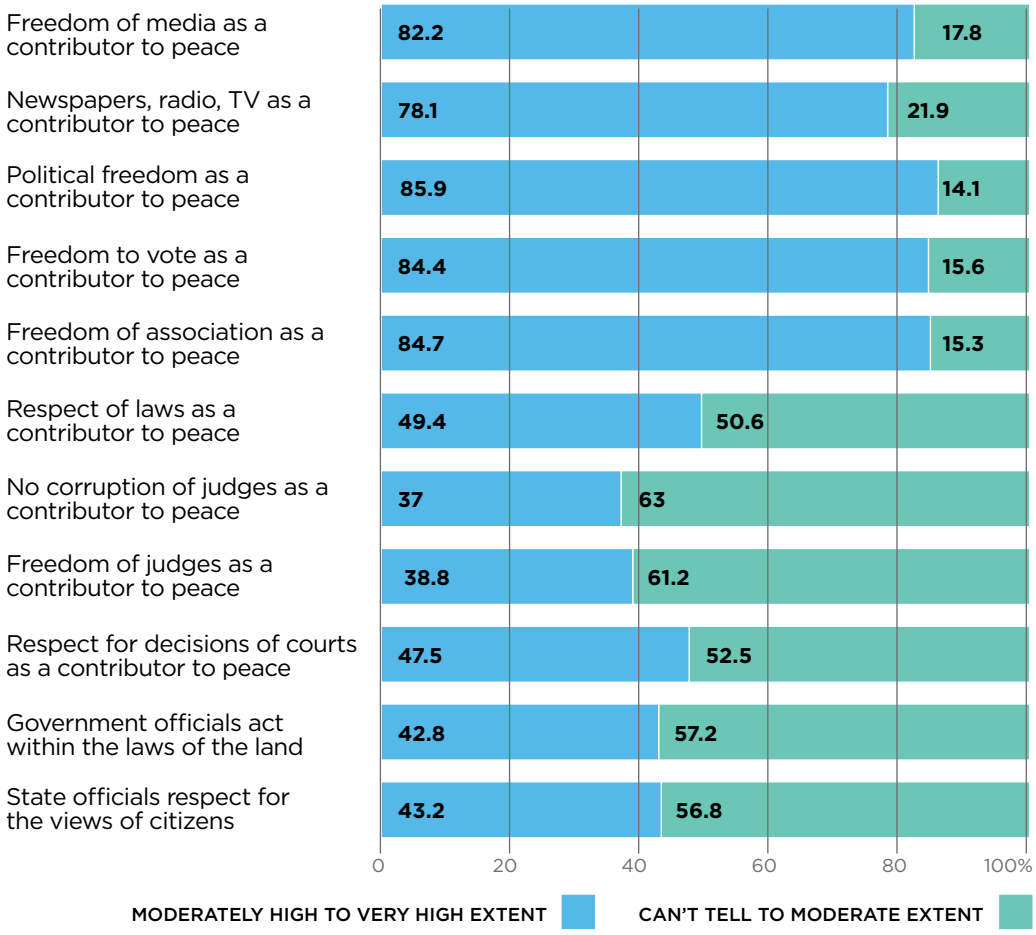


Figure 2.7A: Perceptions on democratic participation in Liberia

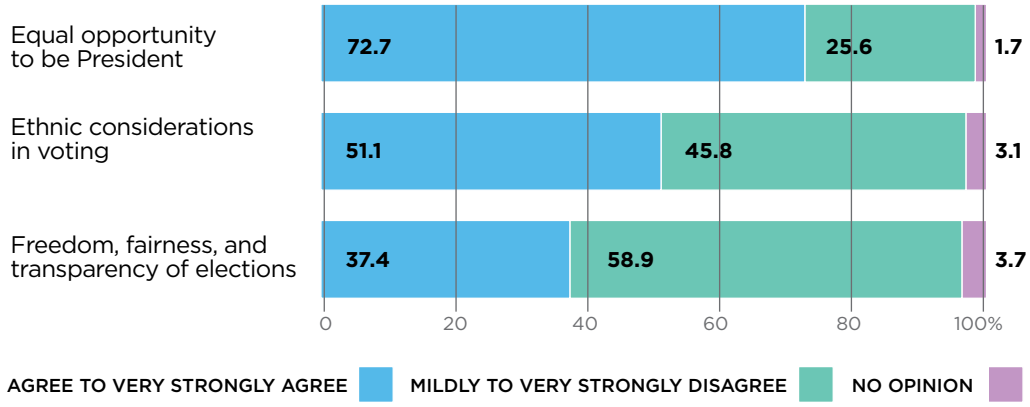
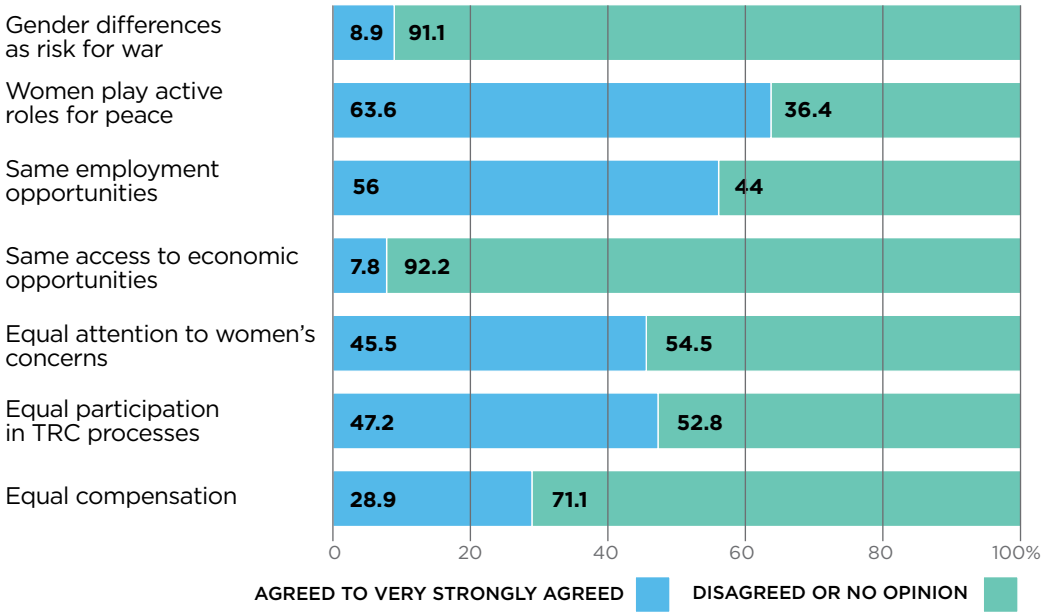
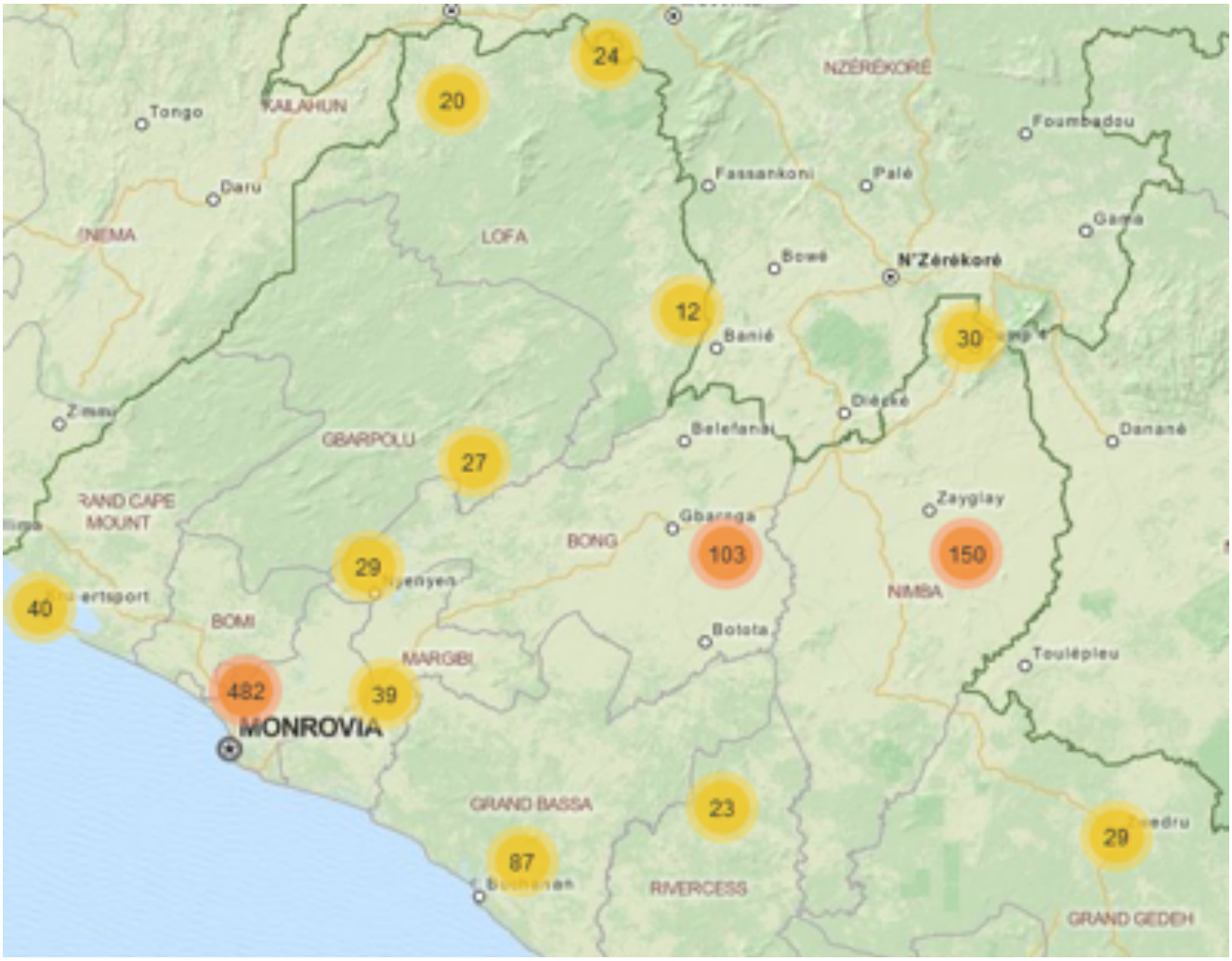
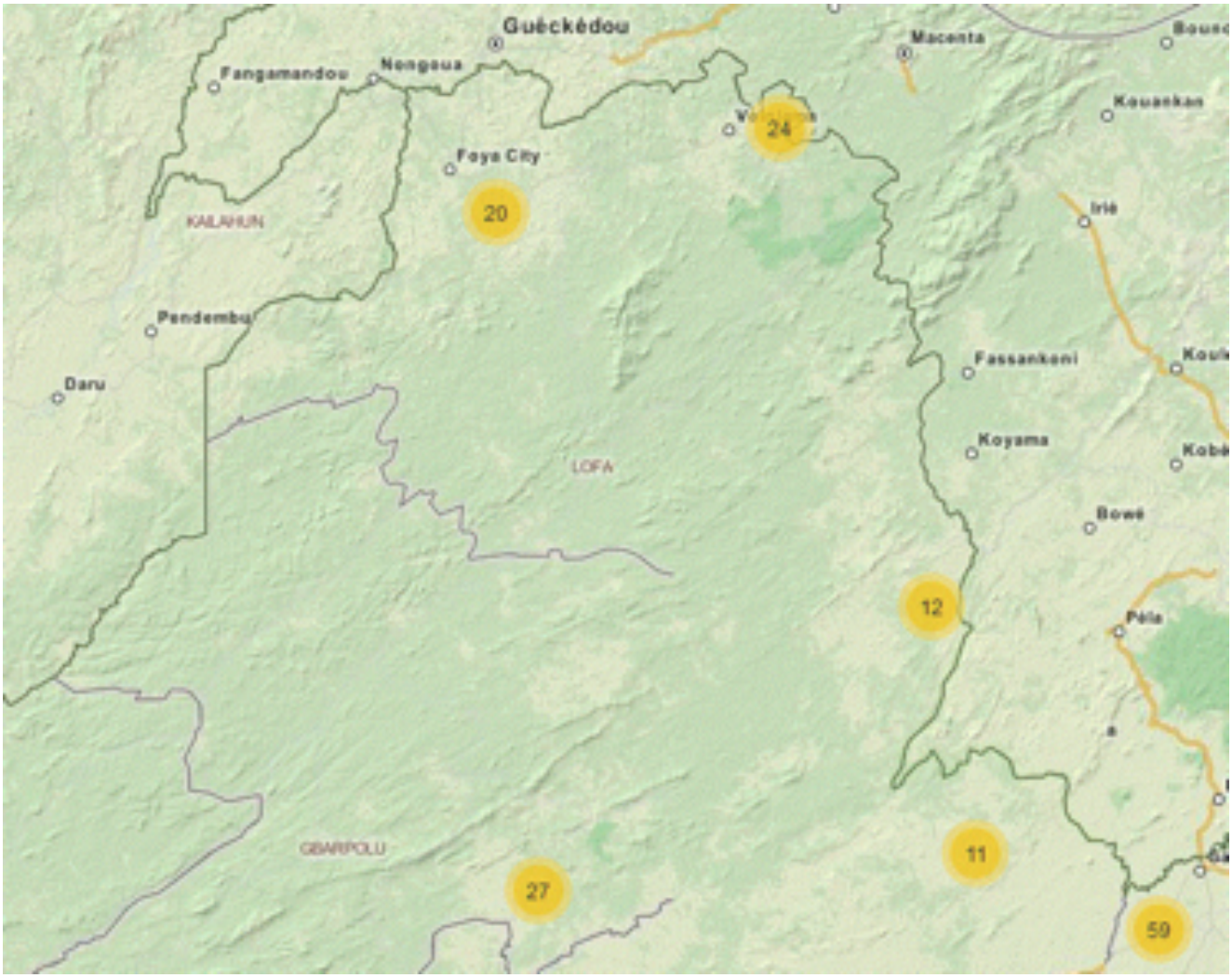


Figure 2.6A: Perceptions on the contribution of gender issues to peace and conflict in Liberia



APPENDIX 15: SAMPLE MAPS OF RESEARCH SITES

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Nongoua
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LOFA
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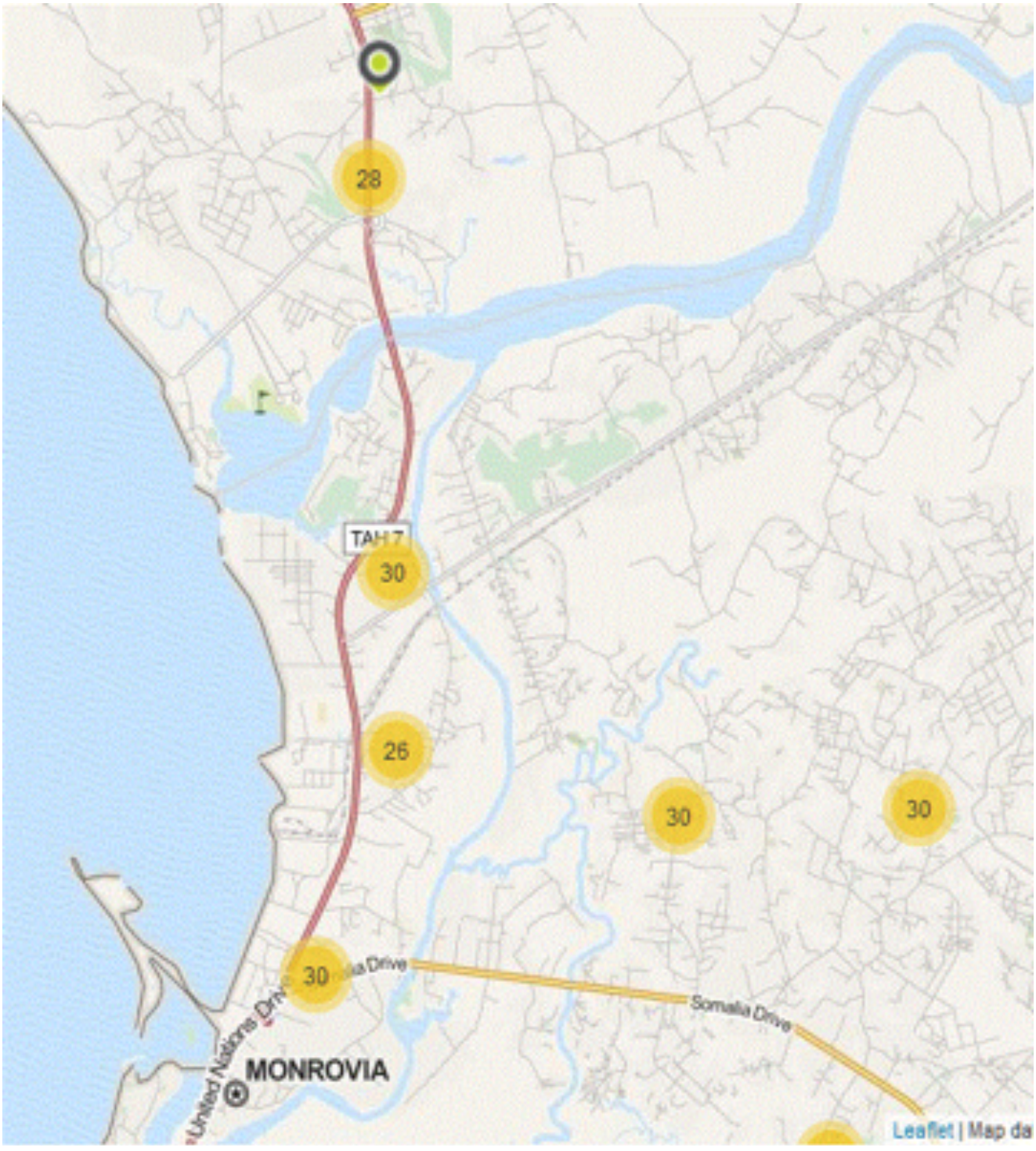
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