



Centre for  
Human Rights and  
Restorative Justice

# REFERENCES TO WOMEN

Liberia Truth Commission

## Abstract

Notes on discussions of women, as well as a list of coding themes and references to women in the Liberia Truth Commission.

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## Researcher Notes

### Report details:

- published in 2009
- pdf has 384 pages
- had sections dedicated to women (hearings for women, women as victims)
- according to NVivo's text search, the word women (using stems) is referenced 356 times, representing 1.23% coverage
- after deleting references from the bibliography, notes or headers, there are **broad references** to women in the content of the report
- women are usually discussed in terms of crimes committed against them and gender-based discrimination

### Women are referenced in the report in the following ways:

- all factions engaged in conflict that violated and abused women (e.g., rape, sexual slavery, forced marriages, and other dehumanizing violations)
  - this abuse was deliberately planned and organized by state and military officials to achieve their objectives
- Commission had training emphasizing the needs and issues of women and children
  - It also recruited more female than male statement takers and organized extensive outreach programs for women
- In Liberia, historically women have been economically, socially, and politically marginalized
- during the war women were brutalized, raped, tortured, forced to take drugs and brutalized by others
- high number of female perpetrators in Liberia compared to other countries
- 70% of sexual violations were committed against women
- After years of abuse and discrimination women fear reprisals
- women of all ages experienced sexual torture and humiliation
- women were made into sex and labour slaves and their children from rape were taken away from them
- women had minimal or no public roles but worked behind the scenes
- women had large roles in domestic and familial affairs and were spiritual leaders
- young men and women were provided separate gendered educations
- slave women served as domestic servants and used unwillingly as concubines to slave masters
- tensions between native inhabitants and the descendants of settlers - class and economic disparities
- accounts of specific incidents of killings, rape, etc.
- examples of war crimes committed included cannibalism and the disemboweling of pregnant women
- socioeconomic and psychological impacts on women and children

- attacks were often planned and deliberate and the perpetrators used fake names and wore disguises
- the further women moved away from home (e.g., displacement, looking for food, etc.) the more vulnerable they were
- most rapes were against adolescents
- despite marginalization and attacks, women marched, held prayer crusades, made petitions and attended and participated in peace conferences to push an agenda of peace
- pre-American Liberian period women had a clearly defined place with limited agency in Liberian society
  - once settlers arrived women were put at the bottom of the social ladder
- health of women affected by sexual and gender-based violence
  - insufficient access to reproductive health care and education programs limited
- TRC recommends reparation program to help empower women devastated by the civil war
- need to combat discrimination of vulnerable populations (e.g., women, Indigenous groups)
- recommend the creation of a comprehensive database of service providers throughout the country to be compiled and made accessible to the Liberian population, especially women
- women need to be provided vocational training
- need to make female experiences, struggles and campaigns for peace apart of public memorialization
- state needs to ensure police and judiciary have training and safe spaces for sexual assault reporting
- media needs to be reformed to match commitment to gender equality
- need to ensure women's needs are catered for and gender equality remains high on the list of priorities
- war lords and heads of fighting factions who committed crimes against women should be punished

## Links to Data Visualization

This section contains links to all data visualization for the Liberia report.

### Word Frequency Cloud

- [word frequency cloud](#)
- [excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings](#)

### TC Liberia Word Trees

- [history](#)
- [women](#)
- [children](#)
- [youth](#)
- [forgive](#)
- [victim](#)
- [truth](#)
- [reconciliation](#)
- [land](#)

\*NVivo software can only edit word trees by changing the central search term and branch sizes. Word trees includes references from bibliography, headers, and notes that cannot be edited out using NVivo software. Researchers will need to manually remove unsightly branches using editing software (e.g., paint, photoshop, etc.)

## Coding Women for the Liberia Report

The following chart breakdowns the child nodes used for coding women references based on themes and discussions surrounding women in the Liberia report.

Women	References or discussions of women
Colonialism	References or discussions of colonialism
Commission	References or discussions of the work and recommendations of the Commission
Displacement	References or discussions of displacement, migration, or exile
Economy	References or discussions of the economy, jobs, labour etc.
Education	References or discussions of education, schools, or training
Forced labour	References or discussions of forced labour or slavery
Human rights	References or discussions of human rights and human rights violations
Legacy	References or discussions of legacy, effects or impacts
Marginalization	References or discussions of marginalization or discrimination
Military	References or discussions of the military and soldiers
Nation	References or discussions of nation or nationalism
Politics	References or discussions of politics, political parties and political leaders
Violence	References or discussions of violence and violent acts
Incidents	References or discussions of violent incidents

## References to Women

This section contains all references to women from the Liberia report.

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_.Report-FULL> - § 161 references coded [5.29% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

4. All factions engaged in armed conflict, violated, degraded, abused and denigrated, committed sexual and gender based violence against women including rape, sexual slavery, forced marriages, and other dehumanizing forms of violations;

### Reference 2 - 0.04% Coverage

3. The massive wave of gross violations and atrocities which characterized the conflict assumed a systematic pattern of abuse, wanton in their execution, and the product of deliberate planning, organized and orchestrated to achieve a military or political objective; disregarding the rights of noncombatants, children, and women, the elderly, disarmed or surrendered enemy combatants, etc.

4. All factions to the conflict systematically targeted women mainly as a result of their gender and committed sexual and gender based violations against them including, rape of all forms, sexual slavery, forced marriages, forced recruitment, etc.

5. Reparation is a desirable and appropriate mechanism to redress the gross violations of human rights and shall apply to communities and individuals, especially women and children, to help restore their human dignity, foster healing and closure as well as justice and genuine reconciliation.

### Reference 3 - 0.03% Coverage

Commissioner Dede Dolopei, Vice-chair of the TRC, was a Liberian administrator, manager, social worker and peace activist. She holds a BBA in accounting with an emphasis in management from the University of Liberia where a Msc. candidate is also in regional planning. Commissioner Dolopei served as a member of the board of directors for National Women's Commission of Liberia and the Christian Foundation for Children and the Aging. She has been instrumental in the promotion and protection of women's rights in Liberia and is well-known for her efforts and expertise in peace building, conflict resolution and psychosocial counseling.

### Reference 4 - 0.04% Coverage

Cllr. Pearl Brown Bull has been a lawyer and renowned Liberian politician since the late 70s. She has obtained numerous degrees, including a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Political Science from the University of Liberia and a Juris Doctor (law) degree from Quinnipiac University, USA. Cllr. Bull has served as Professor of Management & Supervision in Law Enforcement and Criminal Evidence at Shaw University, NC, USA, and held many high-profile public positions including being a member of the Interim Legislative Assembly, Constitutional Advisory Assembly, Public Procurement and Concession Commission, panel of experts for the selection of commissioners of the Independent National Human Rights Commission of Liberia, and Country Vice-President of the International Federation of Women Lawyers. She is a legal drafter with more than a quarter of a century of experience in peace building, conflict resolution and social work.

### Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

and she created a column in the Inquirer dedicated to Liberian women. She is a women's rights activist and a member of the Liberian Women Initiative (LWI), which has been at the vanguard of peace advocacy in Liberia.

### Reference 6 - 0.02% Coverage

e. Adopting specific mechanisms and procedures to address the experiences of women, children and vulnerable groups, paying particular attention to gender based violations, as well as to the issue of child soldiers, providing opportunities for them to relate their experiences, addressing concerns and recommending measures to be taken for the rehabilitation of victims of human rights violations in the spirit of national reconciliation and healing.

#### Reference 7 - 0.02% Coverage

f. Helping restore the human dignity of victims and promote reconciliation by providing an opportunity for victims, witnesses, and others to give an account of the violations and abuses suffered and for perpetrators to relate their experiences, in an environment conducive to constructive interchange between victims and perpetrators, giving special attention to the issue of sexual and gender based violence and most especially to the experiences of children and women during armed conflicts in Liberia;

#### Reference 8 - 0.02% Coverage

n. The TRC shall take into account the security and other interests of the victims and witnesses when appearing for hearings, design witness protection mechanisms on a case by case basis as well as special programs for children and women both as perpetrators and victims under burdens of trauma, stigmatization, neglect, shame, ostracization, threats, etc. and others in difficult circumstances who may wish to recount their stories either in privacy or public, subject to the discretion of the TRC.

#### Reference 9 - 0.04% Coverage

violations and abuses suffered and for perpetrators to relate their experiences, in an environment conducive to constructive interchange between victims and perpetrators.' It also required that the TRC give special attention to the issue of sexual and gender based violence, particularly with respect to women and children. Consequently, the TRC decided that in order to protect the physical and psychological welfare of victims and alleged perpetrators, victims were informed about the appearances of alleged perpetrators and were free to attend public hearings if they desired to without being in conflict with or required to be in close proximity to them. The TRC decided against providing a venue for the accuser, particularly the most violent ones, to confront the accused, for security reasons, among others. While such exchanges took place, they were limited and did not occur frequently.

#### Reference 10 - 0.02% Coverage

sensitization and awareness campaign associated with it. Staff associated with the Diaspora Project in the United States of America, Ghana and Nigeria, were similarly trained as coders and community mobilizers to ensure that TRC techniques were mainstreamed among all staff. All training programs focused a gender dimension that included emphasis on women and children's issues.

#### Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

The TRC recruited more women statement takers than male while women participated strongly in the statement-taking process as statement givers, accounting for approximately 47% of all statements given to the TRC.

#### Reference 12 - 0.02% Coverage

Liberian refugees confrontations with the authorities of Ghana unsettled the planned hearings in the West African sub-region. The hearings including seven months of victims' and witnesses' testimonies and, to date, four months of actors, thematic and institutional hearings, which provided vital accounts and perspectives under the broader 'contemporary history of the conflict theme'. Special considerations have been made to accommodate women, children, elderly, handicap and other vulnerable groups.

#### Reference 13 - 0.01% Coverage



This section discusses the various civil society participation and outreach activities of the TRC inclusive of national and international hearings processes. In this context, it will also highlight the various activities that the TRC designed and implemented for women and children.

#### Reference 14 - 0.02% Coverage

women's groups, youth groups, the disabled community, political parties, the religious community, traditional organizations and the media, participated in the TRC process and continued to play a lead roles in how the TRC implements its mandate. In 2007, the TRC entered into a memorandum of understanding with sixteen civil society organizations, further concretizing their partnership.

#### Reference 15 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC held special interactive outreach presentations on its programs and activities with the National Legislature and the Cabinet. Civil society groups at different levels were engaged by the Commission to assist in this effort; they include: the Liberian National Girls Guides Association, Boys Scouts of Liberia, Artists Association of Liberia, Liberian Crusaders for Peace, Roller Skaters Association of Liberia, Women on the Move Association, and the Traditional Women Association of Liberia. Local media and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and other partners have also provided assistance in this area.

#### Reference 16 - 0.01% Coverage

##### iii. Women

Historically, women have been the most marginalized economically, socially and politically. In Liberia, it was only in 1947, for example, 100 years after the declaration of independence, that Liberian women were granted rights of suffrage.

#### Reference 17 - 0.09% Coverage

the destruction of the country's infrastructure. Unfortunately, women bore a disproportionate amount of suffering during the war. Women were often brutally raped and kidnapped, forced to watch their husbands and children tortured and killed or forcibly conscripted into various warring factions. Thousands of children and youth were forced to take drugs as a means to control and teach them to kill, maim and rape without conscious making them virtual killing machines. It is estimated that the conflict in Liberia produced the highest number of female perpetrators in comparison to civil conflicts in other parts of the world.

According to TRC findings, various episodes of the armed conflict affected men and women differently. While men account for nearly 50% or half of all reported violations compared to one third or 33% from women. However, more than 70% of all sexual based violations reported were against women.

For historical, cultural, social, political, economic and other reasons, women's experiences are often not reported and hence underrepresented in reported violations. Recognizing this reality, the TRC Act provides guidelines for the treatment of women in the TRC process. In addition to the Preamble, nine sections of the Act speak to women's realities and how they should be incorporated in the TRC process. These provisions and references demand the effective participation of women at all levels and in all aspects of the TRC process, including as Commissioners, managers and staff of the TRC, petitioners, victims, perpetrators, victim-perpetrators, and witnesses. Article IV and VI of TRC Act specifically requires the TRC to adopt mechanisms and procedures to address the experience of women, children and vulnerable groups; pay particular attention to genderbased violations; employ specialists in women's rights; protect women's safety; and not endanger women's social reintegration or psychological recovery.

#### Reference 18 - 0.07% Coverage

In adhering to these requirements, the TRC has engaged in numerous activities with women in Liberia and in the Diaspora. Several formal and informal meetings have been held with individuals as well as women's groups. In 2006, to ensure proper coordination and broadbased participation by women in the TRC process, and to guarantee that woman's concerns are adequately expressed and addressed, the TRC established a gender committee comprising a wide spectrum of civil society and international partners. Members of this committee included the Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia; the Ministry of Gender; the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA);

ICTJ; the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); UNMIL Gender Section; Rule of Law Section and Human Rights and Protection Section; Liberia Crusaders for Peace Women's Wing; Traditional Women Association of Liberia; Women on the Move; and the Liberian Media Women Association.

From December 2006 to February 2007, the TRC implemented extensive outreach programs with women throughout Liberia's fifteen counties by holding four zonal workshops targeting women's organizations in the counties, and town hall meetings in all counties. Against this backdrop, there are concerns that, after more than a century of gross neglect, marginalization, and dehumanization, especially during Liberia's most recent episodes of conflict, women harbor deep seeded disdain towards those persons who are directly linked to their suppression and are fearful of reprisal if they cooperate with the TRC.

#### Reference 19 - 0.05% Coverage

The statement taking process was followed by Public and In Camera Hearings in the fifteen sub-divisions of the country and in the United States of America representing the Diaspora. The hearings including seven months of victims and witnesses testimonies and to date, three months of perpetrators, thematic and institutional accounts and perspectives under the broader contemporary history of the conflict theme. Unique categories such as women and children were accommodated under this section. Special considerations were made to accommodate individuals testifying under unique circumstances or categories like women, children, the elderly, youth and the handicap. Two victims who fled the country and lived on the Budubram Liberian Refugee Camp in Buduburam, Ghana, testified in Liberia symbolically representing the sub-regional Diaspora community. The Thematic and Institutional hearings featured specific categories such as; women, children, religious, historical review, media, education, youth, religion, culture and tradition, law enforcement, and security. To date, the TRC has heard more than 800 testimonies from witnesses testifying before it.

#### Reference 20 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC-Traditional Advisory Council membership was drawn from the leadership of the National Traditional Council of Liberia which is the umbrella association of all traditional and tribal associations in the country. The National Traditional Council is representative of Chiefs and elders from the 78 political districts and 64 electoral districts of Liberia. Each of the 15 counties of Liberia has a County Council whose representative reports to the National Council. The National Traditional Council of Liberia has several sub-committees including Women Affairs and the National Coordinating Committee, responsible for settling all disputes affecting the organization and country at large.

#### Reference 21 - 0.02% Coverage

Liberia's various episodes of state breakdown and conflict, particularly the Liberian Civil War (1989-1997) and the LURD and MODEL insurrections (1999-2003) resulted in the deaths of an estimated over 250,000 persons and forced over 1 million to be internally-displaced and hundreds of thousands to be refugees. The nature and magnitude of atrocities committed, especially against women and children, by the various warring factions including government forces, were in epic proportions.

#### Reference 22 - 0.06% Coverage

Women Nearly 26,000 or 28% of reported violations were against women. While as a group men comprise a larger victim category than women, Liberia's various armed conflicts excessively affected women in various ways. As previously noted, women disproportionately suffered from sexual violence including gang rape, sexual slavery, outrages upon personal dignity, and torture, among others. Girls and women aged 15-19 comprise the largest category of reported cases of sexual violence. Women as old as eighty-years old were perversely dehumanized through gendered violence by, for example, being forced to have sex with their sons or male relatives and by having taboo objects such spoons, sticks, hot pepper and rifle buds forced into their vaginal and rectal areas. Women were kidnapped and forced into sexual slavery only to be passed around as 'wives' of roaming combatants. They were also forced to engage in hard labor making them both sex and labor relegating them to the status of chattel slaves. Women suffered the indignity of having the children that they bore after being raped and held as sex slaves summarily taken away from them by combatants at the end of armed conflict. Many women that testified before the

TRC either through statement taking or the hearings gave thousands of heart breaking narratives about how they were brutalized during armed conflict.

**Reference 23 - 0.01% Coverage**

'Enslavement, The perpetrator exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty, in particular women and children.

**Reference 24 - 0.01% Coverage**

(c) 'Enslavement' means the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children;

**Reference 25 - 0.01% Coverage**

conduct described in this element includes trafficking in persons, in particular women and children.

**Reference 26 - 0.01% Coverage**

"Enslavement" The perpetrator exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty, in particular women and children.

**Reference 27 - 0.01% Coverage**

7. Adopt specific mechanisms to address the experiences of women and children;

**Reference 28 - 0.01% Coverage**

6. Unfair discrimination against women and denial of their rightful place in society as equal partners.

**Reference 29 - 0.01% Coverage**

All factions engaged in the armed conflict, violated, degraded, abused and denigrated, committed sexual and gender based violence against women including rape, sexual slavery, forced marriages, and other dehumanizing forms of violations;

**Reference 30 - 0.01% Coverage**

18. Significant more sexual and gender based crimes committed mainly against women were committed than was reported to the TRC through its formal process for reasons of insecurity, stigma, etc

**Reference 31 - 0.02% Coverage**

3. The massive wave of gross violations and atrocities which, characterized the conflict, assumed a systematic pattern of abuse, wanton in their execution, and the product of deliberate planning; organized and orchestrated to achieve a military or political objective; disregarding the rights of noncombatants, children, women, the elderly, disarmed or surrendered enemy combatants, etc.

**Reference 32 - 0.03% Coverage**

All factions to the conflict systematically targeted women, mainly as a result of their gender, and committed sexual and gender based violations against them, including rape of all forms, sexual slavery, forced marriages, forced recruitment, etc.

5. Reparation is a responsibility of the state and development partners as a long term peace investment to redress the gross violations of human rights committed against victim communities and individuals, especially women and children, to help restore their human dignity, foster healing and closure, as well as justice, and genuine reconciliation.

#### Reference 33 - 0.01% Coverage

The wide range of recommendations directed to the Government of Liberia and more specifically, the President of Liberia, include guaranteeing to women, children and other vulnerable populations, the full enjoyment of their social, economic and cultural rights, in addition to civil and political rights.

#### Reference 34 - 0.03% Coverage

Commissioner Dede Dolopei, Vice-chair of the TRC, was a Liberian administrator, manager, social worker and peace activist. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in accounting with emphasis in management from the University of Liberia, where she is also a Master of Science candidate in regional planning. Commissioner Dolopei served as a member of the board of directors for the National Women's Commission of Liberia and the Christian Foundation for Children and the Aging. She has been instrumental in the promotion and protection of women's rights in Liberia, and is well-known for her efforts and expertise in peace-building, conflict resolution and psycho-social counseling.

#### Reference 35 - 0.14% Coverage

Commissioner Massa Amelia Washington is a journalist with more than twenty years of experience in journalism. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communication with an emphasis in print journalism from the University of Liberia and is currently a second-year graduate student with high honors at the Temple University School of Social Administration and Management, Philadelphia, PA, USA. She was trained in broadcast journalism by the Voice of America and the Liberian Broadcasting System. She has served as a Public Relations Officer for the Liberian National Red Cross Society, Senior Reporter for the Ministry of Information's New Liberian newspaper and News Editor for the Inquirer Newspaper, Liberia. Commissioner Washington covered the Liberian Civil War extensively, often reporting in hostile territories, and created a column in the Inquirer dedicated to highlighting the impact of the war on women. She is a Civil Society and women's rights activist and a member of the Liberian Women Initiative (LWI), which has been at the vanguard of peace advocacy in Liberia. She attended and covered early peace conferences including; the Accra Clarification Conference, Akosombo I and Abuja I. Commissioner Washington is the only member of the TRC recruited from outside of Liberia. Prior to joining the Commission, she lived in Philadelphia where she worked as Director of Programs for the WES Health Centers Department of WESWorks. The Commissioner has received several honors including; U.S. Embassy in Monrovia 2009 Liberian Woman of Courage Award, in the Category of the State Department's International Woman of Courage Award, Women's Campaign International (WCI) 2009 International Women's Leadership Award, 2004 Liberian Association of Pennsylvania Inc. Certificate of Honor, and Press Union of Liberia Reporter of the Year Award 1994. Ms. Washington is also one of sixteen Liberian peace advocates featured in the African Women and Peace Support Group's 2004 "Liberian Women Peacemakers, Fighting for the Right to be Seen, Heard and Counted".

Commissioner Massa A. Washington is a journalist with more than twenty years of experience. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communication with an emphasis in print journalism from the University of Liberia and is currently a second-year graduate student with high honors at the Temple University School of Social Administration and Management, Philadelphia, PA, USA. In 1984, she was trained in broadcast journalism by the Voice of America and the Liberian Broadcasting System. She has served as a Public Relations Officer for the Liberian National Red Cross Society, Senior Reporter for the Ministry of Information's New Liberian newspaper and News Editor for the Independent Inquirer. Commissioner Washington covered the Liberian Civil War extensively, often reporting in hostile territories, and she created a column in the Inquirer dedicated to Liberian women. She is a women's rights activist and a member of the Liberian Women Initiative, which has been at the vanguard of peace advocacy in Liberia.

#### Reference 36 - 0.09% Coverage

earning a JD degree from Quinnipiac. She holds Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of Liberia (1973). She is a legal drafter with more than a quarter century of experience in the peace building, woman and human Rights Advocacy and a renown Liberian Politician. Commissioner Bull has held many elected and presidential appointed positions, serving in the public and private sectors in Liberia including on several Boards; Red Cross, YMCA, Renaissance Corporation Inc. FORUM, Special Assistant to Mrs. Angie Brooks Randolph 1974, Law clerk to Supreme Court of Liberia under Associate Justice, George E. Henries, 1978-1979, Country Vice President, International Federation of Female Lawyers, elected National Chairman, Women Wing, True Whig Party of Liberia, January 1980-April 12 1980, Elected Member from Montserrado County to the Constitutional Advisory Assembly of Liberia (1983) (see 1986 Constitution), Member of the Interim National Assembly of Liberia, representing Montserrado County (1984), Member of the Public Procurement Steering Committee to draft the Act Creating the Public Procurement and Concession Commission of Liberia (2004-2005), elected chairman of the Civil Society committee to lobby the national Transitional Legislature for the enactment of An Act to Repeal the 1979 Act Creating the Liberian Commission of Human Rights and to Create the Independent National Committee on Human Rights of Liberia, to ensure said act was printed into Handbill (2005), Vice Chairman, Independent Committee of Expert for the selection of commissioners for the Independent National Human Rights Commission of Liberia (Dec. 2005), Acting National Chairman Women Wing Unity Party of Liberia, 2005, Coordinator for the Movement for the Promotion of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf for President of Liberia (MOPED) (2005-2006), Member of the National Bar Association of Liberia for 27 years, and Association of Female Lawyers where she served on several Committees.

#### Reference 37 - 0.02% Coverage

e. Adopting specific mechanisms and procedures to address the experiences of women, children and vulnerable groups, paying particular attention to gender based violations, as well as to the issue of child soldiers, providing opportunities for them to relate their experiences, addressing concerns and recommending measures to be taken for the rehabilitation of victims of human rights violations in the spirit of national reconciliation and healing.

#### Reference 38 - 0.02% Coverage

Helping restore the human dignity of victims and promote reconciliation by providing an opportunity for victims, witnesses, and others to give an account of the violations and abuses suffered and for perpetrators to relate their experiences, in an environment conducive to constructive interchange between victims and perpetrators, giving special attention to the issue of sexual and gender based violence and most especially to the experiences of children and women during armed conflicts in Liberia;

#### Reference 39 - 0.02% Coverage

The TRC shall take into account the security and other interests of the victims and witnesses when appearing for hearings, design witness protection mechanisms on a case by case basis as well as special programs for children and women both as perpetrators and victims under burdens of trauma, stigmatization, neglect, shame, ostracization, threats, etc. and others in difficult circumstances who may wish to recount their stories either in privacy or public, subject to the discretion of the TRC.

#### Reference 40 - 0.03% Coverage

Article VII Section 26 (f) requires the TRC to help ,restore the human dignity of victims and promote reconciliation by providing an opportunity for victims, witnesses and others to give an account of the violations and abuses suffered and for perpetrators to relate their experiences, in an environment conducive to constructive interchange between victims and perpetrators.' It also requires that the TRC give special attention to the issue of sexual and gender based violence, particularly with respect to women and children. Consequently, the TRC decided that in order to protect the physical and psychological welfare of victims and alleged perpetrators,

#### Reference 41 - 0.02% Coverage

campaign associated with it. Staff associated with the Diaspora Project in the United States of America, Ghana and Nigeria, were similarly trained as coders and community mobilizers to ensure that TRC techniques were

mainstreamed among all staff. All training programs focused a gender dimension that included emphasis on women and children's issues.

#### Reference 42 - 0.01% Coverage

The TRC recruited more women statement takers than male while women

#### Reference 43 - 0.03% Coverage

The statement-taking process was followed by Public and In-Camera Hearings in Liberia's fifteen counties and in the US. Hearings were initially scheduled for West Africa in the Republic of Ghana. Liberian refugees' confrontations with the authorities of Ghana unsettled the planned hearings in the West African sub-region. The hearings included seven months of victims' and witnesses' testimonies and, to date, four months of actors, thematic and institutional hearings, which provided vital accounts and perspectives under the broader 'contemporary history of the conflict theme'. Special considerations have been made to accommodate women, children, the elderly, handicap and other vulnerable groups.

#### Reference 44 - 0.05% Coverage

This section discusses the various civil society participation and outreach activities of the TRC inclusive of national and international hearings processes. In this context, it will also highlight the various activities that the TRC designed and implemented for women and children.

Civil society was a major stakeholder in the Liberian peace process and has been in the vanguard of the TRC process for as far back as the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Accra). From the conceptualization of the TRC and the drafting and passing of the TRC legislation to the vetting of Commissioners and senior staff, civil society representatives from various organizations, including women's groups, youth groups, the disabled community, political parties, the religious community, traditional organizations and the media, participated in the TRC process and continued to play a lead role in how the TRC implements its mandate. In 2007, the TRC entered into a memorandum of understanding with sixteen civil society organizations, further concretizing this partnership.

#### Reference 45 - 0.05% Coverage

The TRC held special interactive outreach presentations on its programs and activities with the National Legislature and the Cabinet. Civil society groups at different levels were engaged by the Commission to assist in this effort; they include: the Liberian National Girls Guides Association, Boys Scouts of Liberia, Artists Association of Liberia, Liberian Crusaders for Peace, Roller Skaters Association of Liberia, Women on the Move Association, and the Traditional Women Association of Liberia. Local media and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and other partners have also provided assistance in this area. Civil Society organizations buttressed the commission's efforts by conducting sensitization and awareness in all fifteen counties, distributing 15,000 copies of the TRC's informational questions and answers (Q&A) brochure, replicating and distributing 10,000 copies of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia to schools and communities for civic education and by conducting sensitization and awareness workshops about the TRC process. The involvement of civil society in the TRC process enormously enhanced the Commission's work in accomplishing its mandate.

#### Reference 46 - 0.03% Coverage

##### 4.7. Women

Historically, women have been the most marginalized; economically, socially and politically. In Liberia, it was only in 1947, for example, 100 years after the declaration of independence, that Liberian women were granted rights of suffrage.

Liberia is attempting to emerge from the throes of more than two decades of state breakdown and protracted civil conflict resulting in deaths and massive displacement of persons internally not excluding the destruction of the country's infrastructure. Unfortunately, women bore a disproportionate amount of suffering during the war. Women were often brutally raped and kidnapped, forced to watch

#### Reference 47 - 0.11% Coverage

According to TRC findings, various episodes of the armed conflict affected men and women differently. While men account for nearly 50% or half of all reported violations compared to one third or 33% from women, women were uniquely targeted because of their gender throughout the conflict and its different phases. Moreover, above 70% of all sexual based violations reported were against women. For historical, cultural, social, political, economic and other reasons, women's experiences are often not reported and hence under-represented in reported violations. Recognizing this reality, the TRC Act provides guidelines for the treatment of women in the TRC process. In addition to the Preamble, nine sections of the Act speak to women's realities and how they should be incorporated in the TRC process. These provisions and references demand the effective participation of women at all levels and in all aspects of the TRC process, including as Commissioners, managers and staff of the TRC, petitioners, victims, perpetrators, victim-perpetrators, and witnesses. Article IV and VI of TRC Act specifically requires the TRC to adopt mechanisms and procedures to address the experience of women, children and vulnerable groups; pay particular attention to gender-based violations; employ specialists in women's rights; protect women's safety; and not endanger women's social reintegration or psychological recovery. In adhering to these requirements, the TRC has engaged in numerous activities with women in Liberia and in the Diaspora. Several formal and informal meetings have been held with individuals as well as women's groups. In 2006, to ensure proper coordination and broad-based participation by women in the TRC process, and to guarantee that woman's concerns are adequately expressed and addressed, the TRC established a gender committee comprising a wide spectrum of civil society and international partners. Members of this committee included the Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia; the Ministry of Gender; the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA); ICTJ; the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); UNMIL Gender Section; Rule of Law Section and Human Rights and Protection Section; Liberia Crusaders for Peace Women's Wing; Traditional Women Association of Liberia; Women on the Move; and the Liberian Media Women Association. From December 2006 to February 2007, the TRC implemented extensive outreach programs with women throughout Liberia's fifteen counties by holding four zonal workshops targeting women's organizations in the counties, and town hall meetings

#### Reference 48 - 0.02% Coverage

in all counties. Against this backdrop, there are concerns that, after more than a century of gross neglect, marginalization, and dehumanization, especially during Liberia's most recent episodes of conflict, women harbor deep seeded disdain towards those persons who are directly linked to their suppression and are fearful of reprisal if they cooperate with the TRC.

#### Reference 49 - 0.04% Coverage

The statement taking process was followed by Public and In-Camera Hearings in the fifteen sub-divisions of the country and in the United States of America representing the Diaspora. The hearings including seven months of victims and witnesses testimonies and to date, three months of perpetrators, thematic and institutional accounts and perspectives under the broader contemporary history of the conflict theme. Unique categories such as women and children were accommodated under this section. Special considerations were made to accommodate individuals testifying under unique circumstances or categories like women, children, the elderly, youth and the handicap. Two victims who fled the country and lived on the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp in Buduburam, Ghana, testified in Liberia symbolically representing the sub-regional Diaspora community. The Thematic and

#### Reference 50 - 0.01% Coverage

Institutional hearings featured specific categories such as; women, children, religious, historical review, media, education, youth, religion, culture and tradition, law enforcement, and security. To date, the TRC has heard more than 800 testimonies from witnesses testifying before it.

#### Reference 51 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC-Traditional Advisory Council membership was drawn from the leadership of the National Traditional Council of Liberia, which is the umbrella association of all traditional and tribal associations in the country. The National Traditional Council is representative of Chiefs and elders from the 78 political districts and 64 electoral

districts of Liberia. Each of the 15 counties of Liberia has a County Council whose representative reports to the National Council. The National Traditional Council of Liberia has several sub-committees including Women Affairs and the National Coordinating Committee, responsible for settling all disputes affecting the organization and country at large.

#### Reference 52 - 0.04% Coverage

Delegates or representatives were drawn from a cross section of stakeholders from each county, representing each district, cutting across the social, economic and political make up of the counties. From the office of the county superintendent to civil, traditional, religious and other societies, women, children, youth, community leaders, ex-combatant communities, etc. were considered as constituencies for representation at the consultations. In all, not less than 13 representatives from each county in the region attended and participated in these consultations. The TRC did not do the selection but rather encouraged local people and the Superintendent's offices to do the selection in a transparent, representative and fair manner to ensure the broadest representation possible. TRC former county coordinators were rehired to serve as mobilizers in each county of their previous assignment.

#### Reference 53 - 0.04% Coverage

Women had a minimum or no public role to play at all in the governance of these states. They were powerful behind-the-scene leaders who advised the kings and chiefs, and were chiefs themselves in other instances. In matters of family, culture, education and spirituality, women were a driving force in determining how the system functions or operates. On the chief or kings' council a woman representative was almost always present. With the extended family system prevalent in pre Liberia, women's role in domestic, familial affairs was huge. She catered to children, relatives and in-laws, made the farms to sustain the wealth and prestige of the family and her husband. Women were important to every leader, chief or king also because of their spiritual leadership and powers to foretell the future and gifts of discernment.

#### Reference 54 - 0.08% Coverage

Another feature of pre-Liberia governance structure and culture was the 'bush schools'; a tradition still in practice today. The Poro society is the school for men and the Sande for women. They were prominent compulsory institutions which traditionally served to initiate young people into the society. The children are taken away for between one to four years to be educated into the laws, customs, traditions and ways of their people; loyalty, respect and care for the elderly, the extended family system, and other values and skills were taught to prepare them for their role and place in society as responsible adults.

More specifically, the women in the Sande were trained for initiation into adulthood, morality and proper sexual comportment; marriage and domestic chores were also subjects. Education about farming, medicine, dancing, child rearing and domestic as well as specialized skills like dying, making cloth, preserving food, etc. were part of the training program.

Before the arrival of the settlers in 1822, extensive contacts and interactions existed between the indigenes at the coast and the interior. Economics, trade and social interests including intermarriages dominated their dealings and creating a big family of in-laws. For defense purposes, they formed alliances and common defense pacts which were enhanced by membership to the Poro or Sande societies as institutions of socialization, acculturation, stature, honesty, trust, common ancestry and brotherhood. These separate nations were not always at peace. They fought wars among themselves. If one group felt stronger, they invaded the weaker one, captured their women and young men. Those who resisted were either killed or made prisoners. The conquered territories were annexed and the prisoners of war were used on the farms or sold into slavery.

#### Reference 55 - 0.05% Coverage

The Grain Coast was not as involved in the Slave Trade as other areas in the sub region due to its rough and rocky coast; most inhospitable to slave vessels and traders. The major slave trading countries were Portugal, England and Holland. The Portuguese captured three Africans near Cape Verde in the 1400s and many Africans regard this as the beginning of the great trade. In 1551 the English slaver, John Hawkins arrived to the pre Liberian coast for slaves. He paid his second and last visit in 1552. Two resident European slave traders on the Liberian coast were Don Pedro Blanco and Theodore Canot. They were Italians operating on and off in Bassa and Cape Mount. On the plantations,



life for the slave was lonely and horrible. While most of the slave women served as domestic servants they were also used unwillingly as concubines to their slave masters and had children (mulattos) many of whom migrated to Africa to form the new states. It is speculated that many of the first presidents of Liberia, including Roberts, originated from this stock.

#### Reference 56 - 0.03% Coverage

The first group of settlers that arrived in Africa under aegis of the ACS, sailed on the Elizabeth in 1817. On board were eighty-six men, women and children from New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia. These were seen as pioneers who would help build the colony. After a few weeks stay in Freetown, they moved on to Sherbo Island where all the agents namely Samuel A. Crozier, Samuel Bacon and John P Blankson, and about half the population of the colonists were wiped out by malaria. Amidst initial constraints, they were able to resettle some 13,000 African Americans and several thousand recaptured African slaves known as Congos from 1821-1867.

#### Reference 57 - 0.02% Coverage

In the following year a constitutional convention was held without the participation or representation of any natives, allies or antagonists. The constitution, written by a Harvard Law Professor, was adopted by the convention along with the 'Declaration of Independence', written by Hilary Teage on July 26, 1847. There was no woman represented at the convention, but eleven women were later designated to sew the Liberian flag. Delegates to the convention were drawn from the three counties that were members of the commonwealth:

#### Reference 58 - 0.03% Coverage

The Constitution specifically contains a preamble and five articles including the bill of rights (Article I), legislative powers (Article II), executive powers (Article III), judicial powers (Article IV), and miscellaneous provisions (Article V). Among the miscellany are clauses prohibiting slavery, protecting the property rights of women and decreeing that only 'persons of color' may be admitted to citizenship and granted the right to hold real property in the republic. Meaning, therefore that the natives were not considered part of Liberia or citizens of the Republic of Liberia.

#### Reference 59 - 0.05% Coverage

To enforce the de jure limits of the state, Liberia in 1908 for the first time, created a national army, the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF). This development, even though consistent with state-making, engendered tremendous political conflicts of its own. The LFF became a tool for the enforcement of the writ of the Liberian government in the hinterland. An elaborate government 'native policy' was instituted with at least two problematic features (or outcomes): One was subversion of the Constitution by endowing the Executive Branch with legislative and judicial powers within the hinterland, a practice reminiscent of the 1822-1847 colonial periods. The other problematic feature of the native policy was the license it gave to some unscrupulous interior officials and their traditional cronies which led to unspeakable atrocities across Liberia's interior region. Talking about 'roots of conflict,' the memory of these atrocities survives in documents, and there are Liberians who continue to hand down to a younger generation the facts of this ugly past in which respectable chiefs and fatherly heads were publicly humiliated, children and women often abused, forced labor and cruelty in collecting the 'hut tax' impositions were common.

#### Reference 60 - 0.05% Coverage

He spent the first period of his rule consolidating his power base through the creation of new and lucrative jobs for his loyalists and the extension of voting rights to women and tribal people, and extended a county system of representation and governance to all political subdivisions in the tribal hinterland. Despite Tubman's efforts to bring the indigenous populations into the social and economic mainstream, the gap between them and the ruling elite during this period of rapid economic development remained. The huge influx of foreign money caused the economy to become distorted and increased social inequalities a consequence of which was increasing hostility between the descendants of the settlers and the original inhabitants. This alarmed Tubman and he was forced to concede that the original inhabitants would have to be granted an amount of political and economic involvement in the country. The

rural inhabitants were happy to live with this system for decades because it gave them greater political freedom and the right to vote for the first time.

#### Reference 61 - 0.01% Coverage

„Let it be remembered that when those great men and women first landed here from the United States to found this nation, they met not a single, solitary one of their brothers who were civilized or educated, nor were the traces of Christian religion anywhere seen or known”

#### Reference 62 - 0.05% Coverage

Between June and August 1990, Liberia became a ‚butcher house’ in the words of former Gambian President, Sir Dauda Jawara. Socio-economic conditions had deteriorated considerably. The trapped population was desolate; physically waned, hungry and ill. The parallel market flourished with looted goods from homes and the free port of Monrovia, all facilitated and instigated by the armed men and their bands of followers. The popular tones which heralded Taylor’s rebellion – ‚monkey come down’ and ‚chucky must come’ - were no longer heard, better, regretted. Family income depleted along with food stock. As more and more families were separated, ties were broken and young girls became the target of armed fighters. Women were targeted and raped, abducted as bush wives as they ventured out of their hiding places to fetch food. The younger girls with no clear sources of survival got ‚involved’ with the fighters and prostitution became a way of life till the end of the conflict and even now in present day Liberia.

#### Reference 63 - 0.05% Coverage

in nature and character, in timber, rubber, gold and diamonds, including diamonds from neighboring Sierra Leone, would prove crucial to sustaining Taylor’s war efforts and prolonging the conflict. The Secretary General of Quiwonkpa’s NPF, Moses Duopu, was killed on his return from Nigeria to Taylor’s territories for claiming the Secretary General title of the new NPFL and disputing or seemingly eyeing the leadership of the NPFL; the AFL massacre 27 Gios and Manos families of the AFL in Monrovia, as 25 AFL soldiers escaped to seek refuge at the Methodist Church in Sinkor which was subsequently attacked. Also, Jackson F. Doe, David Dwayen, Justice Patrick Biddle, Cooper Teah, Gabriel Kpolleh, Photographer B.W. King, along with 80 other very prominent personalities associated with and living in NPFL- held territories were killed at the hands of NPFL ‚generals’; 500 ethnic Mandingoes, including an Imam, killed in Bakedu, Lofa County by the NPFL; a retaliatory killing of over 500 supposedly men, women and children from Nimba County were massacred at the St. Peters Lutheran Church by the AFL led by Youbo Tailay then under the command of Jackson E. Doe<sup>4</sup>

#### Reference 64 - 0.02% Coverage

another 250 ethnic Gios and Manos seeking refuge at the J F K Hospital killed by a group of AFL soldiers; In Buchanan and Monrovia, dogs were eating the dead bodies of human beings in the streets as men and women on the UL Fendell Campus unashamedly bathed together naked in a dirty little stale water better known as ‚Adam and Eve’ creek.

#### Reference 65 - 0.02% Coverage

By the time of the first peace meeting in Free Town, Sierra Leone, under the auspices of the ECOWAS Peace Plan, an extraction of the Inter-Faith Mediation Committee of Liberia, it became clear to ECOWAS that no one faction could boast of military advantage or victory and unless there was intervention to halt the carnage, Liberia will self-destruct as more and more innocent women and children would continue to suffer and die. Especially so, the OAU, UN and most notably the US, would have no direct involvement with Liberia, ECOWAS decided to intervene.

#### Reference 66 - 0.05% Coverage

By 1993 a conflict over allocation of allocated government jobs broke out in ULIMO between the Mandingo and Krahn factions. A bitter struggle ensued in Tubmanburg, Bomi County and the ULIMO faction was effectively split into ULIMO-J of Roosevelt Johnson (Krahn) and ULIMO-K of Alhaji Kromah (Mandingo). An attempt by

ECOMOG to compel ULIMO-J to open the roads leading up to Bomi County proved fatal for ECOMOG and the entrapped civilian population. Scores of ECOMOG soldiers died in the battle; as did hundreds of children of starvation and they were buried on the Catholic St. Dominic Campus. As part of the NPFL's terror campaign to render IGNU and ECOMOG territories ungovernable, a June 6, 1993 attack at Harbel, Margibi County saw an infiltrating NPFL special Unit, under cover of dark, crept on innocent displaced civilians who were asleep, killing approximately 600 persons, including women and children. This attack was planned to give the impression that he AFL was responsible since Harbel, Firestone was under AFL control.

#### Reference 67 - 0.15% Coverage

who operated the equipment and the only English he is mocked to have spoken was 'more mortar'. In demonstrating Guinea's support for LURD he is scorned as asking members of his unit, presumably Guineans: 'your mother there? A chorus 'NO'; Your father there? 'NO'! Then 'more mortar'. What became known as 'world war I, II & III', referring to LURD's strike and retreat strategic attacks on Monrovia, revisited the horrors and persecution of the past on the civilian population in no less measure. Except for MODEL, which instructed its militias to only loot and not kill or rape, as a control measure, atrocities were minimized with looting as the hallmark of its engagements in the southeastern and central regions of Liberia. The scale of destruction and brutality, and the humanitarian catastrophe looming overhead, however, compelled a full involvement of the international community- UN, AU, USA, and EU - in coordination with ECOWAS - to stop the war. The International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) was created to do just that. President Charles Taylor, beleaguered and embattled without sources of fresh supplies of weapons, and slapped with a war crimes indictment and the unanimity of the international community led by US President Bush, Jr that he must leave, stepped down as President of Liberia and went to Nigeria to commence a new life of uncertainty in exile. In all of these hostilities, the suffering and persecution of the local population was always merciless. Economic hardship, rising unemployment and inflation, family break up or displacement imposed further strains on familial relationships with devastating impact on children, young girls and women. Education opportunities were lost or diminished as school closures meant lost of fees already paid and shortage of essential commodities led to price hikes and a declining living standard. Throughout the conflict period, the traditional roles of women shifted remarkable to being major bread-winners. Men were the natural targets of advancing, occupying or resisting arm factions and, were therefore in hiding all the time. Women had to step in; performing household chores, selling or trading in consumable items across factional lines, providing food, securing shelter, medical needs and clothing for family members, maintaining the farm, bearing children and cooking for the family in the midst of war, violence and massive atrocities against the unsuspecting general population. This, not only led to, but increased their vulnerability and exposed them to all manners of violence and abuse. They were caught up in an intractable state of victimization that dehumanized them and sought to deprive them of their womanhood; in many cases the perpetrators succeeded. They were abducted and accused of being enemy spies on espionage missions because they dare venture out when no one dare to; they were raped, and compelled to be house or bush wives for the armed men and would be accused of supporting 'rebels' of the opposing faction; they were also accused of being enemies for cooking for and serving the 'enemy' while in captivity as servants, slaves and 'infidels' or 'kaffli'. They were rejected by their own when liberated from captivity and returned home; husbands, children and relatives were condescending and suspicious; lacking in self-

#### Reference 68 - 0.03% Coverage

It was not until, another two months, after a massive protests from Liberian women, who stormed the conference without being invited, and the impatience of the host country and the ICGL, that on August 18, 2003, the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed; marking the cessation of hostilities in the nearly 15 years of civil war. Apart from the CPA making provisions for the new government after the expected departure of Charles Taylor from Liberia, the agreement also provided, for the first time, accountability mechanism in the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) for Liberia, in an attempt to provide the opportunity for Liberians to confront the legacies of their difficult past.

#### Reference 69 - 0.03% Coverage

The work of the TRC of Liberia commenced the latter part of 2005 in October when nine Commissioners were appointed by the Head of the Transitional Government, C. Gyude Bryant following a public vetting process by a selection panel constituted pursuant to the Act establishing the TRC. The Selection Panel was headed by ECOWAS.

Other members of the panel were UNMIL as Co-chair, political parties, youth, women, inter-religious council, etc. The panel received over 180 nominations and applications which necessitated public vetting, interviews, and background checks. A final short list of 15 nominees was presented to the Head of State from which the nine commissioners were appointed to reflect Liberia's diversity in regional and professional considerations.

#### Reference 70 - 0.08% Coverage

Civil Society: Civil society was a major stakeholder in Liberia's various peace processes and was a part of the vanguard that advocated for the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Accra). From the conceptualization of the TRC and the drafting and passing of the TRC legislation, to the vetting of Commissioners and senior staff, civil society representatives from various organizations (including women's groups, youth groups, the disabled community, political parties, the religious community, traditional organizations and the media) participated in the TRC process and continued to play a lead role in how the TRC implements its mandate. In 2007, the TRC entered into a memorandum of understanding with sixteen civil society organizations, further concretizing that partnership. As early as May 2006, the TRC, through a public participatory process, launched a massive public outreach, awareness and sensitization campaign in collaboration with several civil society organizations aimed at formally introducing the Commission by explaining its mandate, educating the populace about the pivotal role it could play in healing the nation, encouraging them to participate, and garnering the support of the Liberian public and partners in the process. This public awareness campaign began in Monrovia and was subsequently expanded throughout Liberia's fifteen counties. Civil society groups at different levels were engaged by the Commission to assist in this effort; they include: the Liberian National Girls Guides Association, Boys Scouts of Liberia, Artists Association of Liberia, Liberian Crusaders for Peace, Roller Skaters Association of Liberia, Women on the Move Association, and the Traditional Women Association of Liberia. Local media, UNMIL, and other partners have also provided assistance in this area.

#### Reference 71 - 0.03% Coverage

We observe in Table 1 that the TRC collected a significant number of statements from female statement givers. Truth commissions in other countries have often failed to include the participation of women in equal proportion to men in statementtaking. In Liberia, however, nearly fifty percent of statements have been received from female statement-givers, which helped the TRC reflect the experiences of women as well as men during the Liberian conflict. This is also another distinguishing point of the TRC process in Liberia. This data however, does not include children engaged in the TRC Process. A child friendly regiment for taking statements and holding hearings was adopted by the TRC.

#### Reference 72 - 0.08% Coverage

Public hearings are an essential component of the TRC work. Employed for its catalytic and revealing purposes, it provided an opportunity for individual victims and perpetrators to have their experiences officially heard by the state and recognized as part of the Liberian national experience. The opportunity was provided individuals to tell stories and expose the underlining causes and trends of the conflict. The hearings also generated state sponsored – national - empathy, and an understanding from the people and Nation, the Commissioners and policymakers of the conflicts and its varied trends. By satisfying these objectives, the hearings stimulated national public debates and pushed issues of the conflict, repairing victims, perpetrators' accountability, impunity, root causes of the conflict, etc. squarely into the public consciousness. Lastly, the public hearings helped to build in society the capacity to distinguish the truth of the past from lies about it, which is essential to building a stable political future. The TRC hearings assumed a dynamic of its own which warranted hearings taking on varying forms, exuding different outcomes. The hearings were – In-camera or Public Hearings; Victims or perpetrators; Contemporary History of the Conflict; Thematic or Institutional Hearings; county or Diaspora Hearings. The hearings included seven months of victims' and witnesses' testimonies and, to date, four months of actors, thematic and institutional hearings, and accounts and perspectives under the broader 'contemporary history of the conflict' theme. Special consideration was made to accommodate women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. To date, the TRC heard more than 800 testimonies from witnesses testifying before it, under the theme: "Confronting Our difficult Past for a Better Future."

#### Reference 73 - 0.05% Coverage

hearings specifically looked at how the conflict uniquely effected or was affected by thematic elements of the conflict; such as motivations, inherent root causes, and the role of specific elements of our society. It provided a great opportunity for experts to lend their opinions on the roles that different components of the war played in the conflict. These experts spoke extensively about structural, historic and systemic patterns of violence; its causes and impact, on the state, victims and institutions, and sometimes international relationship. While victim hearings were personalized narratives, the thematic hearings were not about the personal experiences of the presenters, but the society as a whole. This nuanced version of history will seek to incorporate various levels of a national history that blend the stories of a diverse range of victims and perpetrators. Thematic hearings included: historical review, contemporary history of the conflict, women, children, the role of religious and traditional institutions, the media, youth, security, etc.

#### Reference 74 - 0.05% Coverage

In each of the 15 counties in Liberia, the TRC had a County Coordinator, field officer or general mobilizer along with other auxiliary staff, including TRC first line of important contact, the statement-takers, to drive through the work of the TRC in the county, making sure it succeeds. The coordinators hailed from their county of assignment and were well known and respected by their people. The TRC tried to ensure also, that all other staff were also citizens or residents of the county, culturally sensitive and communicates well with the people in all respect, including their spoken language. Other personalities and officials affiliated with, and contributing to the work of the commission, are the various county superintendents, city mayors, district and township commissioners, traditional and religious leaders, community leaders – youth, women, - Child Protection agencies, pro democracy and human rights organizations, district representatives, and civic organizations, education institutions and authorities, the county oversight Commissioner of the TRC, the program Department and the TRC Chairman; all constituted county structures.

#### Reference 75 - 0.01% Coverage

Women were not accorded their rights in the first republic. It was under Tubman that they were given suffrage

#### Reference 76 - 0.01% Coverage

July 29, 1990: Massacre of over 500 men, women and children mainly of Gio and Mano ethnicity seeking refuge at the St. Peters Lutheran Church in Monrovia as reprisal for the Bakedu Massacre.

#### Reference 77 - 0.01% Coverage

June, 1995: UNICEF workers in Buchanan reported that they had registered 652 cases of women who had been raped, mostly by members of the warring factions, within a period less than 6 months.

#### Reference 78 - 0.01% Coverage

May, 1990: At least 30 Gio and Mano men, women and children were abducted by government soldiers from a UN compound where hundreds were seeking protection. They were then apparently executed extra judicially by the AFL.

#### Reference 79 - 0.02% Coverage

October 23, 1992: Six NPFL soldiers entered the nuns' convent in the suburb of Gardnersville, killed three other American nuns and a Lebanese businessman, and abducted the businessman's Liberian wife, two other Liberian women with their four children, and four Liberian novices. Those abducted were apparently later released. NPRAG officials denied that NPFL forces were responsible.

#### Reference 80 - 0.02% Coverage

September, 1993: A UN inquiry found that the AFL had been responsible for the extra judicial executions of nearly 600 unarmed civilians- mostly women, children and elderly people- at displaced people's camps near Harbel in June. This report by the WACCO Commission is disputed by findings of the TRC to the effect that NPFL committed the atrocities.

Reference 81 - 0.01% Coverage

June, 1994: Mandingo ULIMO fighters reportedly killed at least four civilians and took women hostage for money when they burned and looted villages in the Tienne area.

Reference 82 - 0.01% Coverage

September, 1994: NPFL fighters tied up at least 20 men, women and children and threw them into the St. John River at Bahla Bridge.

Reference 83 - 0.01% Coverage

April, 1995: UNICEF representatives reported a massacre in Yourcee, a village near Buchanan. They stated that at least 62 people, including women and children, had

Reference 84 - 0.01% Coverage

April, 1998: The discovery of a mass grave in Zorzor, Lofa County. The NPFL has been implicated. The victims, including pregnant women, were bound at the hands and legs before being buried alive in shallow graves.

Reference 85 - 0.01% Coverage

June 9, 2002: The massacre of 110 young men and women in Bopolu, Gbarpolu County by LURD combatant Oforie Diah (a.k.a Iron Jacket). The victims were accused of being GOL sympathizers.

Reference 86 - 0.02% Coverage

March, 1999: Members of the military, searching for a missing man, detained and beat elders in the village of Dambala, Grand Cape Mount County. Villagers complained that the soldiers had raped several women and had looted money and goods. The alleged violations followed several hours of shooting in the village. Military authorities admitted that looting had occurred but denied the allegations of violence and rape.

Reference 87 - 0.01% Coverage

May, 2002: As thousands of civilians fled fighting around Gbarnga as many as 20 women reported that they had been raped by security forces. They included a 19 year old raped by four government militia. Another woman was abducted, held for two days and reportedly raped by an ATU member.

Reference 88 - 0.01% Coverage

August, 2002: Three women fleeing to Guinea were abducted by LURD combatants between Kotolahun and Honyahun. They were forced to carry loads and then raped. Those responsible were subsequently beaten by their commanders.

Reference 89 - 0.02% Coverage

November, 2003: Persistent reports of killings, beatings, abduction and rape by MODEL forces were received. A 60-year-old man, narrated to Amnesty International how MODEL forces attacked Graie on November 1, 2003 burning most of the houses in Graie, Nimba county. Tied some people, beat them with cutlasses and stripped people- both men and women.

#### Reference 90 - 0.02% Coverage

March, 2001: Dozens of university students and professors were whipped and severally beaten by the security forces during a peaceful protest in Monrovia against the arrests of more than 40 students. Some were released shortly afterwards without charge, with visible marks of beatings, and at least seven women students were reported to have been raped repeatedly in detention. At least 17 were released over the next three weeks after widespread public protests. In April the university suspended student leaders; most of whom fled the country.

#### Reference 91 - 0.03% Coverage

During the period from 2001-2003, about 750-1000 civilians, comprising of pregnant women, children, of 12-18 years old, elderly people were taken from their hidden places (bushes) villages, Town and forest by LURD soldiers and forced to carry ammunition on their heads from Fassama to Mascenta and Bopolu. These civilians were not allowed to go further into Guinea, but some brave ones would escape. While many were killed whenever they complained about hunger or tireless while in enrooted. The content of consignment of goods and ammunition which weight about 50-75kg Another women and girls were used as domestic slaves to pound rice and cooked while other were sexual abused

#### Reference 92 - 0.02% Coverage

The late John Hilary Tubman was a top businessman and prominent citizen of Maryland County. All his Money and other properties were taken from him and was later killed by Jack the Rebel of the NPFL would escape. While many were killed wherever they complained about hunger or tireless while in enrooted. The content of consignment of goods and ammunition which weight about 50-75kg Another women and girls were used as domestic slaves to pound rice and cooked while other were sexual abused.

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#### Reference 95 - 0.04% Coverage

It is trite and banal to assert that war brings with it dastardly, carnage, wanton destruction of lives and properties. It is even common to accept that despite the prohibition of certain practices as war weapons – e.g starvation – it is not implausible for the human psychology to tolerate these occurrences as inevitable consequences of war. However, the species of crimes committed in the Liberian civil war – especially cannibalism (eating of human flesh by humans), disembowelment of pregnant women undoubtedly take the meaning of war crime/crime against humanity to another level and stretches the tolerance of mankind of war atrocities. According to Stephen Ellis, the Liberian conflict topped and surpassed all other wars in form and character, in intensity, in depravity, in savagery, in barbarism and in horror. Whilst the Liberian experience may find parallels in history, the description above points to barbarity in modern times which by all standards are repugnant to the human conscience.

#### Reference 96 - 0.03% Coverage

rockets on the overpopulated center of Monrovia killing scores of innocent citizens seeking shelter and refuge; MODEL massively looted from very poor people to render them depraved as their women and girls were raped. The AFL organized a death squad and killed several innocent civilians perceived as being 'against Doe' by beheading. Massacres since April 14, 1979 and burial of victims in mass graves became a commonplace characteristic of the conflict.

The impact of this devastation on women and children in socio-economic and psychological terms is beyond any one's imagination. Apart from family breakups and separations, deprivation and poverty; death and destruction, the family suffered the most as a consequence of the war and at the hands of its barbaric executioners.

#### Reference 97 - 0.02% Coverage

So callous, deliberate and conscious were the attacks and violations against civilians that the perpetrators in vast majority adopted pseudo-names and adorned women apparels, wigs, religious and traditional costumes, to hide their true identities and names. Examples of names used are 'black jacket; one man one; Gbar Red; Peanut Butter; Cobra; Rebel Pa; Jack the Rebel; iron jacket; yellow jacket; Scorpion; Rebel killer; pepper and salt; war bus', etc. Yet in other cases they adopted or patterned

#### Reference 98 - 0.05% Coverage

TRC findings from over 20,000 testimonies collected from Liberians point to a wide distribution of violations and victims throughout the country in every county in almost equal proportion of women (47%) to men (53%). The analysis presented here reflects 17,160 out of 17,416 statements entered into the TRC's database. The analysis excludes 256 statements because these statement givers reported no violations within the TRC's mandate period, January 1979 – October 2003, or because the county or country where the statement was taken was not recorded. The 17,160 statements included in this analysis contain information about 86,647 victims and 163,615 total violations. Statements from the Diaspora (1,163) are not included in this analysis. Owing to insufficient time and resources, and administrative errors, these statements, including 729 from Liberia and 14,000 from the UNDP, could not in time be processed before the end of the TRC's lifespan. The characteristics of statement taking in the Diaspora differ slightly from the Liberian character and therefore included in separate Diaspora analysis.

#### Reference 99 - 0.05% Coverage

Liberia is a signatory to key international instruments protecting fundamental human rights, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Geneva Conventions, and numerous other instruments that protect the rights of specific groups, such as women and children. During both the Doe and Taylor regimes, the government refused to take responsibility for the actions of its functionaries or rein them for the atrocities they committed. Because of this, they were perceived generally to be aware or sanctioning these atrocities committed under their watch. Moreover, Doe, Taylor and their close associates were directly implicated by TRC witnesses in personally perpetrating human rights abuses. The fact that human rights abuses could be perpetrated with complete impunity was a defining feature of the TRC mandate period, and numerous statement givers narrated their futile attempts to obtain justice for abuses committed against them.

#### Reference 100 - 0.02% Coverage

While men, women and children all experienced the violence and trauma of the war, women and girls were also targets of gender-based violence. Already vulnerable due to a patriarchal culture and discrimination that existed before the conflict, women were subjected to widespread sexual abuse during and after the fighting. Many of these acts were public and particularly brutal.

#### Reference 101 - 0.04% Coverage

Another characteristic of the violations were their indiscriminate nature. Though the violations were sometimes systematic, there were also many random and fatal acts of violence. No group of persons was spared from the



violations; men, women, children and the elderly were deliberately targeted by all of the warring faction. They suffered a multiplicity of violations at the hands of their abusers and experienced the conflict as victims and perpetrators. The perpetrators included members of the Government army (the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)), and of armed opposition groups including the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO -K), ULIMO -J, Liberian Peace Council (LPC), Militia forces (GOL of Charles Taylor) and the Lofa Defense Force (LDF).

#### Reference 102 - 0.02% Coverage

War induced victimization was wide spread throughout the population affecting a host of victims including women, men, children, youth, the elderly, and other vulnerable sections of our populace. Notwithstanding, analysis of testimonies collected from TRC witnesses point to men being targeted in greater proportion than women. When taking all violations together. See Table 5 below:

#### Reference 103 - 0.02% Coverage

Owing to the high level of displacement, displaced persons camps were scattered all around the country in populous areas. Men and women were targeted at approximately the same rate for forced displacement relative to their representation in the population.

The plight of IDPs is just as serious as refugees but yet they are the least considered for humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation needs. Women and children account

#### Reference 104 - 0.10% Coverage

##### 9.2. Women: Survivors and Peacemakers

Historically, women were generally excluded from participation in political life, as it was only until 1947, a full century after independence that women were accorded the right to vote. There is no mention anywhere in historical accounts of women participation in the political life of the colony, prior to 1947, except for their participation in the making of the Liberian flag at independence.

In gender terms the dichotomy between rural and urban Liberia are even more manifest in present day Liberia. For example, only 31 percent of women in Harper, located in southeastern Liberia and surrounding areas receive birth assistance from trained health professionals; in Monrovia 84 percent of such women received birth assistance from trained health professionals.

During the armed conflict, women and girls were by far more vulnerable to sexual assault and predation than men. Women exposure was due mainly to their daring to move about away from their homes to venture out for food and succor for their families. The further away from their homes they went, the higher the risk of vulnerability. Many parents hid their young girls (and boys from conscriptions) from the fighters when they entered the town or village and forbid them, the children, from moving about without caution.

More than half of victim's testimonies to the TRC alluded to women being vulnerable or victimized during the war in places other than their place of residence, having been displaced internally by the war. Suggesting, therefore that displaced women were more vulnerable to sexual assault than those who did not flee their homes.

The TRC also noticed that women are significantly overrepresented among rape victims and all victims of sexual slavery and sexual violence, as might be expected. In particular, the proportion of rapes with female victims aged 15-19 represents more than five times the proportion of women aged 15-19 in the general population. However, we see relatively more male than female victims for sexual abuse. The definition of sexual abuse included stripping the victim naked and was employed by many perpetrator groups to humiliate the victim.

#### Reference 105 - 0.14% Coverage

Unfortunately, the data include very few reports of rapes for which the victim's age is known. Still, it is interesting to note that the majority of reported rapes for which the victim's age is known were committed against adolescent women, rather than against socially taboo categories such as older women or very young children. The distribution of all violations by age is roughly similar for males and females. Similarly, analysis of violations documented with the TRC with complete age and sex information suggests that all ages were equally at risk and that the generality of

perpetrators' attack was at random, deliberate and systematic in the instigation of violence against the general armless population.

From the statistical data, women participation in the TRC process was impressive as over fifty percent of statements gathered during the statement-taking exercise are attributed to women. Women account for 28 percent of all violations while on the other hand men account for 47 percent. From these statistics, it is clear that as a class of victims, men comprise the larger proportion, although both men and women appeared to have been targeted in about equal proportions.

Forced displacement which accounts for the largest category of violations took a particularly heavy toll on women, many of whom, faced with the loss of their spouses, assumed leadership roles in their families. Given the difficulties and threats to life (increased mortality) that usually accompany forced migration, it can be assumed, in the absence of reliable statistical information, that elderly women and very young children especially girls, were at great risk and might have suffered disproportionately as compared to males.

Many found themselves in displaced or refugee camps with little or no coping skills to deal with the harsh realities of their new environment. Already victimized by their displacement some, especially young girls, in desperation turned to prostitution including the exchange of relief food for sex. As the statistics show, all factions routinely targeted women simply on account of their gender. This is strongly reflected in the level of sexual violence perpetrated against women. For example, women account for 63 percent of all cases of rape reported to the TRC, as compared to only 6 percent for men. It can be concluded thus that women were singled out for abuse simply on account of their gender. For instance, the proportion of rape with female victims aged 15-19 represents more than five times the proportion of women 15-19 in the general population.

Finally, it is important to note that aside from these reported cases of violence directed against women, the data does not account for the marginalization; exclusion and outright denial of opportunities for self actualization women have, for over a century, endured in Liberia. These age old inequalities find expression in current statistics reflecting the status of women. For example, according to the 2007 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey, HIV prevalence is higher among women than men

#### Reference 106 - 0.01% Coverage

girls as compared to boys, as well as illiteracy rates which are higher as compared to men. High teen pregnancy rates, high abortion rates, high infant and maternal mortality rates are all indicators of the long standing prejudice and inequality that have been the lot of Liberian women for well over a century.

#### Reference 107 - 0.01% Coverage

Women became involved in the peace process and therefore constituted a critical voice for peace. Despite afflictions of the war, reduced earning potential, single parenting, etc., women had public marches, petitions, prayer crusade, and attended and participated in peace conferences as part of their agenda for peace.

#### Reference 108 - 0.04% Coverage

Violations against young boys in these age categories were virtually nil showing again that women including girls were the main targets of sexual violence. This situation is further amplified by the statistics showing that girls age 15-19 were heavily targeted and girls age 10-14 to a lesser degree. Even girls age 5- 9 were the victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence. But beyond what the statistics reveal, children were subjected to other forms of abuse that were not captured in the data gathering process. For example, children were often forced to watch while atrocities, including rape, were being committed against their siblings, parents and elders. In other cases they were forced to eat human flesh and to take drugs and other hallucinating substances. Under the influence of such mind altering substances they often committed some of the worst atrocities recorded/witnessed during the conflict.

#### Reference 109 - 0.06% Coverage

As a class of victims, men account for 47 percent of all violations reported to the TRC, notwithstanding the fact that men constituted the preponderant majority of the fighting forces on all sides. As the data shows, men are over represented among victims of killing, assault, torture, forced labor and forced recruitment. Such data explains why women, despite being ready targets of sexual violence found themselves foraging for food for their families while

men dared not venture out for fear of being killed. It can be said that all the factions, without exception, treated men with ingrained hostility and suspicion.

The age-targeting suggested by these graphs is that men of an increasingly older age were at greater risk for killing and looting violations than younger men. This is indicated by the relatively larger bars at the top compared to the bars on the bottom of the graphs for killing and looting. In contrast, the larger bars on the bottom of the graph for forced recruitment suggest that young men, between the ages of 15-19 in particular, were at greater risk for this violation. A possible interpretation of the killing and forced recruitment graphs is that perpetrators avoided young people for killing, targeting them instead for forced recruitment. As mentioned above, graphs for rape, sexual slavery and sexual violence suggest that young women were at significantly greater risk of suffering these violations.

#### Reference 110 - 0.03% Coverage

Overall, we do not observe high levels of risk for elderly female victims in the violation categories studied by the TRC in statements except for in the age category of 70-74 for killing. We also see a bump in the relative risk for women between the ages of 65-69 for rape violations, though relatively small for the ages 65-69. Even though the actual number of rape violations for female victims between the ages of 65-69 is relatively small, however, when adjusted for the very small proportion this age-sex group makes up the population, we see that women in this age category faced a relatively high risk for suffering rape compared to other age-sex categories with the exception of much younger women.

#### Reference 111 - 0.02% Coverage

For several months in 1990, St. Peter's Lutheran Church became the refuge of women, children and men predominately from the Mano, Gio and Kpelle tribes fleeing violence throughout the country. Of significance here is that the Church was seen as a place of sanctuary – sanctified by God as a place of worship and protection; it became an attractive site for protection from harm because it was a sacred place.

#### Reference 112 - 0.05% Coverage

Many children are not attending school because their caregivers cannot afford to pay the fees. Security also remains a concern, and sexual assault is an acute problem. Despite these problems, Liberians in the camp have been ingenious in meeting their own needs by starting businesses, schools, community-based organizations, and faith-based institutions. However, Liberians who are doing well often are those who receive remittance payments from relatives who have managed to get resettled elsewhere. Although remittance support assists many, the population remains very vulnerable. Education beyond the elementary level and employment opportunities are available only to the very few. Liberian professionals find themselves with little to do because they have not been able to find work in Ghana. Those young Liberians, who are able to get vocational training or a Ghanaian degree, find themselves in a similar situation. Many make ends meet by engaging in petty trading, braiding hair, or relying on the generosity of friends. Others, especially young women desperate to feed their families, turn to prostitution.

#### Reference 113 - 0.01% Coverage

Violations by all factions against women Violations of the rights of the child by forceful recruitment into arm forces

#### Reference 114 - 0.13% Coverage

##### 10.3 Women, the TRC and the Conflict

This political system of exclusion was extended to women who held a limited and restricted place in Liberian society at all levels. Women were not allowed into political space until the 1940s when they were granted the franchise to vote, but only if one had property. Indigenous women, notwithstanding, were not permitted to participate in elections until the 1950s. This was a contradiction of the constitution which proclaimed the equality of all people, and the inalienable rights of all its citizens to participate in their governance. Thus interpreted, the constitution was fashioned in a way favorable to one segment of the society – the property class. Hence in actuality, there were three categories of women in Liberia: the 'settlers' (sometimes referred to as 'civilized' – meaning exposed to western education and norms and not wearing indigenous 'lappa' dress); women of Americo-Liberian

heritage, some of whom owned property and by that standard were qualified to vote; and poor 'settler' women who did not have property and were excluded. There was yet another group, the indigenous women who like their male counterparts could not vote until the 1950s. So in spite of the constitution's stance on the equality of all persons, the political class at the time set aside the real meaning of the equality 'doctrine' and therefore ignored the constitution. Certainly this was the beginning of the discrimination of all modern Liberian women which reinforced the already existing cultural bias against women.

It is important to note that Article XXVIII of the Accra CPA called for gender balance in all positions in the National Transitional Government of Liberia. This assertion was a great opportunity for women to participate in the political process. However it was not adhered to and women remained on the fringes.

All of the indigenous groups are patrilineal (family relationships are all traced through the male blood line and only such relationships are recognized) and have ideologies of male dominance. The nineteenth-century domestic ideology brought with the resettled Americo-Liberians also was highly patriarchal, with women assigned to roles as homemakers and nurturers of children. However, the sexual division of labor in indigenous agricultural settings afforded women a measure of power, if not formal authority. Women's labor was extremely valuable, as seen in the institution of bride wealth that accompanied marriage. Among "civilized people" of indigenous or Americo-Liberian background, women's domestic role in caring for clothing, household decoration, and the other symbolic means by which the status of the household is communicated had great importance. While it was acceptable for an educated woman to hold a white-collar job outside the home, she could not participate in the most common activities – farming, marketing, and carrying loads of wood and water – without threatening her status.

#### Reference 115 - 0.15% Coverage

Indigenous constructions of gender emphasized the breadwinner or productive role for women and the warrior role for men. Indigenous political structures had a "dualsex" organization, that is, parallel systems of offices for men and women. Among the northwestern peoples, this took the form of the dual organization of the above mentioned Poro and Sande secret societies. In the south and east, female councils of elders used a series of checks and balances on official male power. On the national level, the last transitional leader before the 1997 election Ruth Sando Perry was also the first female head of state in Africa.

The Hinterland Laws, which were an extension of the Liberian Constitution and presided over by the governments through the chiefs, denied women certain basic rights such as owning property, holding major discussions with men, participating in decision making processes, and doing certain jobs despite being able to do them like working in a mine or driving a vehicle. They did not have the right to go to school; it was always a privilege and girls were most often sent to work on farms while boys went to schools.

Culturally, it is said that these practices were based on fears that women would dominate their partners if allowed the 'space' to do so. Women were expected to be respectful and to speak when spoken to, especially the „civilized“ women. A man interviewed during the study was recorded to have said, “During the days of our forefathers women were respectful. But these days women are not respectful. When you talk one, they [women] will talk ten”. The Hinterland law allowed men to overtly oppress women and entrench the tendency to treat women unjustly. Even after a woman had borne her husband's children, he could take her back to her relatives, saying that he did not want her any more, and she would have no recourse. This denial of the basic legal and human rights of women, especially the perception of women as the „property“ of her husband or father, rendered women and girls extremely vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and without access to recourse. This laid the foundation for the extreme violations perpetrated during wartime because men had already been socialized to violate women with impunity.

The Liberian government's pronouncement of free and compulsory education for all children of school age has been in existence since 1912. Yet there were high disparities between the numbers of girls and boys in schools. With women's labor being highly prized as farmers, it was a given that girls would work with their mothers and boys needed to be sent to school. Some girls who did go to school did not experience any discrimination and competed equally with the boys, but for the majority, the perception was that education for girls was unnecessary. Currently, almost 80% of Liberian women are illiterate.

Through this description of social formation in Liberia before and during any of the numerous conflicts which have checkered its history over one and a half centuries, it is clear that the Liberian society was and still is endocentric and patriarchal. Although women were valued and held specific gender roles within which some power could be located, there was no inherent power that could place a woman into

#### Reference 116 - 0.03% Coverage

a decision making or leadership position. In fact, in the cases where this had been known to happen, those women were seen as honorary men. Therefore, in the preAmerico-Liberian period it would be safe to say that indigenous Liberian women held a clearly defined place in society with limited power and agency. After the settlers arrived, they were further marginalized to the lowest rung on the social ladder below the indigenous men who were below the settler women and with the male Americo-Liberians holding pride of place as the ultimate “king of the castle”.

#### Reference 117 - 0.03% Coverage

The criminal justice and law enforcement systems, while having made some progress in providing child-friendly measures to deal with delinquents under the age of 18, still lacks the capacity to provide childfriendly procedures and facilities. While the establishment of the Women and Children Protection Section within the Liberian National Police and the establishment of one juvenile court in Monrovia have been extremely positive steps, there is still little expertise to properly deal with children in conflict with the law. There is only one juvenile judge in the country and there is little understanding among magistrate courts of child protection issues. There are no separate detention facilities for children in the country.

#### Reference 118 - 0.04% Coverage

In particular, the health of girls has been severely affected by the high incidence of sexual and gender-based violence. Sexual abuse, rape, multiple rape, and gang rape, and sexual slavery caused serious harm to girls’ reproductive systems and have left many of them with chronic problems from obstetric fistula and sexually transmitted diseases or even infected with HIV. It is extremely worrying that the HIV infection rate among adolescent mothers is three times the average infection rate for the country. There is insufficient access to reproductive health care, HIV prevention, testing, and treatment, in particular in rural areas. Special outreach and educational programs on reproductive health and family planning are limited, although approximately half of all Liberian women give birth before they reach the age of 18.

#### Reference 119 - 0.01% Coverage

Reports of the TRC women’s engagement including hearings and other nationwide activities.

#### Reference 120 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC determines that the conflict in Liberia dating back to the founding of the Liberian state and which was exacerbated by neglect, poverty, exclusion, political repression, ethnicity, and those human rights violations including violations of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, war crimes and egregious domestic laws violations of Liberia and economic crimes which characterized the conflict from 1979 to 2003 gravely impacted all segments of the Liberian society including but not limited to Liberians in the Diaspora and at home Women, Children, Youth, The Elderly, Vulnerable Groups, Cultural, Traditional and Religious Institutions, and Public Institutions.

#### Reference 121 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC further recommends that a reparation program for the empowerment of women devastated by the civil war be extended survivors to advance their economic pursuits in the form of soft micro credit economic programs, small enterprise and marketing programs with education on small business management for sustainability.

The TRC recommends that the Central Bank, Ministry of Finance or the Government of Liberia ensures that commercial banks and lending institutions expand existing micro economic programs and government guaranteed lending schemes to women every where, especially in the rural areas, most especially, on very flexible terms and conditions suitable to poor people.

#### Reference 122 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC recommends that the Government gives full and equal recognition to the economic, social and culture rights of the Liberian people especially minority groups to the extent that every citizen will have access to economic opportunity for personal and group advance; that the cultural values and social orientation of Liberians generally

including minorities will at all times be respected as fundamental equal rights and that the rights of women to self-actualization and equity will be respected and that children will be accorded their full rights as members of the human family.

#### Reference 123 - 0.04% Coverage

##### 18.5. Recommendations related to Women's Rights, Protection and Empowerment

The TRC recommends the abolition of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and minority groups in our society.

The TRC recommends that the Government of Liberia should, without delay, establish programmes that would victims of the conflict, especially women, with medical, psychological and social services including rehabilitation and assistance with child care and maintenance and other support structures to promote their safety, physical and psychological wellbeing.

The TRC further recommends that the Government attention to the health needs and rights of women in vulnerable and disadvantage groups such as migrant women, refugee and internally displaced women, the girl child and older women, women in prostitution, rural women, women with mental and physical disabilities.

#### Reference 124 - 0.02% Coverage

##### 19.2. Vulnerability, Employment, Women and Youth Related Issues

The TRC recommends to the Government of Liberia that the Government take measures to address the issues of vulnerability, employment, women and youth related issues of Liberians in the Diaspora which would eventually ensure their voluntary return to Liberia as contributing members of our society rather than as convicts or ex-convicts involuntarily repatriated.

#### Reference 125 - 0.06% Coverage

The TRC recommends also that in further strengthening of national integration and unity, that every Liberian makes the effort through exposure to all the cultures and traditions of our people in schools, social institutions, etc. to underscore that while certain cultures are predisposed to certain practices and are inclined or disinclined to other practices because of history, experience, etc. we should avoid stereotyping, change our minds and attitudes, and stop asking people what is your tribe, or saying such other nasty things like „bassa man can steal, kpelle people are stupid, bassa people sold their land for smoke fish, krahn people eat charcoal and human beings, grand gedeh people have no grave, kru people are rude and hostile, peace was in heaven before kru man entered, lorma people are blind followers, vai people like money and court business and are lazy, gio and mano people like security and killing business, they undermine people and are disloyal, Maryland people like ritualistic killing (they are gboyoye people), congo people are fetish, incestuous and corrupt, gola people are mean, bassa women are prostitutes, mandingos and fulas are not citizens, all muslims are mandingos, all mandingos are from Guinea, all Ghanaians are Fanti, Freetown is Sierra Leone, etc.

#### Reference 126 - 0.01% Coverage

Eliminate gender-based violence, protect survivors of rape, and prosecute people who commit violence against women;

#### Reference 127 - 0.01% Coverage

Ensure that implementation efforts take into account the need to improve social protection of women, children, the disabled, and other vulnerable groups, focusing on their empowerment and participation in all levels of decision-making; and

#### Reference 128 - 0.01% Coverage

2. At least one-third of all of the judges must be women. Article 4

#### Reference 129 - 0.01% Coverage

3. "Enslavement" The perpetrator exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty, in particular women and children.

Reference 130 - 0.01% Coverage

'Enslavement' means the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children;

Reference 131 - 0.01% Coverage

Similar to Slavery of 1956. It is also understood that the conduct described in this element includes trafficking in persons, in particular women and children.

Reference 132 - 0.01% Coverage

12. "Enslavement" The perpetrator exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty, in particular women and children.

Reference 133 - 0.01% Coverage

particular sensitivities of girls, young women and children victims of rape, sexual assault, abduction and slavery of all kinds, special consideration shall be given to the appointment of prosecutors and investigators experienced in gender-related crimes and juvenile justice.

Reference 134 - 0.01% Coverage

Murder, dismemberment of pregnant women

Reference 135 - 0.10% Coverage

Additional Recommendations to Address the Needs of Women and Girls and to Advance Gender Equality in Liberia  
This report has shown that Liberia 's 14 year civil war, buttressed by over a century of violence, oppression and inequality did not spare women and girls from being used, abused, killed, maimed, mutilated, tortured, raped, gang raped, abducted, forced into sexual slavery and drugged. Their houses, property and possessions were destroyed and looted, they were internally displaced and turned into refugees and suffered the loss of their breadwinners and livelihoods. This report therefore finds that women and girls were violated in every category of violations and that the ensuing harms, impact and consequences of these violations extended far beyond their direct physical experience.

This report determines that through the investigations of the TRC, many of the causes and origins of violence against women during wartime are rooted in the socio-cultural, traditional and political history of Liberia. It is also firmly linked to the low socio-political status of women, with the added perception of male superiority. This rendered women and girls extremely vulnerable to exploitation and violence during both war and peace. It has also taken into account the multiplicity and complexity of women's roles in the armed conflict, recognizing that women took on the added roles of perpetrator, collaborator as well as peacemaker and mediator.

These recommendations are therefore based on the need to not only address the direct consequences of the conflict in Liberia but also the root causes and origins of the violations that women continue to experience in the aftermath of the conflict. Women continue to experience the secondary harms from the increase in single parenting, unwanted pregnancies, health problems from sexually transmitted diseases, increasing poverty, prostitution, discrimination and increased responsibility due to the loss of breadwinners, livelihoods and the adoption of orphans.

These recommendations are informed by the recommendations elicited from women throughout the lifespan of the TRC, through all the projects and activities aimed at engaging women and girls in Liberia from its inception through June 2009.

#### Reference 136 - 0.02% Coverage

The ratification and subsequent incorporation of international human rights instruments into national law is crucial to the advancement of women's rights. It imposes on states an obligation to interpret national law in a manner consistent with their duty to their population. Liberia ratified CEDAW in 1984 and is about to present its first and sixth report to the CEDAW committee in July 2009. This report comprehensively covers the status of women in Liberia today and makes a wide

#### Reference 137 - 0.02% Coverage

range of pledges to advance substantive gender equality in Liberia. The Committee will make a number of recommendations to the Liberian government for them to fulfill their obligation to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. It is therefore strongly recommended that a mechanism be established to monitor and report on the implementation of the CEDAW committee's recommendations.

#### Reference 138 - 0.05% Coverage

For full recovery and transformation of Liberian society, the work initiated in the post-conflict process must be continued. It is therefore recommended as a first step that a comprehensive database of service providers throughout the country be compiled and made available and accessible to the Liberian population, especially to the women. This activity should be implemented jointly between civil society, the government and UN agencies to avoid overlaps and to ensure that it is comprehensive, covering every small community based organization offering services of any kind that will contribute to the health and wellbeing of the nation.

More clinical and psychosocial services need to be provided and accessible to all, at decentralized levels, especially reaching out to the rural population. This includes the establishment of decentralized health clinics. Parts of these services should be tailored to accommodate survivors of sexual violence and ex-combatants paying special attention to reaching women and girls associated with the fighting forces.

#### Reference 139 - 0.08% Coverage

Since many women associated with the fighting forces were not able to participate in the skills training programs provided on demobilization, and that many women requested vocational training during the TRC process, it is recommended that skills training programs be decentralized and made accessible to all, especially to women and girls outside of Monrovia. It is further recommended that these training programs are designed based on an assessment of marketable skills needed in Liberia and is coordinated, vetted and certified by both the Ministries of Gender and Development and Labour to ensure that the training is appropriate and the quality is standardized. Furthermore, government should develop incentives for all employers to offer skills training by setting up a levy that employers pay which they can access for the skills training of employees.

It is noted that for many who have undertaken skills training there is an absence of opportunities to practice the skills as well as the lack of accessible markets. It is recommended that the Ministry of Gender and Development and partners explore opportunities for women to utilize the skills acquired and for market opportunities where their goods can be sold.

The current legal and regulatory environment must be reworked to allow for the development of the microfinance sector and the provision of micro-credit for the poor and vulnerable especially women. The provision of these services must be linked to programs dealing with the root socio-cultural and traditional causes of gender inequality to avoid the backlash of violence that inevitably follows such financial empowerment programs.

Micro-credit schemes should especially target women associated with the fighting forces, internally displaced women, female single parents and caregivers, and war widows. Those providing micro-

#### Reference 140 - 0.02% Coverage

credit should be compelled to incorporate a basic business management course into the provision of micro-credit especially for semi-literate or illiterate women.

Donor funded support to microfinance has been limited. UNDP programs in some counties have been the only means of financial support for rural women. Donors need to look into more support for microfinance.



#### Reference 141 - 0.04% Coverage

The Legal and regulatory framework also needs to be reworked to allow greater access for women to financial and banking services including training women and girls on how to conduct and manage their finances effectively. Academic, vocational and practical skills training should be provided. All loans should only be approved along with a mandatory training on how to use finances effectively for the purpose intended, and especially on how to start small businesses.

Agriculture and subsistence farming are a major source of income for women. Female extension workers must be recruited and trained to ensure that extension services are gender responsive. New farming technologies must be identified and taught to women farmers along with the provisions of farm tools and network support with other women farmers.

#### Reference 142 - 0.04% Coverage

The bias against women receiving formal education must be addressed at all levels, socially, economically and politically. The National Girl Child Education Policy must be implemented to address some of the following issues: Free and compulsory education for girls up to senior secondary level is recommended. Girls who become pregnant while at school must not be expelled. Government should ensure that counseling services are available at all schools as well as adequate sex education and awareness as preventative measures. In the event of girls becoming pregnant, services must be available for the girl to complete her education in a way that takes her health status into account. Teachers impregnating girls must be severely dealt with, through the setting up enforceable codes of conduct for teachers and students.

#### Reference 143 - 0.02% Coverage

It is further recommended that the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Ministry of Gender and Development, UN and Civil society partners establish decentralized adult education programs, including night schools for women in which basic literacy and numeric skills can be taught. This needs to take all the socio-economic concerns of women into account, like safe transport, child care and affordability.

#### Reference 144 - 0.01% Coverage

Although the statutory laws prohibit discriminatory practices, they make no specific provisions against discrimination in the private or domestic sphere. Access to justice is limited for women, particularly in the rural areas, and availability of legal aid is severely limited.

#### Reference 145 - 0.04% Coverage

It is recommended that more judges, prosecutors, magistrates are trained and sensitized on gender and discrimination. This includes clerks and other staff in the judicial system, whose negative attitudes towards women and their limited knowledge of rights, further limits women's access to the justice system.

It is recommended that a formal legal aid system is set up, coordinated and supported by the government and the judiciary to deal with the fact that poverty and illiteracy limits women's access to justice.

Public education on the law needs to be linked to literacy programs, since high illiteracy among women attempting to access justice, particularly in the counties and rural areas, limits their success. Since literacy is not a precondition for legal literacy, focus must be placed on educating women on their rights through different forms of communication as well.

#### Reference 146 - 0.01% Coverage

An affirmative action policy or law must be developed and implemented to ensure that women's participation and inclusion does not rely on goodwill.

#### Reference 147 - 0.03% Coverage

All workplace discrimination within state institutions, particularly the traditionally male dominated sectors like the security sector, must be investigated and corrected with sanctions in place for sexual harassment, unequal incentive schemes, operational structures and bureaucratic procedures. Furthermore, substantive equality must be practiced to ensure that women are not further discriminated against, by treating everybody the same.

A sensitive action research study of the nature and prevalence of female genital mutilation / cutting must be done. Public education of the outcomes, the dangers and the choices women have regarding this practice must then follow. Laws must be enacted to protect women and girls who choose not to follow this practice.

#### Reference 148 - 0.04% Coverage

\* All women who suffered sexual violations must receive free medical services

\* All women who suffered physical violence and are suffering as a result must receive free medical services \*

Psychosocial/trauma counseling for women must be continued

\* Scholarships must be provided to the children of women whose husbands, partners or breadwinners were killed \*

Individual reparation to be determined on a case-by case basis must be given to all women who either gave statements to the TRC or who testified at the public or in-camera hearings \* GOL must facilitate the reunification of women who were used as sex slaves, bore children for fighters but whose children were taken away from them by fighters at the end of the war, and who want to be reunited with their children the opportunity to be reunited with their children. Must women have said this will facilitate their healing and promote the ends of justice.

Women Associated with the Fighting Forces

#### Reference 149 - 0.01% Coverage

There should be specialized clinics for women to deal with the specific problems resulting from the violence of the war. Free and consistent healthcare must be provided for all survivors of rape and sexual violence medically and psychologically.

#### Reference 150 - 0.03% Coverage

A large number of elderly women have been rendered destitute and without families, must be reintegrated into society, and government and civil society are called upon to develop innovative programs that will restore these women's dignity and pride. Examples of this can be taken from other countries where the elderly have been taken into homes as child minders (adopt a grandmother), or to offer some assistance to families struggling to recover their family values. Homes for the elderly should be established in the main urban centers, subsidized by government where no family member or family can be found to 'adopt' the person. All the elderly women should be given free medical attention.

#### Reference 151 - 0.01% Coverage

Women rendered widows by the war need to be empowered to understand their rights, and steps need to be taken to ensure that those who were working their husband's lands are granted access and ownership to that land. All war widows should receive free psychosocial counseling.

#### Reference 152 - 0.03% Coverage

Women who lost track of their children and families need a special service to be established that they can access, to reunite them with their missing family, and to be assisted to return to their original homes if that is what they deem appropriate. These women have also lost their properties and homes so a rebuilding plan is essential. Building materials should be subsidized and made available to women who can present a rebuilding plan. In the interest of reconciliation, the perpetrators who destroyed homes should be involved in this plan as part of community reparations to the victims.

#### Reference 153 - 0.07% Coverage

causes and course of mass crime, and allow the re-interpretation and re-assertion of the belief systems. However, while memorialization can be a bridge between past and future and contribute to reconciliation and healing projects, in many instances it further marginalizes women. Women's experiences, contributions, struggles for change, and campaigns for peace in Liberia, must be mainstreamed into the memorialization practice to ensure that they serve as mechanisms for inspiration and motivation for current and future generations. This would also encourage civic engagement around women's experiences of conflict, breaking cultures of silences and shame, and furthering the course towards gender equality.

Throughout the work of the TRC Gender Unit, there were persistent calls for memorials and ways to commemorate the dead especially from the women. It is therefore recommended that government and civil society work together with the communities, to identify sites to build monuments where they are appropriate and most honoring of those whose lives were lost during the civil war. It is especially important to memorialize sites of massacres, to hold mourning days, rites or feasts, or to write the names of the people who died during the war. Government is called upon to devise creative ways to engage the population and ensure that the voices of those remaining, particularly the women participate in devising and deciding who and what will be remembered where and how.

#### Reference 154 - 0.09% Coverage

Under institutional reform, vetting is increasingly implemented to address human rights abuses. It is defined as a formal process for the identification and removal of individuals responsible for abuses from public office. Vetting is becoming an integral part of the process of restoring trust in organs of the state, in an attempt to ensure that the structures that facilitated human rights abuses in the past no longer exist. The collapse of the rule of law during the war with the army and the police involved in perpetrating acts of violence on civilians makes credible institutional reform essential for citizens, especially women, to regain their trust in the state organs. It is also vital that Liberian state institutions reform and transform so as to promote and foster gender equality. The institutional reform process should transform such institutions into efficient and fair institutions that respect human rights, maintain peace, and preserve the rule of law. Institutional reform measures in Liberia are recommended to create the following in all public institutions such as the police and the military: \* the creation of oversight, complaint and disciplinary procedures; \* public education and awareness campaigns to train the public, especially women, on how to access recourse if the system discriminates against them or is harmful, especially the translation of such procedures into Liberian English and other accessible forms of communication. \* the reform or establishment of new legal frameworks; \* the development or revision of ethical guidelines and codes of conduct; \* the provision of adequate salaries, equipment and infrastructure; \* the reform of all institutions by screening and removing personnel who are deemed unsuitable for public employment, due to their willing participation in acts of violence and destruction during the war, from, for example, the security forces, the police or the judiciary.

#### Reference 155 - 0.03% Coverage

The State needs to further ensure that women-friendly environments are developed within the police and judiciary for the reporting of sexual and GBV. More females must be recruited into the security sector and trained adequately to build their capacity, and more must be promoted into management and decision making positions as well. Adequate sexual harassment policies must be adopted and enforced within these sectors. Attractive incentives must be created to recruit women; including child care, promotional opportunities, and evidence that gender stereotyping is absent.

#### Reference 156 - 0.02% Coverage

All forms of media in Liberia are powerful socializing agents and must be reformed and transformed to reflect the nation's serious commitment to gender equality. More women must be trained and advanced to take up leadership positions within the media. Media monitoring and watchdog mechanisms should be established to ensure that the messaging from the media is not perpetuating harmful gender stereotypes, and/or objectifying women and girls.

#### Reference 157 - 0.03% Coverage

This is an important institution which will follow on after the TRC. It needs to be reconstituted immediately so that it can begin to work alongside or soon after the closure of the TRC to avoid too big a gap between the two institutions. A special task force should be created to look into the issue of reparations, with the HRC holding full

responsibility for the monitoring of this process and holding it accountable. The HRC should be given the same mandate as the TRC in terms of ensuring that women's needs are catered for and that gender equality remains high on their list of priorities.

#### Reference 158 - 0.02% Coverage

The culture of impunity in Liberia has had a severe impact and dire consequences for women and girls. The state failed completely to protect them as civilians during the war and even in the post conflict periods, deepening this culture and allowed women's bodies to become the battlefield through which the war was fought. For women and girls, it is absolutely imperative to end the

#### Reference 159 - 0.03% Coverage

culture of impunity. It is therefore recommended that war-lords and heads of fighting factions be punished for initiating, encouraging, participating in and perpetuating crimes against women during the war and in the post conflict periods. This punishment must be real, and justice must be seen to be done. This should involve jail-time, hard labor, and seizure of property or other ill-gotten gains. Public apologies from the warring factions must be mandated and reparations sought from them personally. Amnesty should only be considered with full disclosure and remorse for crimes against women. All child soldiers should be given conditional amnesty with the condition being mandatory rehabilitation.

#### Reference 160 - 0.07% Coverage

##### Advancing Women's Rights beyond the TRC

After all the testimonies, hearings, workshops, and the end of the TRC, it is critical that women ensure that their rights are advanced and harm committed against them is repaired. It is therefore further recommended that:

- \* Sensitization of women's rights happens through media, drama, or workshops since many women do not know their rights in Liberia. They have lost their husbands, land has been taken away and so forth, and they need to know exactly what rights they have and how to access them. (Right to Knowledge; Access to Information).

- \* All the national and international laws need to be disseminated in a simplified way throughout Liberia, so that everyone knows what they are and how to use them. Only two people from a group of 25 at the national conference knew about the Inheritance Law which has already been enacted. Throughout Liberia there is still confusion when traditional marriages are dissolved. (Equal Right to Inherit for Men and Women)

- \* All women should be assisted to regain their lost livelihoods and/ or be given the information they need to understand that they have a right to claim these losses. Many women lost businesses during the war, and also their male relatives who were helping them. They are left with small children and no means of income. There should be a scheme to assist these women to go back to their business and to start over. (Right to Work; Right to an adequate standard of living).

- \* Illiteracy is highest amongst women. Market women need to be literate. Many live in communities where there are no public schools. Women are being charged fees to attend school, when education

#### Reference 161 - 0.03% Coverage

up to grade 9 is free. So they need literacy programs, more primary schools in rural communities and knowledge about the system. (Right to education). \* Many women are living at the mercy of family and friends having lost their homes in the war. Low cost housing schemes must be provided. (Right to Housing). \* The DDRR did not cater for victims. They need assistance such as skills training, medical care, and scholarships for their children, and trauma counseling. A resettlement fund should be made available, victims identified and given assistance to go back to their homes and start over. \* Legal Aid must be provided to women who are being thrown out by their husbands and husbands' relatives.

## Child Node References to Women

The following section contains references to women from the Liberia report organized by the child nodes outlined in Coding Women for the Liberia Report. Some references appear under several subheadings since they contained discussions of multiple themes.

### *Colonialism*

References or discussions of colonialism

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_.Report-FULL> - § 8 references coded [0.25% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.05% Coverage

The Grain Coast was not as involved in the Slave Trade as other areas in the sub region due to its rough and rocky coast; most inhospitable to slave vessels and traders. The major slave trading countries were Portugal, England and Holland. The Portuguese captured three Africans near Cape Verde in the 1400s and many Africans regard this as the beginning of the great trade. In 1551 the English slaver, John Hawkins arrived to the pre Liberian coast for slaves. He paid his second and last visit in 1552. Two resident European slave traders on the Liberian coast were Don Pedro Blanco and Theodore Canot. They were Italians operating on and off in Bassa and Cape Mount. On the plantations, life for the slave was lonely and horrible. While most of the slave women served as domestic servants they were also used unwillingly as concubines to their slave masters and had children (mulattos) many of whom migrated to Africa to form the new states. It is speculated that many of the first presidents of Liberia, including Roberts, originated from this stock.

#### Reference 2 - 0.03% Coverage

The first group of settlers that arrived in Africa under aegis of the ACS, sailed on the Elizabeth in 1817. On board were eighty-six men, women and children from New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia. These were seen as pioneers who would help build the colony. After a few weeks stay in Freetown, they moved on to Sherbo Island where all the agents namely Samuel A. Crozier, Samuel Bacon and John P Blankson, and about half the population of the colonists were wiped out by malaria. Amidst initial constraints, they were able to resettle some 13,000 African Americans and several thousand recaptured African slaves known as Congos from 1821-1867.

#### Reference 3 - 0.02% Coverage

In the following year a constitutional convention was held without the participation or representation of any natives, allies or antagonists. The constitution, written by a Harvard Law Professor, was adopted by the convention along with the 'Declaration of Independence', written by Hilary Teage on July 26, 1847. There was no woman represented at the convention, but eleven women were later designated to sew the Liberian flag. Delegates to the convention were drawn from the three counties that were members of the commonwealth:

#### Reference 4 - 0.03% Coverage

The Constitution specifically contains a preamble and five articles including the bill of rights (Article I), legislative powers (Article II), executive powers (Article III), judicial powers (Article IV), and miscellaneous provisions (Article V). Among the miscellany are clauses prohibiting slavery, protecting the property rights of women and decreeing that only 'persons of color' may be admitted to citizenship and granted the right to hold real property in the republic. Meaning, therefore that the natives were not considered part of Liberia or citizens of the Republic of Liberia.

#### Reference 5 - 0.05% Coverage

To enforce the de jure limits of the state, Liberia in 1908 for the first time, created a national army, the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF). This development, even though consistent with state-making, engendered tremendous political conflicts of its own. The LFF became a tool for the enforcement of the writ of the Liberian government in the hinterland. An elaborate government 'native policy' was instituted with at least two problematic features (or outcomes): One was subversion of the Constitution by endowing the Executive Branch with legislative and judicial powers within the hinterland, a practice reminiscent of the 1822-1847 colonial periods. The other problematic feature of the native policy was the license it gave to some unscrupulous interior officials and their traditional cronies which led to unspeakable atrocities across Liberia's interior region. Talking about 'roots of conflict,' the memory of these atrocities survives in documents, and there are Liberians who continue to hand down to a younger generation the facts of this ugly past in which respectable chiefs and fatherly heads were publicly humiliated, children and women often abused, forced labor and cruelty in collecting the 'hut tax' impositions were common.

#### Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

'Let it be remembered that when those great men and women first landed here from the United States to found this nation, they met not a single, solitary one of their brothers who were civilized or educated, nor were the traces of Christian religion anywhere seen or known'

#### Reference 7 - 0.02% Coverage

a decision making or leadership position. In fact, in the cases where this had been known to happen, those women were seen as honorary men. Therefore, in the preAmerico-Liberian period it would be safe to say that indigenous Liberian women held a clearly defined place in society with limited power and agency. After the settlers arrived, they were further marginalized to the lowest rung on the social ladder below the indigenous men who were below the settler women and with the male Americo-Liberians holding pride of place as the ultimate "king of the castle".

#### Reference 8 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC determines that the conflict in Liberia dating back to the founding of the Liberian state and which was exacerbated by neglect, poverty, exclusion, political repression, ethnicity, and those human rights violations including violations of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, war crimes and egregious domestic laws violations of Liberia and economic crimes which characterized the conflict from 1979 to 2003 gravely impacted all segments of the Liberian society including but not limited to Liberians in the Diaspora and at home Women, Children, Youth, The Elderly, Vulnerable Groups, Cultural, Traditional and Religious Institutions, and Public Institutions.

## *Commission*

### References or discussions of the work and recommendations of the Commission

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_Report-FULL> - § 64 references coded [2.33% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.02% Coverage

e. Adopting specific mechanisms and procedures to address the experiences of women, children and vulnerable groups, paying particular attention to gender based violations, as well as to the issue of child soldiers, providing opportunities for them to relate their experiences, addressing concerns and recommending measures to be taken for the rehabilitation of victims of human rights violations in the spirit of national reconciliation and healing.

#### Reference 2 - 0.02% Coverage

f. Helping restore the human dignity of victims and promote reconciliation by providing an opportunity for victims, witnesses, and others to give an account of the violations and abuses suffered and for perpetrators to relate their experiences, in an environment conducive to constructive interchange between victims and perpetrators, giving special attention to the issue of sexual and gender based violence and most especially to the experiences of children and women during armed conflicts in Liberia;

#### Reference 3 - 0.02% Coverage

n. The TRC shall take into account the security and other interests of the victims and witnesses when appearing for hearings, design witness protection mechanisms on a case by case basis as well as special programs for children and women both as perpetrators and victims under burdens of trauma, stigmatization, neglect, shame, ostracization, threats, etc. and others in difficult circumstances who may wish to recount their stories either in privacy or public, subject to the discretion of the TRC.

#### Reference 4 - 0.04% Coverage

violations and abuses suffered and for perpetrators to relate their experiences, in an environment conducive to constructive interchange between victims and perpetrators.' It also required that the TRC give special attention to the issue of sexual and gender based violence, particularly with respect to women and children. Consequently, the TRC decided that in order to protect the physical and psychological welfare of victims and alleged perpetrators, victims were informed about the appearances of alleged perpetrators and were free to attend public hearings if they desired to without being in conflict with or required to be in close proximity to them. The TRC decided against providing a venue for the accuser, particularly the most violent ones, to confront the accused, for security reasons, among others. While such exchanges took place, they were limited and did not occur frequently.

#### Reference 5 - 0.02% Coverage

sensitization and awareness campaign associated with it. Staff associated with the Diaspora Project in the United States of America, Ghana and Nigeria, were similarly trained as coders and community mobilizers to ensure that TRC techniques were mainstreamed among all staff. All training programs focused a gender dimension that included emphasis on women and children's issues.

#### Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

The TRC recruited more women statement takers than male while women participated strongly in the statement-taking process as statement givers, accounting for approximately 47% of all statements given to the TRC.

#### Reference 7 - 0.02% Coverage

Liberian refugees confrontations with the authorities of Ghana unsettled the planned hearings in the West African sub-region. The hearings including seven months of victims' and witnesses' testimonies and, to date, four months of actors, thematic and institutional hearings, which provided vital accounts and perspectives under the broader 'contemporary history of the conflict theme'. Special considerations have been made to accommodate women, children, elderly, handicap and other vulnerable groups.

#### Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

This section discusses the various civil society participation and outreach activities of the TRC inclusive of national and international hearings processes. In this context, it will also highlight the various activities that the TRC designed and implemented for women and children.

#### Reference 9 - 0.02% Coverage

women's groups, youth groups, the disabled community, political parties, the religious community, traditional organizations and the media, participated in the TRC process and continued to play a lead roles in how the TRC implements its mandate. In 2007, the TRC entered into a memorandum of understanding with sixteen civil society organizations, further concretizing their partnership.

#### Reference 10 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC held special interactive outreach presentations on its programs and activities with the National Legislature and the Cabinet. Civil society groups at different levels were engaged by the Commission to assist in this effort; they include: the Liberian National Girls Guides Association, Boys Scouts of Liberia, Artists Association of Liberia, Liberian Crusaders for Peace, Roller Skaters Association of Liberia, Women on the Move Association, and the Traditional Women Association of Liberia. Local media and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and other partners have also provided assistance in this area.

#### Reference 11 - 0.09% Coverage

the destruction of the country's infrastructure. Unfortunately, women bore a disproportionate amount of suffering during the war. Women were often brutally raped and kidnapped, forced to watch their husbands and children tortured and killed or forcibly conscripted into various warring factions. Thousands of children and youth were forced to take drugs as a means to control and teach them to kill, maim and rape without conscious making them virtual killing machines. It is estimated that the conflict in Liberia produced the highest number of female perpetrators in comparison to civil conflicts in other parts of the world.

According to TRC findings, various episodes of the armed conflict affected men and women differently. While men account for nearly 50% or half of all reported violations compared to one third or 33% from women. However, more than 70% of all sexual based violations reported were against women.

For historical, cultural, social, political, economic and other reasons, women's experiences are often not reported and hence underrepresented in reported violations. Recognizing this reality, the TRC Act provides guidelines for the treatment of women in the TRC process. In addition to the Preamble, nine sections of the Act speak to women's realities and how they should be incorporated in the TRC process. These provisions and references demand the effective participation of women at all levels and in all aspects of the TRC process, including as Commissioners, managers and staff of the TRC, petitioners, victims, perpetrators, victim-perpetrators, and witnesses. Article IV and VI of TRC Act specifically requires the TRC to adopt mechanisms and procedures to address the experience of women, children and vulnerable groups; pay particular attention to genderbased violations; employ specialists in women's rights; protect women's safety; and not endanger women's social reintegration or psychological recovery.

#### Reference 12 - 0.07% Coverage

In adhering to these requirements, the TRC has engaged in numerous activities with women in Liberia and in the Diaspora. Several formal and informal meetings have been held with individuals as well as women's groups. In 2006, to ensure proper coordination and broadbased participation by women in the TRC process, and to guarantee that woman's concerns are adequately expressed and addressed, the TRC established a gender committee comprising a wide spectrum of civil society and international partners. Members of this committee included the



Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia; the Ministry of Gender; the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA); ICTJ; the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); UNMIL Gender Section; Rule of Law Section and Human Rights and Protection Section; Liberia Crusaders for Peace Women's Wing; Traditional Women Association of Liberia; Women on the Move; and the Liberian Media Women Association.

From December 2006 to February 2007, the TRC implemented extensive outreach programs with women throughout Liberia's fifteen counties by holding four zonal workshops targeting women's organizations in the counties, and town hall meetings in all counties. Against this backdrop, there are concerns that, after more than a century of gross neglect, marginalization, and dehumanization, especially during Liberia's most recent episodes of conflict, women harbor deep seeded disdain towards those persons who are directly linked to their suppression and are fearful of reprisal if they cooperate with the TRC.

#### Reference 13 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC-Traditional Advisory Council membership was drawn from the leadership of the National Traditional Council of Liberia which is the umbrella association of all traditional and tribal associations in the country. The National Traditional Council is representative of Chiefs and elders from the 78 political districts and 64 electoral districts of Liberia. Each of the 15 counties of Liberia has a County Council whose representative reports to the National Council. The National Traditional Council of Liberia has several sub-committees including Women Affairs and the National Coordinating Committee, responsible for settling all disputes affecting the organization and country at large.

#### Reference 14 - 0.01% Coverage

7. Adopt specific mechanisms to address the experiences of women and children;

#### Reference 15 - 0.14% Coverage

Commissioner Massa Amelia Washington is a journalist with more than twenty years of experience in journalism. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communication with an emphasis in print journalism from the University of Liberia and is currently a second-year graduate student with high honors at the Temple University School of Social Administration and Management, Philadelphia, PA, USA. She was trained in broadcast journalism by the Voice of America and the Liberian Broadcasting System. She has served as a Public Relations Officer for the Liberian National Red Cross Society, Senior Reporter for the Ministry of Information's New Liberian newspaper and News Editor for the Inquirer Newspaper, Liberia. Commissioner Washington covered the Liberian Civil War extensively, often reporting in hostile territories, and created a column in the Inquirer dedicated to highlighting the impact of the war on women. She is a Civil Society and women's rights activist and a member of the Liberian Women Initiative (LWI), which has been at the vanguard of peace advocacy in Liberia. She attended and covered early peace conferences including; the Accra Clarification Conference, Akosombo I and Abuja I. Commissioner Washington is the only member of the TRC recruited from outside of Liberia. Prior to joining the Commissioner, she lived in Philadelphia where she worked as Director of Programs for the WES Health Centers Department of WESWorks. The Commissioner has received several honors including; U.S. Embassy in Monrovia 2009 Liberian Woman of Courage Award, in the Category of the State Department's International Woman of Courage Award, Women's Campaign International (WCI) 2009 International Women's Leadership Award, 2004 Liberian Association of Pennsylvania Inc. Certificate of Honor, and Press Union of Liberia Reporter of the Year Award 1994. Ms. Washington is also one of sixteen Liberian peace advocates featured in the African Women and Peace Support Group's 2004 "Liberian Women Peacemakers, Fighting for the Right to be Seen, Heard and Counted".

Commissioner Massa A. Washington is a journalist with more than twenty years of experience. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communication with an emphasis in print journalism from the University of Liberia and is currently a second-year graduate student with high honors at the Temple University School of Social Administration and Management, Philadelphia, PA, USA. In 1984, she was trained in broadcast journalism by the Voice of America and the Liberian Broadcasting System. She has served as a Public Relations Officer for the Liberian National Red Cross Society, Senior Reporter for the Ministry of Information's New Liberian newspaper and News Editor for the Independent Inquirer. Commissioner Washington covered the Liberian Civil War extensively, often reporting in hostile territories, and she created a column in the Inquirer dedicated to Liberian

women. She is a women's rights activist and a member of the Liberian Women Initiative, which has been at the vanguard of peace advocacy in Liberia.

#### Reference 16 - 0.09% Coverage

earning a JD degree from Quinnipiac. She holds Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of Liberia (1973). She is a legal drafter with more than a quarter century of experience in the peace building, woman and human Rights Advocacy and a renown Liberian Politician. Commissioner Bull has held many elected and presidential appointed positions, serving in the public and private sectors in Liberia including on several Boards; Red Cross, YMCA, Renaissance Corporation Inc. FORUM, Special Assistant to Mrs. Angie Brooks Randolph 1974, Law clerk to Supreme Court of Liberia under Associate Justice, George E. Henries, 1978-1979, Country Vice President, International Federation of Female Lawyers, elected National Chairman, Women Wing, True Whig Party of Liberia, January 1980-April 12 1980, Elected Member from Montserrado County to the Constitutional Advisory Assembly of Liberia (1983) (see 1986 Constitution), Member of the Interim National Assembly of Liberia, representing Montserrado County (1984), Member of the Public Procurement Steering Committee to draft the Act Creating the Public Procurement and Concession Commission of Liberia (2004-2005), elected chairman of the Civil Society committee to lobby the national Transitional Legislature for the enactment of An Act to Repeal the 1979 Act Creating the Liberian Commission of Human Rights and to Create the Independent National Committee on Human Rights of Liberia, to ensure said act was printed into Handbill (2005), Vice Chairman, Independent Committee of Expert for the selection of commissioners for the Independent National Human Rights Commission of Liberia (Dec. 2005), Acting National Chairman Women Wing Unity Party of Liberia, 2005, Coordinator for the Movement for the Promotion of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf for President of Liberia (MOPED) (2005-2006), Member of the National Bar Association of Liberia for 27 years, and Association of Female Lawyers where she served on several Committees.

#### Reference 17 - 0.02% Coverage

e. Adopting specific mechanisms and procedures to address the experiences of women, children and vulnerable groups, paying particular attention to gender based violations, as well as to the issue of child soldiers, providing opportunities for them to relate their experiences, addressing concerns and recommending measures to be taken for the rehabilitation of victims of human rights violations in the spirit of national reconciliation and healing.

#### Reference 18 - 0.02% Coverage

Helping restore the human dignity of victims and promote reconciliation by providing an opportunity for victims, witnesses, and others to give an account of the violations and abuses suffered and for perpetrators to relate their experiences, in an environment conducive to constructive interchange between victims and perpetrators, giving special attention to the issue of sexual and gender based violence and most especially to the experiences of children and women during armed conflicts in Liberia;

#### Reference 19 - 0.02% Coverage

The TRC shall take into account the security and other interests of the victims and witnesses when appearing for hearings, design witness protection mechanisms on a case by case basis as well as special programs for children and women both as perpetrators and victims under burdens of trauma, stigmatization, neglect, shame, ostracization, threats, etc. and others in difficult circumstances who may wish to recount their stories either in privacy or public, subject to the discretion of the TRC.

#### Reference 20 - 0.03% Coverage

Article VII Section 26 (f) requires the TRC to help ,restore the human dignity of victims and promote reconciliation by providing an opportunity for victims, witnesses and others to give an account of the violations and abuses suffered and for perpetrators to relate their experiences, in an environment conducive to constructive interchange between victims and perpetrators.' It also requires that the TRC give special attention to the issue of sexual and gender based violence, particularly with respect to women and children. Consequently, the TRC decided that in order to protect the physical and psychological welfare of victims and alleged perpetrators,

#### Reference 21 - 0.02% Coverage

campaign associated with it. Staff associated with the Diaspora Project in the United States of America, Ghana and Nigeria, were similarly trained as coders and community mobilizers to ensure that TRC techniques were mainstreamed among all staff. All training programs focused a gender dimension that included emphasis on women and children's issues.

#### Reference 22 - 0.01% Coverage

The TRC recruited more women statement takers than male while women

#### Reference 23 - 0.03% Coverage

The statement-taking process was followed by Public and In-Camera Hearings in Liberia's fifteen counties and in the US. Hearings were initially scheduled for West Africa in the Republic of Ghana. Liberian refugees' confrontations with the authorities of Ghana unsettled the planned hearings in the West African sub-region. The hearings included seven months of victims' and witnesses' testimonies and, to date, four months of actors, thematic and institutional hearings, which provided vital accounts and perspectives under the broader ,contemporary history of the conflict theme'. Special considerations have been made to accommodate women, children, the elderly, handicap and other vulnerable groups.

#### Reference 24 - 0.05% Coverage

This section discusses the various civil society participation and outreach activities of the TRC inclusive of national and international hearings processes. In this context, it will also highlight the various activities that the TRC designed and implemented for women and children.

Civil society was a major stakeholder in the Liberian peace process and has been in the vanguard of the TRC process for as far back as the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Accra). From the conceptualization of the TRC and the drafting and passing of the TRC legislation to the vetting of Commissioners and senior staff, civil society representatives from various organizations, including women's groups, youth groups, the disabled community, political parties, the religious community, traditional organizations and the media, participated in the TRC process and continued to play a lead role in how the TRC implements its mandate. In 2007, the TRC entered into a memorandum of understanding with sixteen civil society organizations, further concretizing this partnership.

#### Reference 25 - 0.05% Coverage

The TRC held special interactive outreach presentations on its programs and activities with the National Legislature and the Cabinet. Civil society groups at different levels were engaged by the Commission to assist in this effort; they include: the Liberian National Girls Guides Association, Boys Scouts of Liberia, Artists Association of Liberia, Liberian Crusaders for Peace, Roller Skaters Association of Liberia, Women on the Move Association, and the Traditional Women Association of Liberia. Local media and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and other partners have also provided assistance in this area. Civil Society organizations buttressed the commission's efforts by conducting sensitization and awareness in all fifteen counties, distributing 15,000 copies of the TRC's informational questions and answers (Q&A) brochure, replicating and distributing 10,000 copies of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia to schools and communities for civic education and by conducting sensitization and awareness workshops about the TRC process. The involvement of civil society in the TRC process enormously enhanced the Commission's work in accomplishing its mandate.

#### Reference 26 - 0.11% Coverage

According to TRC findings, various episodes of the armed conflict affected men and women differently. While men account for nearly 50% or half of all reported violations compared to one third or 33% from women, women were uniquely targeted because of their gender throughout the conflict and its different phases. Moreover, above 70% of all sexual based violations reported were against women. For historical, cultural, social, political, economic and other reasons, women's experiences are often not reported and hence under-represented in reported violations. Recognizing this reality, the TRC Act provides guidelines for the treatment of women in the TRC process. In

addition to the Preamble, nine sections of the Act speak to women's realities and how they should be incorporated in the TRC process. These provisions and references demand the effective participation of women at all levels and in all aspects of the TRC process, including as Commissioners, managers and staff of the TRC, petitioners, victims, perpetrators, victim-perpetrators, and witnesses. Article IV and VI of TRC Act specifically requires the TRC to adopt mechanisms and procedures to address the experience of women, children and vulnerable groups; pay particular attention to gender-based violations; employ specialists in women's rights; protect women's safety; and not endanger women's social reintegration or psychological recovery.

In adhering to these requirements, the TRC has engaged in numerous activities with women in Liberia and in the Diaspora. Several formal and informal meetings have been held with individuals as well as women's groups. In 2006, to ensure proper coordination and broad-based participation by women in the TRC process, and to guarantee that woman's concerns are adequately expressed and addressed, the TRC established a gender committee comprising a wide spectrum of civil society and international partners. Members of this committee included the Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia; the Ministry of Gender; the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA); ICTJ; the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); UNMIL Gender Section; Rule of Law Section and Human Rights and Protection Section; Liberia Crusaders for Peace Women's Wing; Traditional Women Association of Liberia; Women on the Move; and the Liberian Media Women Association.

From December 2006 to February 2007, the TRC implemented extensive outreach programs with women throughout Liberia's fifteen counties by holding four zonal workshops targeting women's organizations in the counties, and town hall meetings

#### Reference 27 - 0.04% Coverage

The statement taking process was followed by Public and In-Camera Hearings in the fifteen sub-divisions of the country and in the United States of America representing the Diaspora. The hearings including seven months of victims and witnesses testimonies and to date, three months of perpetrators, thematic and institutional accounts and perspectives under the broader contemporary history of the conflict theme. Unique categories such as women and children were accommodated under this section. Special considerations were made to accommodate individuals testifying under unique circumstances or categories like women, children, the elderly, youth and the handicap. Two victims who fled the country and lived on the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp in Buduburam, Ghana, testified in Liberia symbolically representing the sub-regional Diaspora community. The Thematic and

#### Reference 28 - 0.01% Coverage

Institutional hearings featured specific categories such as; women, children, religious, historical review, media, education, youth, religion, culture and tradition, law enforcement, and security. To date, the TRC has heard more than 800 testimonies from witnesses testifying before it.

#### Reference 29 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC-Traditional Advisory Council membership was drawn from the leadership of the National Traditional Council of Liberia, which is the umbrella association of all traditional and tribal associations in the country. The National Traditional Council is representative of Chiefs and elders from the 78 political districts and 64 electoral districts of Liberia. Each of the 15 counties of Liberia has a County Council whose representative reports to the National Council. The National Traditional Council of Liberia has several sub-committees including Women Affairs and the National Coordinating Committee, responsible for settling all disputes affecting the organization and country at large.

#### Reference 30 - 0.04% Coverage

Delegates or representatives were drawn from a cross section of stakeholders from each county, representing each district, cutting across the social, economic and political make up of the counties. From the office of the county superintendent to civil, traditional, religious and other societies, women, children, youth, community leaders, ex-combatant communities, etc. were considered as constituencies for representation at the consultations. In all, not less than 13 representatives from each county in the region attended and participated in these consultations. The TRC did not do the selection but rather encouraged local people and the Superintendent's offices to do the selection in a

transparent, representative and fair manner to ensure the broadest representation possible. TRC former county coordinators were rehired to serve as mobilizers in each county of their previous assignment.

#### Reference 31 - 0.03% Coverage

The work of the TRC of Liberia commenced the latter part of 2005 in October when nine Commissioners were appointed by the Head of the Transitional Government, C. Gyude Bryant following a public vetting process by a selection panel constituted pursuant to the Act establishing the TRC. The Selection Panel was headed by ECOWAS. Other members of the panel were UNMIL as Co-chair, political parties, youth, women, inter-religious council, etc. The panel received over 180 nominations and applications which necessitated public vetting, interviews, and background checks. A final short list of 15 nominees was presented to the Head of State from which the nine commissioners were appointed to reflect Liberia's diversity in regional and professional considerations.

#### Reference 32 - 0.08% Coverage

Civil Society: Civil society was a major stakeholder in Liberia's various peace processes and was a part of the vanguard that advocated for the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Accra). From the conceptualization of the TRC and the drafting and passing of the TRC legislation, to the vetting of Commissioners and senior staff, civil society representatives from various organizations (including women's groups, youth groups, the disabled community, political parties, the religious community, traditional organizations and the media) participated in the TRC process and continued to play a lead role in how the TRC implements its mandate. In 2007, the TRC entered into a memorandum of understanding with sixteen civil society organizations, further concretizing that partnership. As early as May 2006, the TRC, through a public participatory process, launched a massive public outreach, awareness and sensitization campaign in collaboration with several civil society organizations aimed at formally introducing the Commission by explaining its mandate, educating the populace about the pivotal role it could play in healing the nation, encouraging them to participate, and garnering the support of the Liberian public and partners in the process. This public awareness campaign began in Monrovia and was subsequently expanded throughout Liberia's fifteen counties. Civil society groups at different levels were engaged by the Commission to assist in this effort; they include: the Liberian National Girls Guides Association, Boys Scouts of Liberia, Artists Association of Liberia, Liberian Crusaders for Peace, Roller Skaters Association of Liberia, Women on the Move Association, and the Traditional Women Association of Liberia. Local media, UNMIL, and other partners have also provided assistance in this area.

#### Reference 33 - 0.03% Coverage

We observe in Table 1 that the TRC collected a significant number of statements from female statement givers. Truth commissions in other countries have often failed to include the participation of women in equal proportion to men in statementtaking. In Liberia, however, nearly fifty percent of statements have been received from female statement-givers, which helped the TRC reflect the experiences of women as well as men during the Liberian conflict. This is also another distinguishing point of the TRC process in Liberia. This data however, does not include children engaged in the TRC Process. A child friendly regiment for taking statements and holding hearings was adopted by the TRC.

#### Reference 34 - 0.08% Coverage

Public hearings are an essential component of the TRC work. Employed for its catalytic and revealing purposes, it provided an opportunity for individual victims and perpetrators to have their experiences officially heard by the state and recognized as part of the Liberian national experience. The opportunity was provided individuals to tell stories and expose the underlining causes and trends of the conflict. The hearings also generated state sponsored – national - empathy, and an understanding from the people and Nation, the Commissioners and policymakers of the conflicts and its varied trends. By satisfying these objectives, the hearings stimulated national public debates and pushed issues of the conflict, repairing victims, perpetrators' accountability, impunity, root causes of the conflict, etc. squarely into the public consciousness. Lastly, the public hearings helped to build in society the capacity to distinguish the truth of the past from lies about it, which is essential to building a stable political future. The TRC hearings assumed a dynamic of its own which warranted hearings taking on varying forms, exuding different outcomes. The hearings were – In-camera or Public Hearings; Victims or perpetrators; Contemporary History of the

Conflict; Thematic or Institutional Hearings; county or Diaspora Hearings. The hearings included seven months of victims' and witnesses' testimonies and, to date, four months of actors, thematic and institutional hearings, and accounts and perspectives under the broader 'contemporary history of the conflict' theme. Special consideration was made to accommodate women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. To date, the TRC heard more than 800 testimonies from witnesses testifying before it, under the theme: "Confronting Our difficult Past for a Better Future."

#### Reference 35 - 0.05% Coverage

hearings specifically looked at how the conflict uniquely effected or was affected by thematic elements of the conflict; such as motivations, inherent root causes, and the role of specific elements of our society. It provided a great opportunity for experts to lend their opinions on the roles that different components of the war played in the conflict. These experts spoke extensively about structural, historic and systemic patterns of violence; its causes and impact, on the state, victims and institutions, and sometimes international relationship. While victim hearings were personalized narratives, the thematic hearings were not about the personal experiences of the presenters, but the society as a whole. This nuanced version of history will seek to incorporate various levels of a national history that blend the stories of a diverse range of victims and perpetrators. Thematic hearings included: historical review, contemporary history of the conflict, women, children, the role of religious and traditional institutions, the media, youth, security, etc.

#### Reference 36 - 0.05% Coverage

In each of the 15 counties in Liberia, the TRC had a County Coordinator, field officer or general mobilizer along with other auxiliary staff, including TRC first line of important contact, the statement-takers, to drive through the work of the TRC in the county, making sure it succeeds. The coordinators hailed from their county of assignment and were well known and respected by their people. The TRC tried to ensure also, that all other staff were also citizens or residents of the county, culturally sensitive and communicates well with the people in all respect, including their spoken language. Other personalities and officials affiliated with, and contributing to the work of the commission, are the various county superintendents, city mayors, district and township commissioners, traditional and religious leaders, community leaders – youth, women, - Child Protection agencies, pro democracy and human rights organizations, district representatives, and civic organizations, education institutions and authorities, the county oversight Commissioner of the TRC, the program Department and the TRC Chairman; all constituted county structures.

#### Reference 37 - 0.05% Coverage

TRC findings from over 20,000 testimonies collected from Liberians point to a wide distribution of violations and victims throughout the country in every county in almost equal proportion of women (47%) to men (53%). The analysis presented here reflects 17,160 out of 17,416 statements entered into the TRC's database. The analysis excludes 256 statements because these statement givers reported no violations within the TRC's mandate period, January 1979 – October 2003, or because the county or country where the statement was taken was not recorded. The 17,160 statements included in this analysis contain information about 86,647 victims and 163,615 total violations. Statements from the Diaspora (1,163) are not included in this analysis. Owing to insufficient time and resources, and administrative errors, these statements, including 729 from Liberia and 14,000 from the UNDP, could not in time be processed before the end of the TRC' lifespan. The characteristics of statement taking in the Diaspora differ slightly from the Liberian character and therefore included in separate Diaspora analysis.

#### Reference 38 - 0.01% Coverage

Reports of the TRC women's engagement including hearings and other nationwide activities.

#### Reference 39 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC further recommends that a reparation program for the empowerment of women devastated by the civil war be extended survivors to advance their economic pursuits in the form of soft micro credit economic programs, small enterprise and marketing programs with education on small business management for sustainability.

The TRC recommends that the Central Bank, Ministry of Finance or the Government of Liberia ensures that commercial banks and lending institutions expand existing micro economic programs and government guaranteed lending schemes to women every where, especially in the rural areas, most especially, on very flexible terms and conditions suitable to poor people.

#### Reference 40 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC recommends that the Government gives full and equal recognition to the economic, social and culture rights of the Liberian people especially minority groups to the extent that every citizen will have access to economic opportunity for personal and group advance; that the cultural values and social orientation of Liberians generally including minorities will at all times be respected as fundamental equal rights and that the rights of women to self-actualization and equity will be respected and that children will be accorded their full rights as members of the human family.

#### Reference 41 - 0.04% Coverage

##### 18.5. Recommendations related to Women's Rights, Protection and Empowerment

The TRC recommends the abolition of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and minority groups in our society.

The TRC recommends that the Government of Liberia should, without delay, establish programmes that would victims of the conflict, especially women, with medical, psychological and social services including rehabilitation and assistance with child care and maintenance and other support structures to promote their safety, physical and psychological wellbeing.

The TRC further recommends that the Government attention to the health needs and rights of women in vulnerable and disadvantage groups such as migrant women, refugee and internally displaced women, the girl child and older women, women in prostitution, rural women, women with mental and physical disabilities.

#### Reference 42 - 0.02% Coverage

##### 19.2. Vulnerability, Employment, Women and Youth Related Issues

The TRC recommends to the Government of Liberia that the Government take measures to address the issues of vulnerability, employment, women and youth related issues of Liberians in the Diaspora which would eventually ensure their voluntary return to Liberia as contributing members of our society rather than as convicts or ex-convicts involuntarily repatriated.

#### Reference 43 - 0.06% Coverage

The TRC recommends also that in further strengthening of national integration and unity, that every Liberian makes the effort through exposure to all the cultures and traditions of our people in schools, social institutions, etc. to underscore that while certain cultures are predisposed to certain practices and are inclined or disinclined to other practices because of history, experience, etc. we should avoid stereotyping, change our minds and attitudes, and stop asking people what is your tribe, or saying such other nasty things like „bassa man can steal, kpelle people are stupid, bassa people sold their land for smoke fish, krahn people eat charcoal and human beings, grand gedeh people have no grave, kru people are rude and hostile, peace was in heaven before kru man entered, lorma people are blind followers, vai people like money and court business and are lazy, gio and mano people like security and killing business, they undermine people and are disloyal, Maryland people like ritualistic killing (they are gboyoye people), congo people are fetish, incestuous and corrupt, gola people are mean, bassa women are prostitutes, mandingos and fulas are not citizens, all muslims are mandingos, all mandingos are from Guinea, all Ghanaians are Fanti, Freetown is Sierra Leone, etc.

#### Reference 44 - 0.01% Coverage

Eliminate gender-based violence, protect survivors of rape, and prosecute people who commit violence against women;

#### Reference 45 - 0.01% Coverage

Ensure that implementation efforts take into account the need to improve social protection of women, children, the disabled, and other vulnerable groups, focusing on their empowerment and participation in all levels of decision-making; and

Reference 46 - 0.01% Coverage

2. At least one-third of all of the judges must be women. Article 4

Reference 47 - 0.01% Coverage

particular sensitivities of girls, young women and children victims of rape, sexual assault, abduction and slavery of all kinds, special consideration shall be given to the appointment of prosecutors and investigators experienced in gender-related crimes and juvenile justice.

Reference 48 - 0.10% Coverage

Additional Recommendations to Address the Needs of Women and Girls and to Advance Gender Equality in Liberia  
This report has shown that Liberia's 14 year civil war, buttressed by over a century of violence, oppression and inequality did not spare women and girls from being used, abused, killed, maimed, mutilated, tortured, raped, gang raped, abducted, forced into sexual slavery and drugged. Their houses, property and possessions were destroyed and looted, they were internally displaced and turned into refugees and suffered the loss of their breadwinners and livelihoods. This report therefore finds that women and girls were violated in every category of violations and that the ensuing harms, impact and consequences of these violations extended far beyond their direct physical experience.

This report determines that through the investigations of the TRC, many of the causes and origins of violence against women during wartime are rooted in the socio-cultural, traditional and political history of Liberia. It is also firmly linked to the low socio-political status of women, with the added perception of male superiority. This rendered women and girls extremely vulnerable to exploitation and violence during both war and peace. It has also taken into account the multiplicity and complexity of women's roles in the armed conflict, recognizing that women took on the added roles of perpetrator, collaborator as well as peacemaker and mediator.

These recommendations are therefore based on the need to not only address the direct consequences of the conflict in Liberia but also the root causes and origins of the violations that women continue to experience in the aftermath of the conflict. Women continue to experience the secondary harms from the increase in single parenting, unwanted pregnancies, health problems from sexually transmitted diseases, increasing poverty, prostitution, discrimination and increased responsibility due to the loss of breadwinners, livelihoods and the adoption of orphans.

These recommendations are informed by the recommendations elicited from women throughout the lifespan of the TRC, through all the projects and activities aimed at engaging women and girls in Liberia from its inception through June 2009.

Reference 49 - 0.02% Coverage

range of pledges to advance substantive gender equality in Liberia. The Committee will make a number of recommendations to the Liberian government for them to fulfill their obligation to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. It is therefore strongly recommended that a mechanism be established to monitor and report on the implementation of the CEDAW committee's recommendations.

Reference 50 - 0.05% Coverage

For full recovery and transformation of Liberian society, the work initiated in the post-conflict process must be continued. It is therefore recommended as a first step that a comprehensive database of service providers throughout the country be compiled and made available and accessible to the Liberian population, especially to the women. This activity should be implemented jointly between civil society, the government and UN agencies to avoid overlaps and to ensure that it is comprehensive, covering every small community based organization offering services of any kind that will contribute to the health and wellbeing of the nation.



More clinical and psychosocial services need to be provided and accessible to all, at decentralized levels, especially reaching out to the rural population. This includes the establishment of decentralized health clinics. Parts of these services should be tailored to accommodate survivors of sexual violence and ex-combatants paying special attention to reaching women and girls associated with the fighting forces.

#### Reference 51 - 0.01% Coverage

An affirmative action policy or law must be developed and implemented to ensure that women's participation and inclusion does not rely on goodwill.

#### Reference 52 - 0.03% Coverage

All workplace discrimination within state institutions, particularly the traditionally male dominated sectors like the security sector, must be investigated and corrected with sanctions in place for sexual harassment, unequal incentive schemes, operational structures and bureaucratic procedures. Furthermore, substantive equality must be practiced to ensure that women are not further discriminated against, by treating everybody the same.

A sensitive action research study of the nature and prevalence of female genital mutilation / cutting must be done. Public education of the outcomes, the dangers and the choices women have regarding this practice must then follow. Laws must be enacted to protect women and girls who choose not to follow this practice.

#### Reference 53 - 0.04% Coverage

\* All women who suffered sexual violations must receive free medical services

\* All women who suffered physical violence and are suffering as a result must receive free medical services \*

Psychosocial/trauma counseling for women must be continued

\* Scholarships must be provided to the children of women whose husbands, partners or breadwinners were killed \*

Individual reparation to be determined on a case-by case basis must be given to all women who either gave statements to the TRC or who testified at the public or in-camera hearings \* GOL must facilitate the reunification of women who were used as sex slaves, bore children for fighters but whose children were taken away from them by fighters at the end of the war, and who want to be reunited with their children the opportunity to be reunited with their children. Must women have said this will facilitate their healing and promote the ends of justice.

Women Associated with the Fighting Forces

#### Reference 54 - 0.01% Coverage

There should be specialized clinics for women to deal with the specific problems resulting from the violence of the war. Free and consistent healthcare must be provided for all survivors of rape and sexual violence medically and psychologically.

#### Reference 55 - 0.03% Coverage

A large number of elderly women have been rendered destitute and without families, must be reintegrated into society, and government and civil society are called upon to develop innovative programs that will restore these women's dignity and pride. Examples of this can be taken from other countries where the elderly have been taken into homes as child minders (adopt a grandmother), or to offer some assistance to families struggling to recover their family values. Homes for the elderly should be established in the main urban centers, subsidized by government where no family member or family can be found to 'adopt' the person. All the elderly women should be given free medical attention.

#### Reference 56 - 0.01% Coverage

Women rendered widows by the war need to be empowered to understand their rights, and steps need to be taken to ensure that those who were working their husband's lands are granted access and ownership to that land. All war widows should receive free psychosocial counseling.

#### Reference 57 - 0.03% Coverage

Women who lost track of their children and families need a special service to be established that they can access, to reunite them with their missing family, and to be assisted to return to their original homes if that is what they deem appropriate. These women have also lost their properties and homes so a rebuilding plan is essential. Building materials should be subsidized and made available to women who can present a rebuilding plan. In the interest of reconciliation, the perpetrators who destroyed homes should be involved in this plan as part of community reparations to the victims.

#### Reference 58 - 0.07% Coverage

causes and course of mass crime, and allow the re-interpretation and re-assertion of the belief systems. However, while memorialization can be a bridge between past and future and contribute to reconciliation and healing projects, in many instances it further marginalizes women. Women's experiences, contributions, struggles for change, and campaigns for peace in Liberia, must be mainstreamed into the memorialization practice to ensure that they serve as mechanisms for inspiration and motivation for current and future generations. This would also encourage civic engagement around women's experiences of conflict, breaking cultures of silences and shame, and furthering the course towards gender equality.

Throughout the work of the TRC Gender Unit, there were persistent calls for memorials and ways to commemorate the dead especially from the women. It is therefore recommended that government and civil society work together with the communities, to identify sites to build monuments where they are appropriate and most honoring of those whose lives were lost during the civil war. It is especially important to memorialize sites of massacres, to hold mourning days, rites or feasts, or to write the names of the people who died during the war. Government is called upon to devise creative ways to engage the population and ensure that the voices of those remaining, particularly the women participate in devising and deciding who and what will be remembered where and how.

#### Reference 59 - 0.09% Coverage

Under institutional reform, vetting is increasingly implemented to address human rights abuses. It is defined as a formal process for the identification and removal of individuals responsible for abuses from public office. Vetting is becoming an integral part of the process of restoring trust in organs of the state, in an attempt to ensure that the structures that facilitated human rights abuses in the past no longer exist. The collapse of the rule of law during the war with the army and the police involved in perpetrating acts of violence on civilians makes credible institutional reform essential for citizens, especially women, to regain their trust in the state organs. It is also vital that Liberian state institutions reform and transform so as to promote and foster gender equality. The institutional reform process should transform such institutions into efficient and fair institutions that respect human rights, maintain peace, and preserve the rule of law. Institutional reform measures in Liberia are recommended to create the following in all public institutions such as the police and the military: \* the creation of oversight, complaint and disciplinary procedures; \* public education and awareness campaigns to train the public, especially women, on how to access recourse if the system discriminates against them or is harmful, especially the translation of such procedures into Liberian English and other accessible forms of communication. \* the reform or establishment of new legal frameworks; \* the development or revision of ethical guidelines and codes of conduct; \* the provision of adequate salaries, equipment and infrastructure; \* the reform of all institutions by screening and removing personnel who are deemed unsuitable for public employment, due to their willing participation in acts of violence and destruction during the war, from, for example, the security forces, the police or the judiciary.

#### Reference 60 - 0.03% Coverage

The State needs to further ensure that women-friendly environments are developed within the police and judiciary for the reporting of sexual and GBV. More females must be recruited into the security sector and trained adequately to build their capacity, and more must be promoted into management and decision making positions as well. Adequate sexual harassment policies must be adopted and enforced within these sectors. Attractive incentives must be created to recruit women; including child care, promotional opportunities, and evidence that gender stereotyping is absent.

#### Reference 61 - 0.02% Coverage

All forms of media in Liberia are powerful socializing agents and must be reformed and transformed to reflect the nation's serious commitment to gender equality. More women must be trained and advanced to take up leadership positions within the media. Media monitoring and watchdog mechanisms should be established to ensure that the messaging from the media is not perpetuating harmful gender stereotypes, and/or objectifying women and girls.

#### Reference 62 - 0.03% Coverage

This is an important institution which will follow on after the TRC. It needs to be reconstituted immediately so that it can begin to work alongside or soon after the closure of the TRC to avoid too big a gap between the two institutions. A special task force should be created to look into the issue of reparations, with the HRC holding full responsibility for the monitoring of this process and holding it accountable. The HRC should be given the same mandate as the TRC in terms of ensuring that women's needs are catered for and that gender equality remains high on their list of priorities.

#### Reference 63 - 0.03% Coverage

culture of impunity. It is therefore recommended that war-lords and heads of fighting factions be punished for initiating, encouraging, participating in and perpetuating crimes against women during the war and in the post conflict periods. This punishment must be real, and justice must be seen to be done. This should involve jail-time, hard labor, and seizure of property or other ill-gotten gains. Public apologies from the warring factions must be mandated and reparations sought from them personally. Amnesty should only be considered with full disclosure and remorse for crimes against women. All child soldiers should be given conditional amnesty with the condition being mandatory rehabilitation.

#### Reference 64 - 0.07% Coverage

##### Advancing Women's Rights beyond the TRC

After all the testimonies, hearings, workshops, and the end of the TRC, it is critical that women ensure that their rights are advanced and harm committed against them is repaired. It is therefore further recommended that:

- \* Sensitization of women's rights happens through media, drama, or workshops since many women do not know their rights in Liberia. They have lost their husbands, land has been taken away and so forth, and they need to know exactly what rights they have and how to access them. (Right to Knowledge; Access to Information).
- \* All the national and international laws need to be disseminated in a simplified way throughout Liberia, so that everyone knows what they are and how to use them. Only two people from a group of 25 at the national conference knew about the Inheritance Law which has already been enacted. Throughout Liberia there is still confusion when traditional marriages are dissolved. (Equal Right to Inherit for Men and Women)
- \* All women should be assisted to regain their lost livelihoods and/ or be given the information they need to understand that they have a right to claim these losses. Many women lost businesses during the war, and also their male relatives who were helping them. They are left with small children and no means of income. There should be a scheme to assist these women to go back to their business and to start over. (Right to Work; Right to an adequate standard of living).
- \* Illiteracy is highest amongst women. Market women need to be literate. Many live in communities where there are no public schools. Women are being charged fees to attend school, when education

## *Displacement*

References or discussions of displacement, migration, or exile

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_.Report-FULL> - § 10 references coded [0.59% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.05% Coverage

The statement taking process was followed by Public and In Camera Hearings in the fifteen sub-divisions of the country and in the United States of America representing the Diaspora. The hearings including seven months of victims and witnesses testimonies and to date, three months of perpetrators, thematic and institutional accounts and perspectives under the broader contemporary history of the conflict theme. Unique categories such as women and children were accommodated under this section. Special considerations were made to accommodate individuals testifying under unique circumstances or categories like women, children, the elderly, youth and the handicap. Two victims who fled the country and lived on the Budubram Liberian Refugee Camp in Buduburam, Ghana, testified in Liberia symbolically representing the sub-regional Diaspora community. The Thematic and Institutional hearings featured specific categories such as; women, children, religious, historical review, media, education, youth, religion, culture and tradition, law enforcement, and security. To date, the TRC has heard more than 800 testimonies from witnesses testifying before it.

### Reference 2 - 0.02% Coverage

Liberia's various episodes of state breakdown and conflict, particularly the Liberian Civil War (1989-1997) and the LURD and MODEL insurrections (1999-2003) resulted in the deaths of an estimated over 250,000 persons and forced over 1 million to be internally-displaced and hundreds of thousands to be refugees. The nature and magnitude of atrocities committed, especially against women and children, by the various warring factions including government forces, were in epic proportions.

### Reference 3 - 0.03% Coverage

#### 4.7. Women

Historically, women have been the most marginalized; economically, socially and politically. In Liberia, it was only in 1947, for example, 100 years after the declaration of independence, that Liberian women were granted rights of suffrage.

Liberia is attempting to emerge from the throes of more than two decades of state breakdown and protracted civil conflict resulting in deaths and massive displacement of persons internally not excluding the destruction of the country's infrastructure. Unfortunately, women bore a disproportionate amount of suffering during the war. Women were often brutally raped and kidnapped, forced to watch

### Reference 4 - 0.11% Coverage

According to TRC findings, various episodes of the armed conflict affected men and women differently. While men account for nearly 50% or half of all reported violations compared to one third or 33% from women, women were uniquely targeted because of their gender throughout the conflict and its different phases. Moreover, above 70% of all sexual based violations reported were against women. For historical, cultural, social, political, economic and other reasons, women's experiences are often not reported and hence under-represented in reported violations. Recognizing this reality, the TRC Act provides guidelines for the treatment of women in the TRC process. In addition to the Preamble, nine sections of the Act speak to women's realities and how they should be incorporated in the TRC process. These provisions and references demand the effective participation of women at all levels and in all aspects of the TRC process, including as Commissioners, managers and staff of the TRC, petitioners, victims, perpetrators, victim-perpetrators, and witnesses. Article IV and VI of TRC Act specifically requires the TRC to adopt mechanisms and procedures to address the experience of women, children and vulnerable groups; pay particular attention to gender-based violations; employ specialists in women's rights; protect women's safety; and not endanger women's social reintegration or psychological recovery.

In adhering to these requirements, the TRC has engaged in numerous activities with women in Liberia and in the Diaspora. Several formal and informal meetings have been held with individuals as well as women's groups. In 2006, to ensure proper coordination and broad-based participation by women in the TRC process, and to guarantee that woman's concerns are adequately expressed and addressed, the TRC established a gender committee comprising a wide spectrum of civil society and international partners. Members of this committee included the Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia; the Ministry of Gender; the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA); ICTJ; the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); UNMIL Gender Section; Rule of Law Section and Human Rights and Protection Section; Liberia Crusaders for Peace Women's Wing; Traditional Women Association of Liberia; Women on the Move; and the Liberian Media Women Association. From December 2006 to February 2007, the TRC implemented extensive outreach programs with women throughout Liberia's fifteen counties by holding four zonal workshops targeting women's organizations in the counties, and town hall meetings

#### Reference 5 - 0.15% Coverage

who operated the equipment and the only English he is mocked to have spoken was ,more mortar'. In demonstrating Guinea's support for LURD he is scorned as asking members of his unit, presumably Guineans: ,your mother there? A chorus ,NO'; Your father there? ,NO'! Then ,more mortar'. What became known as ,world war I, II & III', referring to LURD's strike and retreat strategic attacks on Monrovia, revisited the horrors and persecution of the past on the civilian population in no less measure. Except for MODEL, which instructed its militias to only loot and not kill or rape, as a control measure, atrocities were minimized with looting as the hallmark of its engagements in the southeastern and central regions of Liberia. The scale of destruction and brutality, and the humanitarian catastrophe looming overhead, however, compelled a full involvement of the international community- UN, AU, USA, and EU - in coordination with ECOWAS - to stop the war. The International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) was created to do just that. President Charles Taylor, beleaguered and embattled without sources of fresh supplies of weapons, and slapped with a war crimes indictment and the unanimity of the international community led by US President Bush, Jr that he must leave, stepped down as President of Liberia and went to Nigeria to commence a new life of uncertainty in exile. In all of these hostilities, the suffering and persecution of the local population was always merciless. Economic hardship, rising unemployment and inflation, family break up or displacement imposed further strains on familial relationships with devastating impact on children, young girls and women. Education opportunities were lost or diminished as school closures meant lost of fees already paid and shortage of essential commodities led to price hikes and a declining living standard. Throughout the conflict period, the traditional roles of women shifted remarkable to being major bread-winners. Men were the natural targets of advancing, occupying or resisting arm factions and, were therefore in hiding all the time. Women had to step in; performing household chores, selling or trading in consumable items across factional lines, providing food, securing shelter, medical needs and clothing for family members, maintaining the farm, bearing children and cooking for the family in the midst of war, violence and massive atrocities against the unsuspecting general population. This, not only led to, but increased their vulnerability and exposed them to all manners of violence and abuse. They were caught up in an intractable state of victimization that dehumanized them and sought to deprive them of their womanhood; in many cases the perpetrators succeeded. They were abducted and accused of being enemy spies on espionage missions because they dare venture out when no one dare to; they were raped, and compelled to be house or bush wives for the armed men and would be accused of supporting ,rebels' of the opposing faction; they were also accused of being enemies for cooking for and serving the ,enemy' while in captivity as servants, slaves and ,infidels' or ,kaffli'. They were rejected by their own when liberated from captivity and returned home; husbands, children and relatives were condescending and suspicious; lacking in self-

#### Reference 6 - 0.02% Coverage

September, 1993: A UN inquiry found that the AFL had been responsible for the extra judicial executions of nearly 600 unarmed civilians- mostly women, children and elderly people- at displaced people's camps near Harbel in June. This report by the WACCO Commission is disputed by findings of the TRC to the effect that NPFL committed the atrocities.

#### Reference 7 - 0.02% Coverage

Owing to the high level of displacement, displaced persons camps were scattered all around the country in populous areas. Men and women were targeted at approximately the same rate for forced displacement relative to their representation in the population.

The plight of IDPs is just as serious as refugees but yet they are the least considered for humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation needs. Women and children account

#### Reference 8 - 0.14% Coverage

Unfortunately, the data include very few reports of rapes for which the victim's age is known. Still, it is interesting to note that the majority of reported rapes for which the victim's age is known were committed against adolescent women, rather than against socially taboo categories such as older women or very young children. The distribution of all violations by age is roughly similar for males and females. Similarly, analysis of violations documented with the TRC with complete age and sex information suggests that all ages were equally at risk and that the generality of perpetrators' attack was at random, deliberate and systematic in the instigation of violence against the general armless population.

From the statistical data, women participation in the TRC process was impressive as over fifty percent of statements gathered during the statement-taking exercise are attributed to women. Women account for 28 percent of all violations while on the other hand men account for 47 percent. From these statistics, it is clear that as a class of victims, men comprise the larger proportion, although both men and women appeared to have been targeted in about equal proportions.

Forced displacement which accounts for the largest category of violations took a particularly heavy toll on women, many of whom, faced with the loss of their spouses, assumed leadership roles in their families. Given the difficulties and threats to life (increased mortality) that usually accompany forced migration, it can be assumed, in the absence of reliable statistical information, that elderly women and very young children especially girls, were at great risk and might have suffered disproportionately as compared to males.

Many found themselves in displaced or refugee camps with little or no coping skills to deal with the harsh realities of their new environment. Already victimized by their displacement some, especially young girls, in desperation turned to prostitution including the exchange of relief food for sex. As the statistics show, all factions routinely targeted women simply on account of their gender. This is strongly reflected in the level of sexual violence perpetrated against women. For example, women account for 63 percent of all cases of rape reported to the TRC, as compared to only 6 percent for men. It can be concluded thus that women were singled out for abuse simply on account of their gender. For instance, the proportion of rape with female victims aged 15-19 represents more than five times the proportion of women 15-19 in the general population.

Finally, it is important to note that aside from these reported cases of violence directed against women, the data does not account for the marginalization; exclusion and outright denial of opportunities for self actualization women have, for over a century, endured in Liberia. These age old inequalities find expression in current statistics reflecting the status of women. For example, according to the 2007 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey, HIV prevalence is higher among women than men

#### Reference 9 - 0.02% Coverage

For several months in 1990, St. Peter's Lutheran Church became the refuge of women, children and men predominately from the Mano, Gio and Kpelle tribes fleeing violence throughout the country. Of significance here is that the Church was seen as a place of sanctuary – sanctified by God as a place of worship and protection; it became an attractive site for protection from harm because it was a sacred place.

#### Reference 10 - 0.04% Coverage

##### 18.5. Recommendations related to Women's Rights, Protection and Empowerment

The TRC recommends the abolition of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and minority groups in our society.

The TRC recommends that the Government of Liberia should, without delay, establish programmes that would victims of the conflict, especially women, with medical, psychological and social services including rehabilitation and assistance with child care and maintenance and other support structures to promote their safety, physical and psychological wellbeing.

The TRC further recommends that the Government attention to the health needs and rights of women in vulnerable and disadvantage groups such as migrant women, refugee and internally displaced women, the girl child and older women, women in prostitution, rural women, women with mental and physical disabilities.

## *Economy*

References or discussions of the economy, jobs, labour etc.

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_Report-FULL> - § 8 references coded [0.45% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.05% Coverage

He spent the first period of his rule consolidating his power base through the creation of new and lucrative jobs for his loyalists and the extension of voting rights to women and tribal people, and extended a county system of representation and governance to all political subdivisions in the tribal hinterland. Despite Tubman's efforts to bring the indigenous populations into the social and economic mainstream, the gap between them and the ruling elite during this period of rapid economic development remained. The huge influx of foreign money caused the economy to become distorted and increased social inequalities a consequence of which was increasing hostility between the descendants of the settlers and the original inhabitants. This alarmed Tubman and he was forced to concede that the original inhabitants would have to be granted an amount of political and economic involvement in the country. The rural inhabitants were happy to live with this system for decades because it gave them greater political freedom and the right to vote for the first time.

### Reference 2 - 0.04% Coverage

Between June and August 1990, Liberia became a 'butcher house' in the words of former Gambian President, Sir Dauda Jawara. Socio-economic conditions had deteriorated considerably. The trapped population was desolate; physically waned, hungry and ill. The parallel market flourished with looted goods from homes and the free port of Monrovia, all facilitated and instigated by the armed men and their bands of followers. The popular tones which heralded Taylor's rebellion – 'monkey come down' and 'chucky must come' – were no longer heard, better, regretted. Family income depleted along with food stock. As more and more families were separated, ties were broken and young girls became the target of armed fighters. Women were targeted and raped, abducted as bush wives as they ventured out of their hiding places to fetch food. The younger girls with no clear sources of survival got 'involved' with the fighters and prostitution became a way of life till the end of the conflict and even now in present day Liberia.

### Reference 3 - 0.05% Coverage

in nature and character, in timber, rubber, gold and diamonds, including diamonds from neighboring Sierra Leone, would prove crucial to sustaining Taylor's war efforts and prolonging the conflict. The Secretary General of Quiwonkpa's NPF, Moses Duopu, was killed on his return from Nigeria to Taylor's territories for claiming the Secretary General title of the new NPFL and disputing or seemingly eyeing the leadership of the NPFL; the AFL massacre 27 Gios and Manos families of the AFL in Monrovia, as 25 AFL soldiers escaped to seek refuge at the Methodist Church in Sinkor which was subsequently attacked. Also, Jackson F. Doe, David Dwayen, Justice Patrick Biddle, Cooper Teah, Gabriel Kpolleh, Photographer B.W. King, along with 80 other very prominent personalities associated with and living in NPFL- held territories were killed at the hands of NPFL 'generals'; 500 ethnic Mandingoes, including an Imam, killed in Bakedu, Lofa County by the NPFL; a retaliatory killing of over 500 supposedly men, women and children from Nimba County were massacred at the St. Peters Lutheran Church by the AFL led by Youbo Tailay then under the command of Jackson E. Doe<sup>4</sup>

### Reference 4 - 0.13% Coverage

#### 10.3 Women, the TRC and the Conflict

This political system of exclusion was extended to women who held a limited and restricted place in Liberian society at all levels. Women were not allowed into political space until the 1940s when they were granted the franchise to vote, but only if one had property. Indigenous women, notwithstanding, were not permitted to participate in elections until the 1950s. This was a contradiction of the constitution which proclaimed the equality of all people, and the inalienable rights of all its citizens to participate in their governance. Thus interpreted, the constitution was fashioned in a way favorable to one segment of the society – the property class. Hence in actuality, there were three categories of women in Liberia: the 'settlers' (sometimes referred to as 'civilized' – meaning



exposed to western education and norms and not wearing indigenous ,lappa' dress); women of Americo-Liberian heritage, some of whom owned property and by that standard were qualified to vote; and poor ,settler' women who did not have property and were excluded. There was yet another group, the indigenous women who like their male counterparts could not vote until the 1950s. So in spite of the constitution's stance on the equality of all persons, the political class at the time set aside the real meaning of the equality ,doctrine' and therefore ignored the constitution. Certainly this was the beginning of the discrimination of all modern Liberian women which reinforced the already existing cultural bias against women.

It is important to note that Article XXVIII of the Accra CPA called for gender balance in all positions in the National Transitional Government of Liberia. This assertion was a great opportunity for women to participate in the political process. However it was not adhered to and women remained on the fringes.

All of the indigenous groups are patrilineal (family relationships are all traced through the male blood line and only such relationships are recognized) and have ideologies of male dominance. The nineteenth-century domestic ideology brought with the resettled Americo-Liberians also was highly patriarchal, with women assigned to roles as homemakers and nurturers of children. However, the sexual division of labor in indigenous agricultural settings afforded women a measure of power, if not formal authority. Women's labor was extremely valuable, as seen in the institution of bride wealth that accompanied marriage. Among "civilized people" of indigenous or Americo-Liberian background, women's domestic role in caring for clothing, household decoration, and the other symbolic means by which the status of the household is communicated had great importance. While it was acceptable for an educated woman to hold a white-collar job outside the home, she could not participate in the most common activities – farming, marketing, and carrying loads of wood and water – without threatening her status.

#### Reference 5 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC further recommends that a reparation program for the empowerment of women devastated by the civil war be extended survivors to advance their economic pursuits in the form of soft micro credit economic programs, small enterprise and marketing programs with education on small business management for sustainability.

The TRC recommends that the Central Bank, Ministry of Finance or the Government of Liberia ensures that commercial banks and lending institutions expand existing micro economic programs and government guaranteed lending schemes to women every where, especially in the rural areas, most especially, on very flexible terms and conditions suitable to poor people.

#### Reference 6 - 0.08% Coverage

Since many women associated with the fighting forces were not able to participate in the skills training programs provided on demobilization, and that many women requested vocational training during the TRC process, it is recommended that skills training programs be decentralized and made accessible to all, especially to women and girls outside of Monrovia. It is further recommended that these training programs are designed based on an assessment of marketable skills needed in Liberia and is coordinated, vetted and certified by both the Ministries of Gender and Development and Labour to ensure that the training is appropriate and the quality is standardized. Furthermore, government should develop incentives for all employers to offer skills training by setting up a levy that employers pay which they can access for the skills training of employees.

It is noted that for many who have undertaken skills training there is an absence of opportunities to practice the skills as well as the lack of accessible markets. It is recommended that the Ministry of Gender and Development and partners explore opportunities for women to utilize the skills acquired and for market opportunities where their goods can be sold.

The current legal and regulatory environment must be reworked to allow for the development of the microfinance sector and the provision of micro-credit for the poor and vulnerable especially women. The provision of these services must be linked to programs dealing with the root socio-cultural and traditional causes of gender inequality to avoid the backlash of violence that inevitably follows such financial empowerment programs.

Micro-credit schemes should especially target women associated with the fighting forces, internally displaced women, female single parents and caregivers, and war widows. Those providing micro-

#### Reference 7 - 0.04% Coverage

The Legal and regulatory framework also needs to be reworked to allow greater access for women to financial and banking services including training women and girls on how to conduct and manage their finances effectively.

Academic, vocational and practical skills training should be provided. All loans should only be approved along with a mandatory training on how to use finances effectively for the purpose intended, and especially on how to start small businesses.

Agriculture and subsistence farming are a major source of income for women. Female extension workers must be recruited and trained to ensure that extension services are gender responsive. New farming technologies must be identified and taught to women farmers along with the provisions of farm tools and network support with other women farmers.

#### Reference 8 - 0.03% Coverage

The State needs to further ensure that women-friendly environments are developed within the police and judiciary for the reporting of sexual and GBV. More females must be recruited into the security sector and trained adequately to build their capacity, and more must be promoted into management and decision making positions as well.

Adequate sexual harassment policies must be adopted and enforced within these sectors. Attractive incentives must be created to recruit women; including child care, promotional opportunities, and evidence that gender stereotyping is absent.

## Education

References or discussions of education, schools, or training

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_Report-FULL> - § 14 references coded [0.75% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.08% Coverage

Another feature of pre-Liberia governance structure and culture was the 'bush schools'; a tradition still in practice today. The Poro society is the school for men and the Sande for women. They were prominent compulsory institutions which traditionally served to initiate young people into the society. The children are taken away for between one to four years to be educated into the laws, customs, traditions and ways of their people; loyalty, respect and care for the elderly, the extended family system, and other values and skills were taught to prepare them for their role and place in society as responsible adults.

More specifically, the women in the Sande were trained for initiation into adulthood, morality and proper sexual comportment; marriage and domestic chores were also subjects. Education about farming, medicine, dancing, child rearing and domestic as well as specialized skills like dying, making cloth, preserving food, etc. were part of the training program.

Before the arrival of the settlers in 1822, extensive contacts and interactions existed between the indigenes at the coast and the interior. Economics, trade and social interests including intermarriages dominated their dealings and creating a big family of in-laws. For defense purposes, they formed alliances and common defense pacts which were enhanced by membership to the Poro or Sande societies as institutions of socialization, acculturation, stature, honesty, trust, common ancestry and brotherhood. These separate nations were not always at peace. They fought wars among themselves. If one group felt stronger, they invaded the weaker one, captured their women and young men. Those who resisted were either killed or made prisoners. The conquered territories were annexed and the prisoners of war were used on the farms or sold into slavery.

### Reference 2 - 0.08% Coverage

Civil Society: Civil society was a major stakeholder in Liberia's various peace processes and was a part of the vanguard that advocated for the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Accra). From the conceptualization of the TRC and the drafting and passing of the TRC legislation, to the vetting of Commissioners and senior staff, civil society representatives from various organizations (including women's groups, youth groups, the disabled community, political parties, the religious community, traditional organizations and the media) participated in the TRC process and continued to play a lead role in how the TRC implements its mandate. In 2007, the TRC entered into a memorandum of understanding with sixteen civil society organizations, further concretizing that partnership. As early as May 2006, the TRC, through a public participatory process, launched a massive public outreach, awareness and sensitization campaign in collaboration with several civil society organizations aimed at formally introducing the Commission by explaining its mandate, educating the populace about the pivotal role it could play in healing the nation, encouraging them to participate, and garnering the support of the Liberian public and partners in the process. This public awareness campaign began in Monrovia and was subsequently expanded throughout Liberia's fifteen counties. Civil society groups at different levels were engaged by the Commission to assist in this effort; they include: the Liberian National Girls Guides Association, Boys Scouts of Liberia, Artists Association of Liberia, Liberian Crusaders for Peace, Roller Skaters Association of Liberia, Women on the Move Association, and the Traditional Women Association of Liberia. Local media, UNMIL, and other partners have also provided assistance in this area.

### Reference 3 - 0.05% Coverage

Many children are not attending school because their caregivers cannot afford to pay the fees. Security also remains a concern, and sexual assault is an acute problem. Despite these problems, Liberians in the camp have been ingenious in meeting their own needs by starting businesses, schools, community-based organizations, and faith-based institutions. However, Liberians who are doing well often are those who receive remittance payments from relatives who have managed to get resettled elsewhere. Although remittance support assists many, the population remains very vulnerable. Education beyond the elementary level and employment opportunities are available only to

the very few. Liberian professionals find themselves with little to do because they have not been able to find work in Ghana. Those young Liberians, who are able to get vocational training or a Ghanaian degree, find themselves in a similar situation. Many make ends meet by engaging in petty trading, braiding hair, or relying on the generosity of friends. Others, especially young women desperate to feed their families, turn to prostitution.

#### Reference 4 - 0.15% Coverage

Indigenous constructions of gender emphasized the breadwinner or productive role for women and the warrior role for men. Indigenous political structures had a "dualsex" organization, that is, parallel systems of offices for men and women. Among the northwestern peoples, this took the form of the dual organization of the above mentioned Poro and Sande secret societies. In the south and east, female councils of elders used a series of checks and balances on official male power. On the national level, the last transitional leader before the 1997 election Ruth Sando Perry was also the first female head of state in Africa.

The Hinterland Laws, which were an extension of the Liberian Constitution and presided over by the governments through the chiefs, denied women certain basic rights such as owning property, holding major discussions with men, participating in decision making processes, and doing certain jobs despite being able to do them like working in a mine or driving a vehicle. They did not have the right to go to school; it was always a privilege and girls were most often sent to work on farms while boys went to schools.

Culturally, it is said that these practices were based on fears that women would dominate their partners if allowed the 'space' to do so. Women were expected to be respectful and to speak when spoken to, especially the „civilized“ women. A man interviewed during the study was recorded to have said, “During the days of our forefathers women were respectful. But these days women are not respectful. When you talk one, they [women] will talk ten”. The Hinterland law allowed men to overtly oppress women and entrench the tendency to treat women unjustly. Even after a woman had borne her husband's children, he could take her back to her relatives, saying that he did not want her any more, and she would have no recourse. This denial of the basic legal and human rights of women, especially the perception of women as the „property“ of her husband or father, rendered women and girls extremely vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and without access to recourse. This laid the foundation for the extreme violations perpetrated during wartime because men had already been socialized to violate women with impunity.

The Liberian government's pronouncement of free and compulsory education for all children of school age has been in existence since 1912. Yet there were high disparities between the numbers of girls and boys in schools. With women's labor being highly prized as farmers, it was a given that girls would work with their mothers and boys needed to be sent to school. Some girls who did go to school did not experience any discrimination and competed equally with the boys, but for the majority, the perception was that education for girls was unnecessary. Currently, almost 80% of Liberian women are illiterate.

Through this description of social formation in Liberia before and during any of the numerous conflicts which have checkered its history over one and a half centuries, it is clear that the Liberian society was and still is endocentric and patriarchal. Although women were valued and held specific gender roles within which some power could be located, there was no inherent power that could place a woman into

#### Reference 5 - 0.04% Coverage

In particular, the health of girls has been severely affected by the high incidence of sexual and gender-based violence. Sexual abuse, rape, multiple rape, and gang rape, and sexual slavery caused serious harm to girls' reproductive systems and have left many of them with chronic problems from obstetric fistula and sexually transmitted diseases or even infected with HIV. It is extremely worrying that the HIV infection rate among adolescent mothers is three times the average infection rate for the country. There is insufficient access to reproductive health care, HIV prevention, testing, and treatment, in particular in rural areas. Special outreach and educational programs on reproductive health and family planning are limited, although approximately half of all Liberian women give birth before they reach the age of 18.

#### Reference 6 - 0.08% Coverage

Since many women associated with the fighting forces were not able to participate in the skills training programs provided on demobilization, and that many women requested vocational training during the TRC process, it is recommended that skills training programs be decentralized and made accessible to all, especially to women and girls outside of Monrovia. It is further recommended that these training programs are designed based on an

assessment of marketable skills needed in Liberia and is coordinated, vetted and certified by both the Ministries of Gender and Development and Labour to ensure that the training is appropriate and the quality is standardized. Furthermore, government should develop incentives for all employers to offer skills training by setting up a levy that employers pay which they can access for the skills training of employees.

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The current legal and regulatory environment must be reworked to allow for the development of the microfinance sector and the provision of micro-credit for the poor and vulnerable especially women. The provision of these services must be linked to programs dealing with the root socio-cultural and traditional causes of gender inequality to avoid the backlash of violence that inevitably follows such financial empowerment programs.

Micro-credit schemes should especially target women associated with the fighting forces, internally displaced women, female single parents and caregivers, and war widows. Those providing micro-

#### Reference 7 - 0.02% Coverage

credit should be compelled to incorporate a basic business management course into the provision of micro-credit especially for semi-literate or illiterate women.

Donor funded support to microfinance has been limited. UNDP programs in some counties have been the only means of financial support for rural women. Donors need to look into more support for microfinance.

#### Reference 8 - 0.04% Coverage

The Legal and regulatory framework also needs to be reworked to allow greater access for women to financial and banking services including training women and girls on how to conduct and manage their finances effectively. Academic, vocational and practical skills training should be provided. All loans should only be approved along with a mandatory training on how to use finances effectively for the purpose intended, and especially on how to start small businesses.

Agriculture and subsistence farming are a major source of income for women. Female extension workers must be recruited and trained to ensure that extension services are gender responsive. New farming technologies must be identified and taught to women farmers along with the provisions of farm tools and network support with other women farmers.

#### Reference 9 - 0.04% Coverage

The bias against women receiving formal education must be addressed at all levels, socially, economically and politically. The National Girl Child Education Policy must be implemented to address some of the following issues: Free and compulsory education for girls up to senior secondary level is recommended. Girls who become pregnant while at school must not be expelled. Government should ensure that counseling services are available at all schools as well as adequate sex education and awareness as preventative measures. In the event of girls becoming pregnant, services must be available for the girl to complete her education in a way that takes her health status into account. Teachers impregnating girls must be severely dealt with, through the setting up enforceable codes of conduct for teachers and students.

#### Reference 10 - 0.02% Coverage

It is further recommended that the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Ministry of Gender and Development, UN and Civil society partners establish decentralized adult education programs, including night schools for women in which basic literacy and numeric skills can be taught. This needs to take all the socio-economic concerns of women into account, like safe transport, child care and affordability.

#### Reference 11 - 0.04% Coverage

It is recommended that more judges, prosecutors, magistrates are trained and sensitized on gender and discrimination. This includes clerks and other staff in the judicial system, whose negative attitudes towards women and their limited knowledge of rights, further limits women's access to the justice system.

It is recommended that a formal legal aid system is set up, coordinated and supported by the government and the judiciary to deal with the fact that poverty and illiteracy limits women's access to justice.

Public education on the law needs to be linked to literacy programs, since high illiteracy among women attempting to access justice, particularly in the counties and rural areas, limits their success. Since literacy is not a precondition for legal literacy, focus must be placed on educating women on their rights through different forms of communication as well.

#### Reference 12 - 0.02% Coverage

All forms of media in Liberia are powerful socializing agents and must be reformed and transformed to reflect the nation's serious commitment to gender equality. More women must be trained and advanced to take up leadership positions within the media. Media monitoring and watchdog mechanisms should be established to ensure that the messaging from the media is not perpetuating harmful gender stereotypes, and/or objectifying women and girls.

#### Reference 13 - 0.07% Coverage

##### Advancing Women's Rights beyond the TRC

After all the testimonies, hearings, workshops, and the end of the TRC, it is critical that women ensure that their rights are advanced and harm committed against them is repaired. It is therefore further recommended that:

- \* Sensitization of women's rights happens through media, drama, or workshops since many women do not know their rights in Liberia. They have lost their husbands, land has been taken away and so forth, and they need to know exactly what rights they have and how to access them. (Right to Knowledge; Access to Information).

- \* All the national and international laws need to be disseminated in a simplified way throughout Liberia, so that everyone knows what they are and how to use them. Only two people from a group of 25 at the national conference knew about the Inheritance Law which has already been enacted. Throughout Liberia there is still confusion when traditional marriages are dissolved. (Equal Right to Inherit for Men and Women)

- \* All women should be assisted to regain their lost livelihoods and/ or be given the information they need to understand that they have a right to claim these losses. Many women lost businesses during the war, and also their male relatives who were helping them. They are left with small children and no means of income. There should be a scheme to assist these women to go back to their business and to start over. (Right to Work; Right to an adequate standard of living).

- \* Illiteracy is highest amongst women. Market women need to be literate. Many live in communities where there are no public schools. Women are being charged fees to attend school, when education

#### Reference 14 - 0.03% Coverage

up to grade 9 is free. So they need literacy programs, more primary schools in rural communities and knowledge about the system. (Right to education). \* Many women are living at the mercy of family and friends having lost their homes in the war. Low cost housing schemes must be provided. (Right to Housing). \* The DDRR did not cater for victims. They need assistance such as skills training, medical care, and scholarships for their children, and trauma counseling. A resettlement fund should be made available, victims identified and given assistance to go back to their homes and start over. \* Legal Aid must be provided to women who are being thrown out by their husbands and husbands' relatives.

## *Forced Labour*

### References or discussions of forced labour or slavery

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_.Report-FULL> - § 12 references coded [0.30% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.06% Coverage

Women Nearly 26,000 or 28% of reported violations were against women. While as a group men comprise a larger victim category than women, Liberia's various armed conflicts excessively affected women in various ways. As previously noted, women disproportionately suffered from sexual violence including gang rape, sexual slavery, outrages upon personal dignity, and torture, among others. Girls and women aged 15-19 comprise the largest category of reported cases of sexual violence. Women as old as eighty-years old were perversely dehumanized through gendered violence by, for example, being forced to have sex with their sons or male relatives and by having taboo objects such spoons, sticks, hot pepper and rifle buds forced into their vaginal and rectal areas. Women were kidnapped and forced into sexual slavery only to be passed around as 'wives' of roaming combatants. They were also forced to engage in hard labor making them both sex and labor relegating them to the status of chattel slaves. Women suffered the indignity of having the children that they bore after being raped and held as sex slaves summarily taken away from them by combatants at the end of armed conflict. Many women that testified before the TRC either through statement taking or the hearings gave thousands of heart breaking narratives about how they were brutalized during armed conflict.

#### Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

'Enslavement, The perpetrator exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty, in particular women and children.

#### Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

(c) 'Enslavement' means the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children;

#### Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

conduct described in this element includes trafficking in persons, in particular women and children.

#### Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

"Enslavement" The perpetrator exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty, in particular women and children.

#### Reference 6 - 0.05% Coverage

The Grain Coast was not as involved in the Slave Trade as other areas in the sub region due to its rough and rocky coast; most inhospitable to slave vessels and traders. The major slave trading countries were Portugal, England and Holland. The Portuguese captured three Africans near Cape Verde in the 1400s and many Africans regard this as the beginning of the great trade. In 1551 the English slaver, John Hawkins arrived to the pre Liberian coast for slaves. He paid his second and last visit in 1552. Two resident European slave traders on the Liberian coast were Don Pedro Blanco and Theodore Canot. They were Italians operating on and off in Bassa and Cape Mount. On the plantations, life for the slave was lonely and horrible. While most of the slave women served as domestic servants they were also used unwillingly as concubines to their slave masters and had children (mulattos) many of whom migrated to Africa to form the new states. It is speculated that many of the first presidents of Liberia, including Roberts, originated from this stock.

#### Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

August, 2002: Three women fleeing to Guinea were abducted by LURD combatants between Kotolahun and Honyahun. They were forced to carry loads and then raped. Those responsible were subsequently beaten by their commanders.

#### Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

3. "Enslavement" The perpetrator exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty, in particular women and children.

4.

#### Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

'Enslavement' means the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children;

iv

#### Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

Similar to Slavery of 1956. It is also understood that the conduct described in this element includes trafficking in persons, in particular women and children.

#### Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

12. "Enslavement" The perpetrator exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty, in particular women and children.

#### Reference 12 - 0.10% Coverage

Additional Recommendations to Address the Needs of Women and Girls and to Advance Gender Equality in Liberia  
This report has shown that Liberia 's 14 year civil war, buttressed by over a century of violence, oppression and inequality did not spare women and girls from being used, abused, killed, maimed, mutilated, tortured, raped, gang raped, abducted, forced into sexual slavery and drugged. Their houses, property and possessions were destroyed and looted, they were internally displaced and turned into refugees and suffered the loss of their breadwinners and livelihoods. This report therefore finds that women and girls were violated in every category of violations and that the ensuing harms, impact and consequences of these violations extended far beyond their direct physical experience.

This report determines that through the investigations of the TRC, many of the causes and origins of violence against women during wartime are rooted in the socio-cultural, traditional and political history of Liberia. It is also firmly linked to the low socio-political status of women, with the added perception of male superiority. This rendered women and girls extremely vulnerable to exploitation and violence during both war and peace. It has also taken into account the multiplicity and complexity of women's roles in the armed conflict, recognizing that women took on the added roles of perpetrator, collaborator as well as peacemaker and mediator.

These recommendations are therefore based on the need to not only address the direct consequences of the conflict in Liberia but also the root causes and origins of the violations that women continue to experience in the aftermath of the conflict. Women continue to experience the secondary harms from the increase in single parenting, unwanted pregnancies, health problems from sexually transmitted diseases, increasing poverty, prostitution, discrimination and increased responsibility due to the loss of breadwinners, livelihoods and the adoption of orphans.

These recommendations are informed by the recommendations elicited from women throughout the lifespan of the TRC, through all the projects and activities aimed at engaging women and girls in Liberia from its inception through June 2009.



## *Human Rights*

### References or discussions of human rights and human rights violations

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_.Report-FULL> - § 22 references coded [0.93% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.04% Coverage

national reconciliation and combat impunity.

3. The massive wave of gross violations and atrocities which characterized the conflict assumed a systematic pattern of abuse, wanton in their execution, and the product of deliberate planning, organized and orchestrated to achieve a military or political objective; disregarding the rights of noncombatants, children, and women, the elderly, disarmed or surrendered enemy combatants, etc.

4. All factions to the conflict systematically targeted women mainly as a result of their gender and committed sexual and gender based violations against them including, rape of all forms, sexual slavery, forced marriages, forced recruitment, etc.

5. Reparation is a desirable and appropriate mechanism to redress the gross violations of human rights and shall apply to communities and individuals, especially women and children, to help restore their human dignity, foster healing and closure as well as justice and genuine reconciliation.

#### Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

and she created a column in the Inquirer dedicated to Liberian women. She is a women's rights activist and a member of the Liberian Women Initiative (LWI), which has been at the vanguard of peace advocacy in Liberia.

#### Reference 3 - 0.02% Coverage

e. Adopting specific mechanisms and procedures to address the experiences of women, children and vulnerable groups, paying particular attention to gender based violations, as well as to the issue of child soldiers, providing opportunities for them to relate their experiences, addressing concerns and recommending measures to be taken for the rehabilitation of victims of human rights violations in the spirit of national reconciliation and healing.

#### Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

##### iii. Women

Historically, women have been the most marginalized economically, socially and politically. In Liberia, it was only in 1947, for example, 100 years after the declaration of independence, that Liberian women were granted rights of suffrage.

#### Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

6. Unfair discrimination against women and denial of their rightful place in society as equal partners.

#### Reference 6 - 0.02% Coverage

3. The massive wave of gross violations and atrocities which, characterized the conflict, assumed a systematic pattern of abuse, wanton in their execution, and the product of deliberate planning; organized and orchestrated to achieve a military or political objective; disregarding the rights of noncombatants, children, women, the elderly, disarmed or surrendered enemy combatants, etc.

#### Reference 7 - 0.03% Coverage

All factions to the conflict systematically targeted women, mainly as a result of their gender, and committed sexual and gender based violations against them, including rape of all forms, sexual slavery, forced marriages, forced recruitment, etc.

5. Reparation is a responsibility of the state and development partners as a long term peace investment to redress the gross violations of human rights committed against victim communities and individuals, especially women and children, to help restore their human dignity, foster healing and closure, as well as justice, and genuine reconciliation.

#### Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

The wide range of recommendations directed to the Government of Liberia and more specifically, the President of Liberia, include guaranteeing to women, children and other vulnerable populations, the full enjoyment of their social, economic and cultural rights, in addition to civil and political rights.

#### Reference 9 - 0.03% Coverage

The Constitution specifically contains a preamble and five articles including the bill of rights (Article I), legislative powers (Article II), executive powers (Article III), judicial powers (Article IV), and miscellaneous provisions (Article V). Among the miscellany are clauses prohibiting slavery, protecting the property rights of women and decreeing that only 'persons of color' may be admitted to citizenship and granted the right to hold real property in the republic. Meaning, therefore that the natives were not considered part of Liberia or citizens of the Republic of Liberia.

#### Reference 10 - 0.15% Coverage

who operated the equipment and the only English he is mocked to have spoken was 'more mortar'. In demonstrating Guinea's support for LURD he is scorned as asking members of his unit, presumably Guineans: 'your mother there? A chorus 'NO'; Your father there? 'NO'! Then 'more mortar'. What became known as 'world war I, II & III', referring to LURD's strike and retreat strategic attacks on Monrovia, revisited the horrors and persecution of the past on the civilian population in no less measure. Except for MODEL, which instructed its militias to only loot and not kill or rape, as a control measure, atrocities were minimized with looting as the hallmark of its engagements in the southeastern and central regions of Liberia. The scale of destruction and brutality, and the humanitarian catastrophe looming overhead, however, compelled a full involvement of the international community- UN, AU, USA, and EU - in coordination with ECOWAS - to stop the war. The International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) was created to do just that. President Charles Taylor, beleaguered and embattled without sources of fresh supplies of weapons, and slapped with a war crimes indictment and the unanimity of the international community led by US President Bush, Jr that he must leave, stepped down as President of Liberia and went to Nigeria to commence a new life of uncertainty in exile. In all of these hostilities, the suffering and persecution of the local population was always merciless. Economic hardship, rising unemployment and inflation, family break up or displacement imposed further strains on familial relationships with devastating impact on children, young girls and women. Education opportunities were lost or diminished as school closures meant lost of fees already paid and shortage of essential commodities led to price hikes and a declining living standard.

Throughout the conflict period, the traditional roles of women shifted remarkable to being major bread-winners. Men were the natural targets of advancing, occupying or resisting arm factions and, were therefore in hiding all the time. Women had to step in; performing household chores, selling or trading in consumable items across factional lines, providing food, securing shelter, medical needs and clothing for family members, maintaining the farm, bearing children and cooking for the family in the midst of war, violence and massive atrocities against the unsuspecting general population. This, not only led to, but increased their vulnerability and exposed them to all manners of violence and abuse. They were caught up in an intractable state of victimization that dehumanized them and sought to deprive them of their womanhood; in many cases the perpetrators succeeded. They were abducted and accused of being enemy spies on espionage missions because they dare venture out when no one dare to; they were raped, and compelled to be house or bush wives for the armed men and would be accused of supporting 'rebels' of the opposing faction; they were also accused of being enemies for cooking for and serving the 'enemy' while in captivity as servants, slaves and 'infidels' or 'kaffli'. They were rejected by their own when liberated from captivity and returned home; husbands, children and relatives were condescending and suspicious; lacking in self-

#### Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

Women were not accorded their rights in the first republic. It was under Tubman that they were given suffrage

#### Reference 12 - 0.04% Coverage

It is trite and banal to assert that war brings with it dastardly, carnage, wanton destruction of lives and properties. It is even common to accept that despite the prohibition of certain practices as war weapons – e.g starvation – it is not implausible for the human psychology to tolerate these occurrences as inevitable consequences of war. However, the species of crimes committed in the Liberian civil war – especially cannibalism (eating of human flesh by humans), disembowelment of pregnant women undoubtedly take the meaning of war crime/crime against humanity to another level and stretches the tolerance of mankind of war atrocities. According to Stephen Ellis, the Liberian conflict topped and surpassed all other wars in form and character, in intensity, in depravity, in savagery, in barbarism and in horror. Whilst the Liberian experience may find parallels in history, the description above points to barbarity in modern times which by all standards are repugnant to the human conscience.

#### Reference 13 - 0.05% Coverage

Liberia is a signatory to key international instruments protecting fundamental human rights, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Geneva Conventions, and numerous other instruments that protect the rights of specific groups, such as women and children. During both the Doe and Taylor regimes, the government refused to take responsibility for the actions of its functionaries or rein them for the atrocities they committed. Because of this, they were perceived generally to be aware or sanctioning these atrocities committed under their watch. Moreover, Doe, Taylor and their close associates were directly implicated by TRC witnesses in personally perpetrating human rights abuses. The fact that human rights abuses could be perpetrated with complete impunity was a defining feature of the TRC mandate period, and numerous statement givers narrated their futile attempts to obtain justice for abuses committed against them.

#### Reference 14 - 0.04% Coverage

Another characteristic of the violations were their indiscriminate nature. Though the violations were sometimes systematic, there were also many random and fatal acts of violence. No group of persons was spared from the violations; men, women, children and the elderly were deliberately targeted by all of the warring faction. They suffered a multiplicity of violations at the hands of their abusers and experienced the conflict as victims and perpetrators. The perpetrators included members of the Government army (the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)), and of armed opposition groups including the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO -K), ULIMO -J, Liberian Peace Council (LPC), Militia forces (GOL of Charles Taylor) and the Lofa Defense Force (LDF).

#### Reference 15 - 0.02% Coverage

War induced victimization was wide spread throughout the population affecting a host of victims including women, men, children, youth, the elderly, and other vulnerable sections of our populace. Notwithstanding, analysis of testimonies collected from TRC witnesses point to men being targeted in greater proportion than women. When taking all violations together. See Table 5 below:

#### Reference 16 - 0.14% Coverage

Unfortunately, the data include very few reports of rapes for which the victim's age is known. Still, it is interesting to note that the majority of reported rapes for which the victim's age is known were committed against adolescent women, rather than against socially taboo categories such as older women or very young children. The distribution of all violations by age is roughly similar for males and females. Similarly, analysis of violations documented with the TRC with complete age and sex information suggests that all ages were equally at risk and that the generality of

perpetrators' attack was at random, deliberate and systematic in the instigation of violence against the general armless population.

From the statistical data, women participation in the TRC process was impressive as over fifty percent of statements gathered during the statement-taking exercise are attributed to women. Women account for 28 percent of all violations while on the other hand men account for 47 percent. From these statistics, it is clear that as a class of victims, men comprise the larger proportion, although both men and women appeared to have been targeted in about equal proportions.

Forced displacement which accounts for the largest category of violations took a particularly heavy toll on women, many of whom, faced with the loss of their spouses, assumed leadership roles in their families. Given the difficulties and threats to life (increased mortality) that usually accompany forced migration, it can be assumed, in the absence of reliable statistical information, that elderly women and very young children especially girls, were at great risk and might have suffered disproportionately as compared to males.

Many found themselves in displaced or refugee camps with little or no coping skills to deal with the harsh realities of their new environment. Already victimized by their displacement some, especially young girls, in desperation turned to prostitution including the exchange of relief food for sex. As the statistics show, all factions routinely targeted women simply on account of their gender. This is strongly reflected in the level of sexual violence perpetrated against women. For example, women account for 63 percent of all cases of rape reported to the TRC, as compared to only 6 percent for men. It can be concluded thus that women were singled out for abuse simply on account of their gender. For instance, the proportion of rape with female victims aged 15-19 represents more than five times the proportion of women 15-19 in the general population.

Finally, it is important to note that aside from these reported cases of violence directed against women, the data does not account for the marginalization; exclusion and outright denial of opportunities for self actualization women have, for over a century, endured in Liberia. These age old inequalities find expression in current statistics reflecting the status of women. For example, according to the 2007 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey, HIV prevalence is higher among women than men

#### Reference 17 - 0.01% Coverage

Violations by all factions against women Violations of the rights of the child by forceful recruitment into arm forces

#### Reference 18 - 0.15% Coverage

Indigenous constructions of gender emphasized the breadwinner or productive role for women and the warrior role for men. Indigenous political structures had a "dualsex" organization, that is, parallel systems of offices for men and women. Among the northwestern peoples, this took the form of the dual organization of the above mentioned Poro and Sande secret societies. In the south and east, female councils of elders used a series of checks and balances on official male power. On the national level, the last transitional leader before the 1997 election Ruth Sando Perry was also the first female head of state in Africa.

The Hinterland Laws, which were an extension of the Liberian Constitution and presided over by the governments through the chiefs, denied women certain basic rights such as owning property, holding major discussions with men, participating in decision making processes, and doing certain jobs despite being able to do them like working in a mine or driving a vehicle. They did not have the right to go to school; it was always a privilege and girls were most often sent to work on farms while boys went to schools.

Culturally, it is said that these practices were based on fears that women would dominate their partners if allowed the 'space' to do so. Women were expected to be respectful and to speak when spoken to, especially the „civilized“ women. A man interviewed during the study was recorded to have said, “During the days of our forefathers women were respectful. But these days women are not respectful. When you talk one, they [women] will talk ten”. The Hinterland law allowed men to overtly oppress women and entrench the tendency to treat women unjustly. Even after a woman had borne her husband's children, he could take her back to her relatives, saying that he did not want her any more, and she would have no recourse. This denial of the basic legal and human rights of women, especially the perception of women as the „property“ of her husband or father, rendered women and girls extremely vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and without access to recourse. This laid the foundation for the extreme violations perpetrated during wartime because men had already been socialized to violate women with impunity.

The Liberian government's pronouncement of free and compulsory education for all children of school age has been in existence since 1912. Yet there were high disparities between the numbers of girls and boys in schools. With women's labor being highly prized as farmers, it was a given that girls would work with their mothers and boys

needed to be sent to school. Some girls who did go to school did not experience any discrimination and competed equally with the boys, but for the majority, the perception was that education for girls was unnecessary. Currently, almost 80% of Liberian women are illiterate.

Through this description of social formation in Liberia before and during any of the numerous conflicts which have checkered its history over one and a half centuries, it is clear that the Liberian society was and still is endocentric and patriarchal. Although women were valued and held specific gender roles within which some power could be located, there was no inherent power that could place a woman into

#### Reference 19 - 0.03% Coverage

The TRC determines that the conflict in Liberia dating back to the founding of the Liberian state and which was exacerbated by neglect, poverty, exclusion, political repression, ethnicity, and those human rights violations including violations of international humanitarian law, international human rights law, war crimes and egregious domestic laws violations of Liberia and economic crimes which characterized the conflict from 1979 to 2003 gravely impacted all segments of the Liberian society including but not limited to Liberians in the Diaspora and at home Women, Children, Youth, The Elderly, Vulnerable Groups, Cultural, Traditional and Religious Institutions, and Public Institutions.

#### Reference 20 - 0.04% Coverage

##### 18.5. Recommendations related to Women's Rights, Protection and Empowerment

The TRC recommends the abolition of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and minority groups in our society.

The TRC recommends that the Government of Liberia should, without delay, establish programmes that would victims of the conflict, especially women, with medical, psychological and social services including rehabilitation and assistance with child care and maintenance and other support structures to promote their safety, physical and psychological wellbeing.

The TRC further recommends that the Government attention to the health needs and rights of women in vulnerable and disadvantage groups such as migrant women, refugee and internally displaced women, the girl child and older women, women in prostitution, rural women, women with mental and physical disabilities.

#### Reference 21 - 0.02% Coverage

The ratification and subsequent incorporation of international human rights instruments into national law is crucial to the advancement of women's rights. It imposes on states an obligation to interpret national law in a manner consistent with their duty to their population. Liberia ratified CEDAW in 1984 and is about to present its first and sixth report to the CEDAW committee in July 2009. This report comprehensively covers the status of women in Liberia today and makes a wide

#### Reference 22 - 0.09% Coverage

Under institutional reform, vetting is increasingly implemented to address human rights abuses. It is defined as a formal process for the identification and removal of individuals responsible for abuses from public office. Vetting is becoming an integral part of the process of restoring trust in organs of the state, in an attempt to ensure that the structures that facilitated human rights abuses in the past no longer exist. The collapse of the rule of law during the war with the army and the police involved in perpetrating acts of violence on civilians makes credible institutional reform essential for citizens, especially women, to regain their trust in the state organs. It is also vital that Liberian state institutions reform and transform so as to promote and foster gender equality. The institutional reform process should transform such institutions into efficient and fair institutions that respect human rights, maintain peace, and preserve the rule of law. Institutional reform measures in Liberia are recommended to create the following in all public institutions such as the police and the military: \* the creation of oversight, complaint and disciplinary procedures; \* public education and awareness campaigns to train the public, especially women, on how to access recourse if the system discriminates against them or is harmful, especially the translation of such procedures into Liberian English and other accessible forms of communication. \* the reform or establishment of new legal frameworks; \* the development or revision of ethical guidelines and codes of conduct; \* the provision of adequate salaries, equipment and infrastructure; \* the reform of all institutions by screening and removing personnel who are

deemed unsuitable for public employment, due to their willing participation in acts of violence and destruction during the war, from, for example, the security forces, the police or the judiciary.

## Legacy

References or discussions of legacy, effects or impacts

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_Report-FULL> - § 9 references coded [0.29% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.07% Coverage

In adhering to these requirements, the TRC has engaged in numerous activities with women in Liberia and in the Diaspora. Several formal and informal meetings have been held with individuals as well as women's groups. In 2006, to ensure proper coordination and broadbased participation by women in the TRC process, and to guarantee that woman's concerns are adequately expressed and addressed, the TRC established a gender committee comprising a wide spectrum of civil society and international partners. Members of this committee included the Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia; the Ministry of Gender; the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA); ICTJ; the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); UNMIL Gender Section; Rule of Law Section and Human Rights and Protection Section; Liberia Crusaders for Peace Women's Wing; Traditional Women Association of Liberia; Women on the Move; and the Liberian Media Women Association. From December 2006 to February 2007, the TRC implemented extensive outreach programs with women throughout Liberia's fifteen counties by holding four zonal workshops targeting women's organizations in the counties, and town hall meetings in all counties. Against this backdrop, there are concerns that, after more than a century of gross neglect, marginalization, and dehumanization, especially during Liberia's most recent episodes of conflict, women harbor deep seeded disdain towards those persons who are directly linked to their suppression and are fearful of reprisal if they cooperate with the TRC.

### Reference 2 - 0.03% Coverage

#### 4.7. Women

Historically, women have been the most marginalized; economically, socially and politically. In Liberia, it was only in 1947, for example, 100 years after the declaration of independence, that Liberian women were granted rights of suffrage.

Liberia is attempting to emerge from the throes of more than two decades of state breakdown and protracted civil conflict resulting in deaths and massive displacement of persons internally not excluding the destruction of the country's infrastructure. Unfortunately, women bore a disproportionate amount of suffering during the war. Women were often brutally raped and kidnapped, forced to watch

### Reference 3 - 0.02% Coverage

in all counties. Against this backdrop, there are concerns that, after more than a century of gross neglect, marginalization, and dehumanization, especially during Liberia's most recent episodes of conflict, women harbor deep seeded disdain towards those persons who are directly linked to their suppression and are fearful of reprisal if they cooperate with the TRC.

### Reference 4 - 0.03% Coverage

It was not until, another two months, after a massive protests from Liberian women, who stormed the conference without being invited, and the impatience of the host country and the ICGL, that on August 18, 2003, the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed; marking the cessation of hostilities in the nearly 15 years of civil war. Apart from the CPA making provisions for the new government after the expected departure of Charles Taylor from Liberia, the agreement also provided, for the first time, accountability mechanism in the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) for Liberia, in an attempt to provide the opportunity for Liberians to confront the legacies of their difficult past.

### Reference 5 - 0.03% Coverage

rockets on the overpopulated center of Monrovia killing scores of innocent citizens seeking shelter and refuge; MODEL massively looted from very poor people to render them depraved as their women and girls were raped. The

AFL organized a death squad and killed several innocent civilians perceived as being ,against Doe‘ by beheading. Massacres since April 14, 1979 and burial of victims in mass graves became a commonplace characteristic of the conflict.

The impact of this devastation on women and children in socio-economic and psychological terms is beyond any one’s imagination. Apart from family breakups and separations, deprivation and poverty; death and destruction, the family suffered the most as a consequence of the war and at the hands of its barbaric executioners.

#### Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

girls as compared to boys, as well as illiteracy rates which are higher as compared to men. High teen pregnancy rates, high abortion rates, high infant and maternal mortality rates are all indicators of the long standing prejudice and inequality that have been the lot of Liberian women for well over a century.

#### Reference 7 - 0.02% Coverage

a decision making or leadership position. In fact, in the cases where this had been known to happen, those women were seen as honorary men. Therefore, in the preAmerico-Liberian period it would be safe to say that indigenous Liberian women held a clearly defined place in society with limited power and agency. After the settlers arrived, they were further marginalized to the lowest rung on the social ladder below the indigenous men who were below the settler women and with the male Americo-Liberians holding pride of place as the ultimate “king of the castle”.

#### Reference 8 - 0.04% Coverage

In particular, the health of girls has been severely affected by the high incidence of sexual and gender-based violence. Sexual abuse, rape, multiple rape, and gang rape, and sexual slavery caused serious harm to girls’ reproductive systems and have left many of them with chronic problems from obstetric fistula and sexually transmitted diseases or even infected with HIV. It is extremely worrying that the HIV infection rate among adolescent mothers is three times the average infection rate for the country. There is insufficient access to reproductive health care, HIV prevention, testing, and treatment, in particular in rural areas. Special outreach and educational programs on reproductive health and family planning are limited, although approximately half of all Liberian women give birth before they reach the age of 18.

#### Reference 9 - 0.03% Coverage

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## *Marginalization*

References or discussions of marginalization or discrimination

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_Report-FULL> - § 21 references coded [1.01% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

#### iii. Women

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### Reference 2 - 0.07% Coverage

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### Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

6. Unfair discrimination against women and denial of their rightful place in society as equal partners.

### Reference 4 - 0.03% Coverage

#### 4.7. Women

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### Reference 5 - 0.02% Coverage

in all counties. Against this backdrop, there are concerns that, after more than a century of gross neglect, marginalization, and dehumanization, especially during Liberia's most recent episodes of conflict, women harbor deep seeded disdain towards those persons who are directly linked to their suppression and are fearful of reprisal if they cooperate with the TRC.

### Reference 6 - 0.04% Coverage

Women had a minimum or no public role to play at all in the governance of these states. They were powerful behind-the-scene leaders who advised the kings and chiefs, and were chiefs themselves in other instances. In matters of family, culture, education and spirituality, women were a driving force in determining how the system functions or operates. On the chief or kings' council a woman representative was almost always present. With the extended family system prevalent in pre Liberia, women's role in domestic, familial affairs was huge. She catered to children, relatives and in-laws, made the farms to sustain the wealth and prestige of the family and her husband. Women were important to every leader, chief or king also because of their spiritual leadership and powers to foretell the future and gifts of discernment.

#### Reference 7 - 0.08% Coverage

Another feature of pre-Liberia governance structure and culture was the 'bush schools'; a tradition still in practice today. The Poro society is the school for men and the Sande for women. They were prominent compulsory institutions which traditionally served to initiate young people into the society. The children are taken away for between one to four years to be educated into the laws, customs, traditions and ways of their people; loyalty, respect and care for the elderly, the extended family system, and other values and skills were taught to prepare them for their role and place in society as responsible adults.

More specifically, the women in the Sande were trained for initiation into adulthood, morality and proper sexual comportment; marriage and domestic chores were also subjects. Education about farming, medicine, dancing, child rearing and domestic as well as specialized skills like dying, making cloth, preserving food, etc. were part of the training program.

Before the arrival of the settlers in 1822, extensive contacts and interactions existed between the indigenes at the coast and the interior. Economics, trade and social interests including intermarriages dominated their dealings and creating a big family of in-laws. For defense purposes, they formed alliances and common defense pacts which were enhanced by membership to the Poro or Sande societies as institutions of socialization, acculturation, stature, honesty, trust, common ancestry and brotherhood. These separate nations were not always at peace. They fought wars among themselves. If one group felt stronger, they invaded the weaker one, captured their women and young men. Those who resisted were either killed or made prisoners. The conquered territories were annexed and the prisoners of war were used on the farms or sold into slavery.

#### Reference 8 - 0.05% Coverage

He spent the first period of his rule consolidating his power base through the creation of new and lucrative jobs for his loyalists and the extension of voting rights to women and tribal people, and extended a county system of representation and governance to all political subdivisions in the tribal hinterland. Despite Tubman's efforts to bring the indigenous populations into the social and economic mainstream, the gap between them and the ruling elite during this period of rapid economic development remained. The huge influx of foreign money caused the economy to become distorted and increased social inequalities a consequence of which was increasing hostility between the descendants of the settlers and the original inhabitants. This alarmed Tubman and he was forced to concede that the original inhabitants would have to be granted an amount of political and economic involvement in the country. The rural inhabitants were happy to live with this system for decades because it gave them greater political freedom and the right to vote for the first time.

#### Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

Women were not accorded their rights in the first republic. It was under Tubman that they were given suffrage

#### Reference 10 - 0.10% Coverage

##### 9.2. Women: Survivors and Peacemakers

Historically, women were generally excluded from participation in political life, as it was only until 1947, a full century after independence that women were accorded the right to vote. There is no mention anywhere in historical accounts of women participation in the political life of the colony, prior to 1947, except for their participation in the making of the Liberian flag at independence.

In gender terms the dichotomy between rural and urban Liberia are even more manifest in present day Liberia. For example, only 31 percent of women in Harper, located in southeastern Liberia and surrounding areas receive birth

assistance from trained health professionals; in Monrovia 84 percent of such women received birth assistance from trained health professionals.

During the armed conflict, women and girls were by far more vulnerable to sexual assault and predation than men. Women exposure was due mainly to their daring to move about away from their homes to venture out for food and succor for their families. The further away from their homes they went, the higher the risk of vulnerability. Many parents hid their young girls (and boys from conscriptions) from the fighters when they entered the town or village and forbid them, the children, from moving about without caution.

More than half of victim's testimonies to the TRC alluded to women being vulnerable or victimized during the war in places other than their place of residence, having been displaced internally by the war. Suggesting, therefore that displaced women were more vulnerable to sexual assault than those who did not flee their homes.

The TRC also noticed that women are significantly overrepresented among rape victims and all victims of sexual slavery and sexual violence, as might be expected. In particular, the proportion of rapes with female victims aged 15-19 represents more than five times the proportion of women aged 15-19 in the general population. However, we see relatively more male than female victims for sexual abuse. The definition of sexual abuse included stripping the victim naked and was employed by many perpetrator groups to humiliate the victim.

#### Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

girls as compared to boys, as well as illiteracy rates which are higher as compared to men. High teen pregnancy rates, high abortion rates, high infant and maternal mortality rates are all indicators of the long standing prejudice and inequality that have been the lot of Liberian women for well over a century.

#### Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

Women became involved in the peace process and therefore constituted a critical voice for peace. Despite afflictions of the war, reduced earning potential, single parenting, etc., women had public marches, petitions, prayer crusade, and attended and participated in peace conferences as part of their agenda for peace.

#### Reference 13 - 0.13% Coverage

### 10.3 Women, the TRC and the Conflict

This political system of exclusion was extended to women who held a limited and restricted place in Liberian society at all levels. Women were not allowed into political space until the 1940s when they were granted the franchise to vote, but only if one had property. Indigenous women, notwithstanding, were not permitted to participate in elections until the 1950s. This was a contradiction of the constitution which proclaimed the equality of all people, and the inalienable rights of all its citizens to participate in their governance. Thus interpreted, the constitution was fashioned in a way favorable to one segment of the society – the property class. Hence in actuality, there were three categories of women in Liberia: the 'settlers' (sometimes referred to as 'civilized' – meaning exposed to western education and norms and not wearing indigenous 'lappa' dress); women of Americo-Liberian heritage, some of whom owned property and by that standard were qualified to vote; and poor 'settler' women who did not have property and were excluded. There was yet another group, the indigenous women who like their male counterparts could not vote until the 1950s. So in spite of the constitution's stance on the equality of all persons, the political class at the time set aside the real meaning of the equality 'doctrine' and therefore ignored the constitution. Certainly this was the beginning of the discrimination of all modern Liberian women which reinforced the already existing cultural bias against women.

It is important to note that Article XXVIII of the Accra CPA called for gender balance in all positions in the National Transitional Government of Liberia. This assertion was a great opportunity for women to participate in the political process. However it was not adhered to and women remained on the fringes.

All of the indigenous groups are patrilineal (family relationships are all traced through the male blood line and only such relationships are recognized) and have ideologies of male dominance. The nineteenth-century domestic ideology brought with the resettled Americo-Liberians also was highly patriarchal, with women assigned to roles as homemakers and nurturers of children. However, the sexual division of labor in indigenous agricultural settings afforded women a measure of power, if not formal authority. Women's labor was extremely valuable, as seen in the institution of bride wealth that accompanied marriage. Among "civilized people" of indigenous or Americo-Liberian background, women's domestic role in caring for clothing, household decoration, and the other symbolic means by which the status of the household is communicated had great importance. While it was acceptable for an educated

woman to hold a white-collar job outside the home, she could not participate in the most common activities – farming, marketing, and carrying loads of wood and water – without threatening her status.

#### Reference 14 - 0.15% Coverage

Indigenous constructions of gender emphasized the breadwinner or productive role for women and the warrior role for men. Indigenous political structures had a "dualsex" organization, that is, parallel systems of offices for men and women. Among the northwestern peoples, this took the form of the dual organization of the above mentioned Poro and Sande secret societies. In the south and east, female councils of elders used a series of checks and balances on official male power. On the national level, the last transitional leader before the 1997 election Ruth Sando Perry was also the first female head of state in Africa.

The Hinterland Laws, which were an extension of the Liberian Constitution and presided over by the governments through the chiefs, denied women certain basic rights such as owning property, holding major discussions with men, participating in decision making processes, and doing certain jobs despite being able to do them like working in a mine or driving a vehicle. They did not have the right to go to school; it was always a privilege and girls were most often sent to work on farms while boys went to schools.

Culturally, it is said that these practices were based on fears that women would dominate their partners if allowed the 'space' to do so. Women were expected to be respectful and to speak when spoken to, especially the „civilized“ women. A man interviewed during the study was recorded to have said, “During the days of our forefathers women were respectful. But these days women are not respectful. When you talk one, they [women] will talk ten”. The Hinterland law allowed men to overtly oppress women and entrench the tendency to treat women unjustly. Even after a woman had borne her husband's children, he could take her back to her relatives, saying that he did not want her any more, and she would have no recourse. This denial of the basic legal and human rights of women, especially the perception of women as the „property“ of her husband or father, rendered women and girls extremely vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and without access to recourse. This laid the foundation for the extreme violations perpetrated during wartime because men had already been socialized to violate women with impunity.

The Liberian government's pronouncement of free and compulsory education for all children of school age has been in existence since 1912. Yet there were high disparities between the numbers of girls and boys in schools. With women's labor being highly prized as farmers, it was a given that girls would work with their mothers and boys needed to be sent to school. Some girls who did go to school did not experience any discrimination and competed equally with the boys, but for the majority, the perception was that education for girls was unnecessary. Currently, almost 80% of Liberian women are illiterate.

Through this description of social formation in Liberia before and during any of the numerous conflicts which have checkered its history over one and a half centuries, it is clear that the Liberian society was and still is endocentric and patriarchal. Although women were valued and held specific gender roles within which some power could be located, there was no inherent power that could place a woman into

#### Reference 15 - 0.02% Coverage

a decision making or leadership position. In fact, in the cases where this had been known to happen, those women were seen as honorary men. Therefore, in the preAmerico-Liberian period it would be safe to say that indigenous Liberian women held a clearly defined place in society with limited power and agency. After the settlers arrived, they were further marginalized to the lowest rung on the social ladder below the indigenous men who were below the settler women and with the male Americo-Liberians holding pride of place as the ultimate “king of the castle”.

#### Reference 16 - 0.10% Coverage

Additional Recommendations to Address the Needs of Women and Girls and to Advance Gender Equality in Liberia  
This report has shown that Liberia 's 14 year civil war, buttressed by over a century of violence, oppression and inequality did not spare women and girls from being used, abused, killed, maimed, mutilated, tortured, raped, gang raped, abducted, forced into sexual slavery and drugged. Their houses, property and possessions were destroyed and looted, they were internally displaced and turned into refugees and suffered the loss of their breadwinners and livelihoods. This report therefore finds that women and girls were violated in every category of violations and that the ensuing harms, impact and consequences of these violations extended far beyond their direct physical experience.

This report determines that through the investigations of the TRC, many of the causes and origins of violence against women during wartime are rooted in the socio-cultural, traditional and political history of Liberia. It is also firmly linked to the low socio-political status of women, with the added perception of male superiority. This rendered women and girls extremely vulnerable to exploitation and violence during both war and peace. It has also taken into account the multiplicity and complexity of women's roles in the armed conflict, recognizing that women took on the added roles of perpetrator, collaborator as well as peacemaker and mediator.

These recommendations are therefore based on the need to not only address the direct consequences of the conflict in Liberia but also the root causes and origins of the violations that women continue to experience in the aftermath of the conflict. Women continue to experience the secondary harms from the increase in single parenting, unwanted pregnancies, health problems from sexually transmitted diseases, increasing poverty, prostitution, discrimination and increased responsibility due to the loss of breadwinners, livelihoods and the adoption of orphans.

These recommendations are informed by the recommendations elicited from women throughout the lifespan of the TRC, through all the projects and activities aimed at engaging women and girls in Liberia from its inception through June 2009.

#### Reference 17 - 0.08% Coverage

Since many women associated with the fighting forces were not able to participate in the skills training programs provided on demobilization, and that many women requested vocational training during the TRC process, it is recommended that skills training programs be decentralized and made accessible to all, especially to women and girls outside of Monrovia. It is further recommended that these training programs are designed based on an assessment of marketable skills needed in Liberia and is coordinated, vetted and certified by both the Ministries of Gender and Development and Labour to ensure that the training is appropriate and the quality is standardized. Furthermore, government should develop incentives for all employers to offer skills training by setting up a levy that employers pay which they can access for the skills training of employees.

It is noted that for many who have undertaken skills training there is an absence of opportunities to practice the skills as well as the lack of accessible markets. It is recommended that the Ministry of Gender and Development and partners explore opportunities for women to utilize the skills acquired and for market opportunities where their goods can be sold.

The current legal and regulatory environment must be reworked to allow for the development of the microfinance sector and the provision of micro-credit for the poor and vulnerable especially women. The provision of these services must be linked to programs dealing with the root socio-cultural and traditional causes of gender inequality to avoid the backlash of violence that inevitably follows such financial empowerment programs.

Micro-credit schemes should especially target women associated with the fighting forces, internally displaced women, female single parents and caregivers, and war widows. Those providing micro-

#### Reference 18 - 0.04% Coverage

The bias against women receiving formal education must be addressed at all levels, socially, economically and politically. The National Girl Child Education Policy must be implemented to address some of the following issues: Free and compulsory education for girls up to senior secondary level is recommended. Girls who become pregnant while at school must not be expelled. Government should ensure that counseling services are available at all schools as well as adequate sex education and awareness as preventative measures. In the event of girls becoming pregnant, services must be available for the girl to complete her education in a way that takes her health status into account. Teachers impregnating girls must be severely dealt with, through the setting up enforceable codes of conduct for teachers and students.

#### Reference 19 - 0.01% Coverage

Although the statutory laws prohibit discriminatory practices, they make no specific provisions against discrimination in the private or domestic sphere. Access to justice is limited for women, particularly in the rural areas, and availability of legal aid is severely limited.

#### Reference 20 - 0.03% Coverage

All workplace discrimination within state institutions, particularly the traditionally male dominated sectors like the security sector, must be investigated and corrected with sanctions in place for sexual harassment, unequal incentive schemes, operational structures and bureaucratic procedures. Furthermore, substantive equality must be practiced to ensure that women are not further discriminated against, by treating everybody the same.

A sensitive action research study of the nature and prevalence of female genital mutilation / cutting must be done. Public education of the outcomes, the dangers and the choices women have regarding this practice must then follow. Laws must be enacted to protect women and girls who choose not to follow this practice.

#### Reference 21 - 0.02% Coverage

The culture of impunity in Liberia has had a severe impact and dire consequences for women and girls. The state failed completely to protect them as civilians during the war and even in the post conflict periods, deepening this culture and allowed women's bodies to become the battlefield through which the war was fought. For women and girls, it is absolutely imperative to end the

## *Military*

### References or discussions of the military and soldiers

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_.Report-FULL> - § 8 references coded [0.29% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.04% Coverage

national reconciliation and combat impunity.

3. The massive wave of gross violations and atrocities which characterized the conflict assumed a systematic pattern of abuse, wanton in their execution, and the product of deliberate planning, organized and orchestrated to achieve a military or political objective; disregarding the rights of noncombatants, children, and women, the elderly, disarmed or surrendered enemy combatants, etc.

4. All factions to the conflict systematically targeted women mainly as a result of their gender and committed sexual and gender based violations against them including, rape of all forms, sexual slavery, forced marriages, forced recruitment, etc.

5. Reparation is a desirable and appropriate mechanism to redress the gross violations of human rights and shall apply to communities and individuals, especially women and children, to help restore their human dignity, foster healing and closure as well as justice and genuine reconciliation.

#### Reference 2 - 0.02% Coverage

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#### Reference 3 - 0.05% Coverage

To enforce the de jure limits of the state, Liberia in 1908 for the first time, created a national army, the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF). This development, even though consistent with state-making, engendered tremendous political conflicts of its own. The LFF became a tool for the enforcement of the writ of the Liberian government in the hinterland. An elaborate government 'native policy' was instituted with at least two problematic features (or outcomes): One was subversion of the Constitution by endowing the Executive Branch with legislative and judicial powers within the hinterland, a practice reminiscent of the 1822-1847 colonial periods. The other problematic feature of the native policy was the license it gave to some unscrupulous interior officials and their traditional cronies which led to unspeakable atrocities across Liberia's interior region. Talking about 'roots of conflict,' the memory of these atrocities survives in documents, and there are Liberians who continue to hand down to a younger generation the facts of this ugly past in which respectable chiefs and fatherly heads were publicly humiliated, children and women often abused, forced labor and cruelty in collecting the 'hut tax' impositions were common.

#### Reference 4 - 0.02% Coverage

By the time of the first peace meeting in Free Town, Sierra Leone, under the auspices of the ECOWAS Peace Plan, an extraction of the Inter-Faith Mediation Committee of Liberia, it became clear to ECOWAS that no one faction could boast of military advantage or victory and unless there was intervention to halt the carnage, Liberia will self-destruct as more and more innocent women and children would continue to suffer and die. Especially so, the OAU, UN and most notably the US, would have no direct involvement with Liberia, ECOWAS decided to intervene.

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By 1993 a conflict over allocation of allocated government jobs broke out in ULIMO between the Mandingo and Krahn factions. A bitter struggle ensued in Tubmanburg, Bomi County and the ULIMO faction was effectively split into ULIMO-J of Roosevelt Johnson (Krahn) and ULIMO-K of Alhaji Kromah (Mandingo). An attempt by ECOMOG to compel ULIMO-J to open the roads leading up to Bomi County proved fatal for ECOMOG and the entrapped civilian population. Scores of ECOMOG soldiers died in the battle; as did hundreds of children of

starvation and they were buried on the Catholic St. Dominic Campus. As part of the NPFL's terror campaign to render IGNU and ECOMOG territories ungovernable, a June 6, 1993 attack at Harbel, Margibi County saw an infiltrating NPFL special Unit, under cover of dark, crept on innocent displaced civilians who were asleep, killing approximately 600 persons, including women and children. This attack was planned to give the impression that the AFL was responsible since Harbel, Firestone was under AFL control.

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March, 1999: Members of the military, searching for a missing man, detained and beat elders in the village of Dambala, Grand Cape Mount County. Villagers complained that the soldiers had raped several women and had looted money and goods. The alleged violations followed several hours of shooting in the village. Military authorities admitted that looting had occurred but denied the allegations of violence and rape.

#### Reference 7 - 0.04% Coverage

It is trite and banal to assert that war brings with it dastardly, carnage, wanton destruction of lives and properties. It is even common to accept that despite the prohibition of certain practices as war weapons – e.g starvation – it is not implausible for the human psychology to tolerate these occurrences as inevitable consequences of war. However, the species of crimes committed in the Liberian civil war – especially cannibalism (eating of human flesh by humans), disembowelment of pregnant women undoubtedly take the meaning of war crime/crime against humanity to another level and stretches the tolerance of mankind of war atrocities. According to Stephen Ellis, the Liberian conflict topped and surpassed all other wars in form and character, in intensity, in depravity, in savagery, in barbarism and in horror. Whilst the Liberian experience may find parallels in history, the description above points to barbarity in modern times which by all standards are repugnant to the human conscience.

#### Reference 8 - 0.04% Coverage

Another characteristic of the violations were their indiscriminate nature. Though the violations were sometimes systematic, there were also many random and fatal acts of violence. No group of persons was spared from the violations; men, women, children and the elderly were deliberately targeted by all of the warring faction. They suffered a multiplicity of violations at the hands of their abusers and experienced the conflict as victims and perpetrators. The perpetrators included members of the Government army (the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)), and of armed opposition groups including the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO -K), ULIMO -J, Liberian Peace Council (LPC), Militia forces (GOL of Charles Taylor) and the Lofa Defense Force (LDF).



## *Nation*

### References of discussions of nation or nationalism

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_.Report-FULL> - § 8 references coded [0.29% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.04% Coverage

national reconciliation and combat impunity.

3. The massive wave of gross violations and atrocities which characterized the conflict assumed a systematic pattern of abuse, wanton in their execution, and the product of deliberate planning, organized and orchestrated to achieve a military or political objective; disregarding the rights of noncombatants, children, and women, the elderly, disarmed or surrendered enemy combatants, etc.

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## *Politics*

References or discussions of politics, political parties, and political leaders

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### Reference 1 - 0.04% Coverage

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### Reference 2 - 0.04% Coverage

Cllr. Pearl Brown Bull has been a lawyer and renowned Liberian politician since the late 70s. She has obtained numerous degrees, including a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Political Science from the University of Liberia and a Juris Doctor (law) degree from Quinnipiac University, USA. Cllr. Bull has served as Professor of Management & Supervision in Law Enforcement and Criminal Evidence at Shaw University, NC, USA, and held many high-profile public positions including being a member of the Interim Legislative Assembly, Constitutional Advisory Assembly, Public Procurement and Concession Commission, panel of experts for the selection of commissioners of the Independent National Human Rights Commission of Liberia, and Country Vice-President of the International Federation of Women Lawyers. She is a legal drafter with more than a quarter of a century of experience in peace building, conflict resolution and social work.

### Reference 3 - 0.02% Coverage

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### Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

The wide range of recommendations directed to the Government of Liberia and more specifically, the President of Liberia, include guaranteeing to women, children and other vulnerable populations, the full enjoyment of their social, economic and cultural rights, in addition to civil and political rights.

### Reference 5 - 0.03% Coverage

Commissioner Dede Dolopei, Vice-chair of the TRC, was a Liberian administrator, manager, social worker and peace activist. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in accounting with emphasis in management from the University of Liberia, where she is also a Master of Science candidate in regional planning. Commissioner Dolopei served as a member of the board of directors for the National Women's Commission of Liberia and the Christian Foundation for Children and the Aging. She has been instrumental in the promotion and protection of women's rights in Liberia, and is well-known for her efforts and expertise in peace-building, conflict resolution and psycho-social counseling.

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Women had a minimum or no public role to play at all in the governance of these states. They were powerful behind-the-scene leaders who advised the kings and chiefs, and were chiefs themselves in other instances. In matters of family, culture, education and spirituality, women were a driving force in determining how the system functions or operates. On the chief or kings' council a woman representative was almost always present. With the extended family system prevalent in pre Liberia, women's role in domestic, familial affairs was huge. She catered to children, relatives and in-laws, made the farms to sustain the wealth and prestige of the family and her husband. Women were important to every leader, chief or king also because of their spiritual leadership and powers to foretell the future and gifts of discernment.

#### Reference 7 - 0.05% Coverage

He spent the first period of his rule consolidating his power base through the creation of new and lucrative jobs for his loyalists and the extension of voting rights to women and tribal people, and extended a county system of representation and governance to all political subdivisions in the tribal hinterland. Despite Tubman's efforts to bring the indigenous populations into the social and economic mainstream, the gap between them and the ruling elite during this period of rapid economic development remained. The huge influx of foreign money caused the economy to become distorted and increased social inequalities a consequence of which was increasing hostility between the descendants of the settlers and the original inhabitants. This alarmed Tubman and he was forced to concede that the original inhabitants would have to be granted an amount of political and economic involvement in the country. The rural inhabitants were happy to live with this system for decades because it gave them greater political freedom and the right to vote for the first time.

#### Reference 8 - 0.05% Coverage

By 1993 a conflict over allocation of allocated government jobs broke out in ULIMO between the Mandingo and Krahn factions. A bitter struggle ensued in Tubmanburg, Bomi County and the ULIMO faction was effectively split into ULIMO-J of Roosevelt Johnson (Krahn) and ULIMO-K of Alhaji Kromah (Mandingo). An attempt by ECOMOG to compel ULIMO-J to open the roads leading up to Bomi County proved fatal for ECOMOG and the entrapped civilian population. Scores of ECOMOG soldiers died in the battle; as did hundreds of children of starvation and they were buried on the Catholic St. Dominic Campus. As part of the NPFL's terror campaign to render IGNU and ECOMOG territories ungovernable, a June 6, 1993 attack at Harbel, Margibi County saw an infiltrating NPFL special Unit, under cover of dark, crept on innocent displaced civilians who were asleep, killing approximately 600 persons, including women and children. This attack was planned to give the impression that he AFL was responsible since Harbel, Firestone was under AFL control.

#### Reference 9 - 0.05% Coverage

Liberia is a signatory to key international instruments protecting fundamental human rights, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Geneva Conventions, and numerous other instruments that protect the rights of specific groups, such as women and children. During both the Doe and Taylor regimes, the government refused to take responsibility for the actions of its functionaries or rein them for the atrocities they committed. Because of this, they were perceived generally to be aware or sanctioning these atrocities committed under their watch. Moreover, Doe, Taylor and their close associates were directly implicated by TRC witnesses in personally perpetrating human rights abuses. The fact that human rights abuses could be perpetrated with complete impunity was a defining feature of the TRC mandate period, and numerous statement givers narrated their futile attempts to obtain justice for abuses committed against them.

#### Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

Women became involved in the peace process and therefore constituted a critical voice for peace. Despite afflictions of the war, reduced earning potential, single parenting, etc., women had public marches, petitions, prayer crusade, and attended and participated in peace conferences as part of their agenda for peace.

### 10.3 Women, the TRC and the Conflict

This political system of exclusion was extended to women who held a limited and restricted place in Liberian society at all levels. Women were not allowed into political space until the 1940s when they were granted the franchise to vote, but only if one had property. Indigenous women, notwithstanding, were not permitted to participate in elections until the 1950s. This was a contradiction of the constitution which proclaimed the equality of all people, and the inalienable rights of all its citizens to participate in their governance. Thus interpreted, the constitution was fashioned in a way favorable to one segment of the society – the property class. Hence in actuality, there were three categories of women in Liberia: the ,settlers' (sometimes referred to as ,civilized' – meaning exposed to western education and norms and not wearing indigenous ,lappa' dress); women of Americo-Liberian heritage, some of whom owned property and by that standard were qualified to vote; and poor ,settler' women who did not have property and were excluded. There was yet another group, the indigenous women who like their male counterparts could not vote until the 1950s. So in spite of the constitution's stance on the equality of all persons, the political class at the time set aside the real meaning of the equality ,doctrine' and therefore ignored the constitution. Certainly this was the beginning of the discrimination of all modern Liberian women which reinforced the already existing cultural bias against women.

It is important to note that Article XXVIII of the Accra CPA called for gender balance in all positions in the National Transitional Government of Liberia. This assertion was a great opportunity for women to participate in the political process. However it was not adhered to and women remained on the fringes.

All of the indigenous groups are patrilineal (family relationships are all traced through the male blood line and only such relationships are recognized) and have ideologies of male dominance. The nineteenth-century domestic ideology brought with the resettled Americo-Liberians also was highly patriarchal, with women assigned to roles as homemakers and nurturers of children. However, the sexual division of labor in indigenous agricultural settings afforded women a measure of power, if not formal authority. Women's labor was extremely valuable, as seen in the institution of bride wealth that accompanied marriage. Among "civilized people" of indigenous or Americo-Liberian background, women's domestic role in caring for clothing, household decoration, and the other symbolic means by which the status of the household is communicated had great importance. While it was acceptable for an educated woman to hold a white-collar job outside the home, she could not participate in the most common activities – farming, marketing, and carrying loads of wood and water – without threatening her status.

## Violence

### References or discussions of violence or violent acts

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_Report-FULL> - § 46 references coded [1.64% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

4. All factions engaged in armed conflict, violated, degraded, abused and denigrated, committed sexual and gender based violence against women including rape, sexual slavery, forced marriages, and other dehumanizing forms of violations;

#### Reference 2 - 0.04% Coverage

national reconciliation and combat impunity.

3. The massive wave of gross violations and atrocities which characterized the conflict assumed a systematic pattern of abuse, wanton in their execution, and the product of deliberate planning, organized and orchestrated to achieve a military or political objective; disregarding the rights of noncombatants, children, and women, the elderly, disarmed or surrendered enemy combatants, etc.

4. All factions to the conflict systematically targeted women mainly as a result of their gender and committed sexual and gender based violations against them including, rape of all forms, sexual slavery, forced marriages, forced recruitment, etc.

5. Reparation is a desirable and appropriate mechanism to redress the gross violations of human rights and shall apply to communities and individuals, especially women and children, to help restore their human dignity, foster healing and closure as well as justice and genuine reconciliation.

#### Reference 3 - 0.09% Coverage

the destruction of the country's infrastructure. Unfortunately, women bore a disproportionate amount of suffering during the war. Women were often brutally raped and kidnapped, forced to watch their husbands and children tortured and killed or forcibly conscripted into various warring factions. Thousands of children and youth were forced to take drugs as a means to control and teach them to kill, maim and rape without conscious making them virtual killing machines. It is estimated that the conflict in Liberia produced the highest number of female perpetrators in comparison to civil conflicts in other parts of the world.

According to TRC findings, various episodes of the armed conflict affected men and women differently. While men account for nearly 50% or half of all reported violations compared to one third or 33% from women. However, more than 70% of all sexual based violations reported were against women.

For historical, cultural, social, political, economic and other reasons, women's experiences are often not reported and hence underrepresented in reported violations. Recognizing this reality, the TRC Act provides guidelines for the treatment of women in the TRC process. In addition to the Preamble, nine sections of the Act speak to women's realities and how they should be incorporated in the TRC process. These provisions and references demand the effective participation of women at all levels and in all aspects of the TRC process, including as Commissioners, managers and staff of the TRC, petitioners, victims, perpetrators, victim-perpetrators, and witnesses. Article IV and VI of TRC Act specifically requires the TRC to adopt mechanisms and procedures to address the experience of women, children and vulnerable groups; pay particular attention to genderbased violations; employ specialists in women's rights; protect women's safety; and not endanger women's social reintegration or psychological recovery.

#### Reference 4 - 0.02% Coverage

Liberia's various episodes of state breakdown and conflict, particularly the Liberian Civil War (1989-1997) and the LURD and MODEL insurrections (1999-2003) resulted in the deaths of an estimated over 250,000 persons and forced over 1 million to be internally-displaced and hundreds of thousands to be refugees. The nature and magnitude of atrocities committed, especially against women and children, by the various warring factions including government forces, were in epic proportions.

#### Reference 5 - 0.06% Coverage

Women Nearly 26,000 or 28% of reported violations were against women. While as a group men comprise a larger victim category than women, Liberia's various armed conflicts excessively affected women in various ways. As previously noted, women disproportionately suffered from sexual violence including gang rape, sexual slavery, outrages upon personal dignity, and torture, among others. Girls and women aged 15-19 comprise the largest category of reported cases of sexual violence. Women as old as eighty-years old were perversely dehumanized through gendered violence by, for example, being forced to have sex with their sons or male relatives and by having taboo objects such spoons, sticks, hot pepper and rifle buds forced into their vaginal and rectal areas. Women were kidnapped and forced into sexual slavery only to be passed around as 'wives' of roaming combatants. They were also forced to engage in hard labor making them both sex and labor relegating them to the status of chattel slaves. Women suffered the indignity of having the children that they bore after being raped and held as sex slaves summarily taken away from them by combatants at the end of armed conflict. Many women that testified before the TRC either through statement taking or the hearings gave thousands of heart breaking narratives about how they were brutalized during armed conflict.

#### Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

All factions engaged in the armed conflict, violated, degraded, abused and denigrated, committed sexual and gender based violence against women including rape, sexual slavery, forced marriages, and other dehumanizing forms of violations;

#### Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

18. Significant more sexual and gender based crimes committed mainly against women were committed than was reported to the TRC through its formal process for reasons of insecurity, stigma, etc

#### Reference 8 - 0.03% Coverage

All factions to the conflict systematically targeted women, mainly as a result of their gender, and committed sexual and gender based violations against them, including rape of all forms, sexual slavery, forced marriages, forced recruitment, etc.

5. Reparation is a responsibility of the state and development partners as a long term peace investment to redress the gross violations of human rights committed against victim communities and individuals, especially women and children, to help restore their human dignity, foster healing and closure, as well as justice, and genuine reconciliation.

#### Reference 9 - 0.03% Coverage

##### 4.7. Women

Historically, women have been the most marginalized; economically, socially and politically. In Liberia, it was only in 1947, for example, 100 years after the declaration of independence, that Liberian women were granted rights of suffrage.

Liberia is attempting to emerge from the throes of more than two decades of state breakdown and protracted civil conflict resulting in deaths and massive displacement of persons internally not excluding the destruction of the country's infrastructure. Unfortunately, women bore a disproportionate amount of suffering during the war. Women were often brutally raped and kidnapped, forced to watch

#### Reference 10 - 0.11% Coverage

According to TRC findings, various episodes of the armed conflict affected men and women differently. While men account for nearly 50% or half of all reported violations compared to one third or 33% from women, women were uniquely targeted because of their gender throughout the conflict and its different phases. Moreover, above 70% of all sexual based violations reported were against women. For historical, cultural, social, political, economic and other reasons, women's experiences are often not reported and hence under-represented in reported violations. Recognizing this reality, the TRC Act provides guidelines for the treatment of women in the TRC process. In

addition to the Preamble, nine sections of the Act speak to women's realities and how they should be incorporated in the TRC process. These provisions and references demand the effective participation of women at all levels and in all aspects of the TRC process, including as Commissioners, managers and staff of the TRC, petitioners, victims, perpetrators, victim-perpetrators, and witnesses. Article IV and VI of TRC Act specifically requires the TRC to adopt mechanisms and procedures to address the experience of women, children and vulnerable groups; pay particular attention to gender-based violations; employ specialists in women's rights; protect women's safety; and not endanger women's social reintegration or psychological recovery.

In adhering to these requirements, the TRC has engaged in numerous activities with women in Liberia and in the Diaspora. Several formal and informal meetings have been held with individuals as well as women's groups. In 2006, to ensure proper coordination and broad-based participation by women in the TRC process, and to guarantee that woman's concerns are adequately expressed and addressed, the TRC established a gender committee comprising a wide spectrum of civil society and international partners. Members of this committee included the Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia; the Ministry of Gender; the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA); ICTJ; the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); UNMIL Gender Section; Rule of Law Section and Human Rights and Protection Section; Liberia Crusaders for Peace Women's Wing; Traditional Women Association of Liberia; Women on the Move; and the Liberian Media Women Association.

From December 2006 to February 2007, the TRC implemented extensive outreach programs with women throughout Liberia's fifteen counties by holding four zonal workshops targeting women's organizations in the counties, and town hall meetings

#### Reference 11 - 0.04% Coverage

Between June and August 1990, Liberia became a 'butcher house' in the words of former Gambian President, Sir Dauda Jawara. Socio-economic conditions had deteriorated considerably. The trapped population was desolate; physically waned, hungry and ill. The parallel market flourished with looted goods from homes and the free port of Monrovia, all facilitated and instigated by the armed men and their bands of followers. The popular tones which heralded Taylor's rebellion – 'monkey come down' and 'chucky must come' – were no longer heard, better, regretted. Family income depleted along with food stock. As more and more families were separated, ties were broken and young girls became the target of armed fighters. Women were targeted and raped, abducted as bush wives as they ventured out of their hiding places to fetch food. The younger girls with no clear sources of survival got 'involved' with the fighters and prostitution became a way of life till the end of the conflict and even now in present day Liberia.

#### Reference 12 - 0.05% Coverage

in nature and character, in timber, rubber, gold and diamonds, including diamonds from neighboring Sierra Leone, would prove crucial to sustaining Taylor's war efforts and prolonging the conflict. The Secretary General of Quiwonkpa's NPF, Moses Duopu, was killed on his return from Nigeria to Taylor's territories for claiming the Secretary General title of the new NPFL and disputing or seemingly eyeing the leadership of the NPFL; the AFL massacre 27 Gios and Manos families of the AFL in Monrovia, as 25 AFL soldiers escaped to seek refuge at the Methodist Church in Sinkor which was subsequently attacked. Also, Jackson F. Doe, David Dwayen, Justice Patrick Biddle, Cooper Teah, Gabriel Kpolleh, Photographer B.W. King, along with 80 other very prominent personalities associated with and living in NPFL- held territories were killed at the hands of NPFL 'generals'; 500 ethnic Mandingoes, including an Imam, killed in Bakedu, Lofa County by the NPFL; a retaliatory killing of over 500 supposedly men, women and children from Nimba County were massacred at the St. Peters Lutheran Church by the AFL led by Youbo Tailay then under the command of Jackson E. Doe<sup>4</sup>

#### Reference 13 - 0.02% Coverage

another 250 ethnic Gios and Manos seeking refuge at the J F K Hospital killed by a group of AFL soldiers; In Buchanan and Monrovia, dogs were eating the dead bodies of human beings in the streets as men and women on the UL Fendell Campus unashamedly bathed together naked in a dirty little stale water better known as 'Adam and Eve' creek.

#### Reference 14 - 0.05% Coverage



By 1993 a conflict over allocation of allocated government jobs broke out in ULIMO between the Mandingo and Krahn factions. A bitter struggle ensued in Tubmanburg, Bomi County and the ULIMO faction was effectively split into ULIMO-J of Roosevelt Johnson (Krahn) and ULIMO-K of Alhaji Kromah (Mandingo). An attempt by ECOMOG to compel ULIMO-J to open the roads leading up to Bomi County proved fatal for ECOMOG and the entrapped civilian population. Scores of ECOMOG soldiers died in the battle; as did hundreds of children of starvation and they were buried on the Catholic St. Dominic Campus. As part of the NPFL's terror campaign to render IGNU and ECOMOG territories ungovernable, a June 6, 1993 attack at Harbel, Margibi County saw an infiltrating NPFL special Unit, under cover of dark, crept on innocent displaced civilians who were asleep, killing approximately 600 persons, including women and children. This attack was planned to give the impression that he AFL was responsible since Harbel, Firestone was under AFL control.

#### Reference 15 - 0.15% Coverage

who operated the equipment and the only English he is mocked to have spoken was ,more mortar'. In demonstrating Guinea's support for LURD he is scorned as asking members of his unit, presumably Guineans: ,your mother there? A chorus ,NO'; Your father there? ,NO'! Then ,more mortar'. What became known as ,world war I, II & III', referring to LURD's strike and retreat strategic attacks on Monrovia, revisited the horrors and persecution of the past on the civilian population in no less measure. Except for MODEL, which instructed its militias to only loot and not kill or rape, as a control measure, atrocities were minimized with looting as the hallmark of its engagements in the southeastern and central regions of Liberia. The scale of destruction and brutality, and the humanitarian catastrophe looming overhead, however, compelled a full involvement of the international community- UN, AU, USA, and EU - in coordination with ECOWAS - to stop the war. The International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL) was created to do just that. President Charles Taylor, beleaguered and embattled without sources of fresh supplies of weapons, and slapped with a war crimes indictment and the unanimity of the international community led by US President Bush, Jr that he must leave, stepped down as President of Liberia and went to Nigeria to commence a new life of uncertainty in exile. In all of these hostilities, the suffering and persecution of the local population was always merciless. Economic hardship, rising unemployment and inflation, family break up or displacement imposed further strains on familial relationships with devastating impact on children, young girls and women. Education opportunities were lost or diminished as school closures meant lost of fees already paid and shortage of essential commodities led to price hikes and a declining living standard. Throughout the conflict period, the traditional roles of women shifted remarkable to being major bread-winners. Men were the natural targets of advancing, occupying or resisting arm factions and, were therefore in hiding all the time. Women had to step in; performing household chores, selling or trading in consumable items across factional lines, providing food, securing shelter, medical needs and clothing for family members, maintaining the farm, bearing children and cooking for the family in the midst of war, violence and massive atrocities against the unsuspecting general population. This, not only led to, but increased their vulnerability and exposed them to all manners of violence and abuse. They were caught up in an intractable state of victimization that dehumanized them and sought to deprive them of their womanhood; in many cases the perpetrators succeeded. They were abducted and accused of being enemy spies on espionage missions because they dare venture out when no one dare to; they were raped, and compelled to be house or bush wives for the armed men and would be accused of supporting ,rebels' of the opposing faction; they were also accused of being enemies for cooking for and serving the ,enemy' while in captivity as servants, slaves and ,infidels' or ,kaffli'. They were rejected by their own when liberated from captivity and returned home; husbands, children and relatives were condescending and suspicious; lacking in self-

#### Reference 16 - 0.01% Coverage

July 29, 1990: Massacre of over 500 men, women and children mainly of Gio and Mano ethnicity seeking refuge at the St. Peters Lutheran Church in Monrovia as reprisal for the Bakedu Massacre.

#### Reference 17 - 0.01% Coverage

June, 1995: UNICEF workers in Buchanan reported that they had registered 652 cases of women who had been raped, mostly by members of the warring factions, within a period less than 6 months.

#### Reference 18 - 0.01% Coverage

May, 1990: At least 30 Gio and Mano men, women and children were abducted by government soldiers from a UN compound where hundreds were seeking protection. They were then apparently executed extra judicially by the AFL.

Reference 19 - 0.02% Coverage

October 23, 1992: Six NPFL soldiers entered the nuns' convent in the suburb of Gardnersville, killed three other American nuns and a Lebanese businessman, and abducted the businessman's Liberian wife, two other Liberian women with their four children, and four Liberian novices. Those abducted were apparently later released. NPRAG officials denied that NPFL forces were responsible.

Reference 20 - 0.02% Coverage

September, 1993: A UN inquiry found that the AFL had been responsible for the extra judicial executions of nearly 600 unarmed civilians- mostly women, children and elderly people- at displaced people's camps near Harbel in June. This report by the WACCO Commission is disputed by findings of the TRC to the effect that NPFL committed the atrocities.

Reference 21 - 0.01% Coverage

June, 1994: Mandingo ULIMO fighters reportedly killed at least four civilians and took women hostage for money when they burned and looted villages in the Tienne area.

Reference 22 - 0.01% Coverage

September, 1994: NPFL fighters tied up at least 20 men, women and children and threw them into the St. John River at Bahla Bridge.

Reference 23 - 0.01% Coverage

April, 1995: UNICEF representatives reported a massacre in Yourcee, a village near Buchanan. They stated that at least 62 people, including women and children, had

Reference 24 - 0.01% Coverage

April, 1998: The discovery of a mass grave in Zorzor, Lofa County. The NPFL has been implicated. The victims, including pregnant women, were bound at the hands and legs before being buried alive in shallow graves.

Reference 25 - 0.01% Coverage

June 9, 2002: The massacre of 110 young men and women in Bopolu, Gbarpolu County by LURD combatant Oforie Diah (a.k.a Iron Jacket). The victims were accused of being GOL sympathizers.

Reference 26 - 0.02% Coverage

March, 1999: Members of the military, searching for a missing man, detained and beat elders in the village of Dambala, Grand Cape Mount County. Villagers complained that the soldiers had raped several women and had looted money and goods. The alleged violations followed several hours of shooting in the village. Military authorities admitted that looting had occurred but denied the allegations of violence and rape.

Reference 27 - 0.01% Coverage

May, 2002: As thousands of civilians fled fighting around Gbarnga as many as 20 women reported that they had been raped by security forces. They included a 19 year old raped by four government militia. Another woman was abducted, held for two days and reportedly raped by an ATU member.

#### Reference 28 - 0.01% Coverage

August, 2002: Three women fleeing to Guinea were abducted by LURD combatants between Kotolahun and Honyahun. They were forced to carry loads and then raped. Those responsible were subsequently beaten by their commanders.

#### Reference 29 - 0.02% Coverage

November, 2003: Persistent reports of killings, beatings, abduction and rape by MODEL forces were received. A 60-year-old man, narrated to Amnesty International how MODEL forces attacked Graie on November 1, 2003 burning most of the houses in Graie, Nimba county. Tied some people, beat them with cutlasses and stripped people- both men and women.

#### Reference 30 - 0.02% Coverage

March, 2001: Dozens of university students and professors were whipped and severally beaten by the security forces during a peaceful protest in Monrovia against the arrests of more than 40 students. Some were released shortly afterwards without charge, with visible marks of beatings, and at least seven women students were reported to have been raped repeatedly in detention. At least 17 were released over the next three weeks after widespread public protests. In April the university suspended student leaders; most of whom fled the country.

#### Reference 31 - 0.03% Coverage

During the period from 2001-2003, about 750-1000 civilians, comprising of pregnant women, children, of 12-18 years old, elderly people were taken from their hidden places (bushes) villages, Town and forest by LURD soldiers and forced to carry ammunition on their heads from Fassama to Mascenta and Bopolu. These civilians were not allowed to go further into Guinea, but some brave ones would escape. While many were killed whenever they complained about hunger or tireless while in enrooted. The content of consignment of goods and ammunition which weight about 50-75kg Another women and girls were used as domestic slaves to pound rice and cooked while other were sexual abused

#### Reference 32 - 0.02% Coverage

The late John Hilary Tubman was a top businessman and prominent citizen of Maryland County. All his Money and other properties were taken from him and was later killed by Jack the Rebel of the NPFL would escape. While many were killed wherever they complained about hunger or tireless while in enrooted. The content of consignment of goods and ammunition which weight about 50-75kg Another women and girls were used as domestic slaves to pound rice and cooked while other were sexual abused.

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#### Reference 35 - 0.04% Coverage

It is trite and banal to assert that war brings with it dastardly, carnage, wanton destruction of lives and properties. It is even common to accept that despite the prohibition of certain practices as war weapons – e.g starvation – it is not implausible for the human psychology to tolerate these occurrences as inevitable consequences of war. However, the species of crimes committed in the Liberian civil war – especially cannibalism (eating of human flesh by humans), disembowelment of pregnant women undoubtedly take the meaning of war crime/crime against humanity to another level and stretches the tolerance of mankind of war atrocities. According to Stephen Ellis, ,the Liberian conflict topped and surpassed all other wars in form and character, in intensity, in depravity, in savagery, in barbarism and in horror. Whilst the Liberian experience may find parallels in history, the description above points to barbarity in modern times which by all standards are repugnant to the human conscience.

#### Reference 36 - 0.03% Coverage

rockets on the overpopulated center of Monrovia killing scores of innocent citizens seeking shelter and refuge; MODEL massively looted from very poor people to render them depraved as their women and girls were raped. The AFL organized a death squad and killed several innocent civilians perceived as being ,against Doe' by beheading. Massacres since April 14, 1979 and burial of victims in mass graves became a commonplace characteristic of the conflict.

The impact of this devastation on women and children in socio-economic and psychological terms is beyond any one's imagination. Apart from family breakups and separations, deprivation and poverty; death and destruction, the family suffered the most as a consequence of the war and at the hands of its barbaric executioners.

#### Reference 37 - 0.02% Coverage

While men, women and children all experienced the violence and trauma of the war, women and girls were also targets of gender-based violence. Already vulnerable due to a patriarchal culture and discrimination that existed before the conflict, women were subjected to widespread sexual abuse during and after the fighting. Many of these acts were public and particularly brutal.

#### Reference 38 - 0.04% Coverage

Another characteristic of the violations were their indiscriminate nature. Though the violations were sometimes systematic, there were also many random and fatal acts of violence. No group of persons was spared from the violations; men, women, children and the elderly were deliberately targeted by all of the warring faction. They suffered a multiplicity of violations at the hands of their abusers and experienced the conflict as victims and perpetrators. The perpetrators included members of the Government army (the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)), and of armed opposition groups including the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO -K), ULIMO -J, Liberian Peace Council (LPC), Militia forces (GOL of Charles Taylor) and the Lofa Defense Force (LDF).

#### Reference 39 - 0.10% Coverage

##### 9.2. Women: Survivors and Peacemakers

Historically, women were generally excluded from participation in political life, as it was only until 1947, a full century after independence that women were accorded the right to vote. There is no mention anywhere in historical accounts of women participation in the political life of the colony, prior to 1947, except for their participation in the making of the Liberian flag at independence.

In gender terms the dichotomy between rural and urban Liberia are even more manifest in present day Liberia. For example, only 31 percent of women in Harper, located in southeastern Liberia and surrounding areas receive birth assistance from trained health professionals; in Monrovia 84 percent of such women received birth assistance from trained health professionals.

During the armed conflict, women and girls were by far more vulnerable to sexual assault and predation than men. Women exposure was due mainly to their daring to move about away from their homes to venture out for food

and succor for their families. The further away from their homes they went, the higher the risk of vulnerability. Many parents hid their young girls (and boys from conscriptions) from the fighters when they entered the town or village and forbid them, the children, from moving about without caution. More than half of victim's testimonies to the TRC alluded to women being vulnerable or victimized during the war in places other than their place of residence, having been displaced internally by the war. Suggesting, therefore that displaced women were more vulnerable to sexual assault than those who did not flee their homes. The TRC also noticed that women are significantly overrepresented among rape victims and all victims of sexual slavery and sexual violence, as might be expected. In particular, the proportion of rapes with female victims aged 15-19 represents more than five times the proportion of women aged 15-19 in the general population. However, we see relatively more male than female victims for sexual abuse. The definition of sexual abuse included stripping the victim naked and was employed by many perpetrator groups to humiliate the victim.

#### Reference 40 - 0.14% Coverage

Unfortunately, the data include very few reports of rapes for which the victim's age is known. Still, it is interesting to note that the majority of reported rapes for which the victim's age is known were committed against adolescent women, rather than against socially taboo categories such as older women or very young children. The distribution of all violations by age is roughly similar for males and females. Similarly, analysis of violations documented with the TRC with complete age and sex information suggests that all ages were equally at risk and that the generality of perpetrators' attack was at random, deliberate and systematic in the instigation of violence against the general armless population.

From the statistical data, women participation in the TRC process was impressive as over fifty percent of statements gathered during the statement-taking exercise are attributed to women. Women account for 28 percent of all violations while on the other hand men account for 47 percent. From these statistics, it is clear that as a class of victims, men comprise the larger proportion, although both men and women appeared to have been targeted in about equal proportions.

Forced displacement which accounts for the largest category of violations took a particularly heavy toll on women, many of whom, faced with the loss of their spouses, assumed leadership roles in their families. Given the difficulties and threats to life (increased mortality) that usually accompany forced migration, it can be assumed, in the absence of reliable statistical information, that elderly women and very young children especially girls, were at great risk and might have suffered disproportionately as compared to males.

Many found themselves in displaced or refugee camps with little or no coping skills to deal with the harsh realities of their new environment. Already victimized by their displacement some, especially young girls, in desperation turned to prostitution including the exchange of relief food for sex. As the statistics show, all factions routinely targeted women simply on account of their gender. This is strongly reflected in the level of sexual violence perpetrated against women. For example, women account for 63 percent of all cases of rape reported to the TRC, as compared to only 6 percent for men. It can be concluded thus that women were singled out for abuse simply on account of their gender. For instance, the proportion of rape with female victims aged 15-19 represents more than five times the proportion of women 15-19 in the general population.

Finally, it is important to note that aside from these reported cases of violence directed against women, the data does not account for the marginalization; exclusion and outright denial of opportunities for self actualization women have, for over a century, endured in Liberia. These age old inequalities find expression in current statistics reflecting the status of women. For example, according to the 2007 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey, HIV prevalence is higher among women than men

#### Reference 41 - 0.04% Coverage

Violations against young boys in these age categories were virtually nil showing again that women including girls were the main targets of sexual violence. This situation is further amplified by the statistics showing that girls age 15-19 were heavily targeted and girls age 10-14 to a lesser degree. Even girls age 5- 9 were the victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence. But beyond what the statistics reveal, children were subjected to other forms of abuse that were not captured in the data gathering process. For example, children were often forced to watch while atrocities, including rape, were being committed against their siblings, parents and elders. In other cases they were forced to eat human flesh and to take drugs and other hallucinating substances. Under the influence of such mind altering substances they often committed some of the worst atrocities recorded/witnessed during the conflict.

#### Reference 42 - 0.06% Coverage

As a class of victims, men account for 47 percent of all violations reported to the TRC, notwithstanding the fact that men constituted the preponderant majority of the fighting forces on all sides. As the data shows, men are over represented among victims of killing, assault, torture, forced labor and forced recruitment. Such data explains why women, despite being ready targets of sexual violence found themselves foraging for food for their families while men dared not venture out for fear of being killed. It can be said that all the factions, without exception, treated men with ingrained hostility and suspicion.

The age-targeting suggested by these graphs is that men of an increasingly older age were at greater risk for killing and looting violations than younger men. This is indicated by the relatively larger bars at the top compared to the bars on the bottom of the graphs for killing and looting. In contrast, the larger bars on the bottom of the graph for forced recruitment suggest that young men, between the ages of 15-19 in particular, were at greater risk for this violation. A possible interpretation of the killing and forced recruitment graphs is that perpetrators avoided young people for killing, targeting them instead for forced recruitment. As mentioned above, graphs for rape, sexual slavery and sexual violence suggest that young women were at significantly greater risk of suffering these violations.

#### Reference 43 - 0.03% Coverage

Overall, we do not observe high levels of risk for elderly female victims in the violation categories studied by the TRC in statements except for in the age category of 70-74 for killing. We also see a bump in the relative risk for women between the ages of 65-69 for rape violations, though relatively small for the ages 65-69. Even though the actual number of rape violations for female victims between the ages of 65-69 is relatively small, however, when adjusted for the very small proportion this age-sex group makes up the population, we see that women in this age category faced a relatively high risk for suffering rape compared to other age-sex categories with the exception of much younger women.

#### Reference 44 - 0.04% Coverage

In particular, the health of girls has been severely affected by the high incidence of sexual and gender-based violence. Sexual abuse, rape, multiple rape, and gang rape, and sexual slavery caused serious harm to girls' reproductive systems and have left many of them with chronic problems from obstetric fistula and sexually transmitted diseases or even infected with HIV. It is extremely worrying that the HIV infection rate among adolescent mothers is three times the average infection rate for the country. There is insufficient access to reproductive health care, HIV prevention, testing, and treatment, in particular in rural areas. Special outreach and educational programs on reproductive health and family planning are limited, although approximately half of all Liberian women give birth before they reach the age of 18.

#### Reference 45 - 0.01% Coverage

Murder, dismemberment of pregnant women

#### Reference 46 - 0.10% Coverage

Additional Recommendations to Address the Needs of Women and Girls and to Advance Gender Equality in Liberia  
This report has shown that Liberia's 14 year civil war, buttressed by over a century of violence, oppression and inequality did not spare women and girls from being used, abused, killed, maimed, mutilated, tortured, raped, gang raped, abducted, forced into sexual slavery and drugged. Their houses, property and possessions were destroyed and looted, they were internally displaced and turned into refugees and suffered the loss of their breadwinners and livelihoods. This report therefore finds that women and girls were violated in every category of violations and that the ensuing harms, impact and consequences of these violations extended far beyond their direct physical experience.

This report determines that through the investigations of the TRC, many of the causes and origins of violence against women during wartime are rooted in the socio-cultural, traditional and political history of Liberia. It is also firmly linked to the low socio-political status of women, with the added perception of male superiority. This rendered women and girls extremely vulnerable to exploitation and violence during both war and peace. It has also

taken into account the multiplicity and complexity of women's roles in the armed conflict, recognizing that women took on the added roles of perpetrator, collaborator as well as peacemaker and mediator. These recommendations are therefore based on the need to not only address the direct consequences of the conflict in Liberia but also the root causes and origins of the violations that women continue to experience in the aftermath of the conflict. Women continue to experience the secondary harms from the increase in single parenting, unwanted pregnancies, health problems from sexually transmitted diseases, increasing poverty, prostitution, discrimination and increased responsibility due to the loss of breadwinners, livelihoods and the adoption of orphans. These recommendations are informed by the recommendations elicited from women throughout the lifespan of the TRC, through all the projects and activities aimed at engaging women and girls in Liberia from its inception through June 2009.

## Incidents

### References or discussions of violent incidents

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Liberia.TRC\_Report-FULL> - § 19 references coded [0.28% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

July 29, 1990: Massacre of over 500 men, women and children mainly of Gio and Mano ethnicity seeking refuge at the St. Peters Lutheran Church in Monrovia as reprisal for the Bakedu Massacre.

#### Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

June, 1995: UNICEF workers in Buchanan reported that they had registered 652 cases of women who had been raped, mostly by members of the warring factions, within a period less than 6 months.

#### Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

May, 1990: At least 30 Gio and Mano men, women and children were abducted by government soldiers from a UN compound where hundreds were seeking protection. They were then apparently executed extra judicially by the AFL.

#### Reference 4 - 0.02% Coverage

October 23, 1992: Six NPFL soldiers entered the nuns' convent in the suburb of Gardnersville, killed three other American nuns and a Lebanese businessman, and abducted the businessman's Liberian wife, two other Liberian women with their four children, and four Liberian novices. Those abducted were apparently later released. NPRAG officials denied that NPFL forces were responsible.

#### Reference 5 - 0.02% Coverage

September, 1993: A UN inquiry found that the AFL had been responsible for the extra judicial executions of nearly 600 unarmed civilians- mostly women, children and elderly people- at displaced people's camps near Harbel in June. This report by the WACCO Commission is disputed by findings of the TRC to the effect that NPFL committed the atrocities.

#### Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

June, 1994: Mandingo ULIMO fighters reportedly killed at least four civilians and took women hostage for money when they burned and looted villages in the Tienne area.

#### Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

September, 1994: NPFL fighters tied up at least 20 men, women and children and threw them into the St. John River at Bahla Bridge.

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

April, 1995: UNICEF representatives reported a massacre in Yourcee, a village near Buchanan. They stated that at least 62 people, including women and children, had

Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

April, 1998: The discovery of a mass grave in Zorzor, Lofa County. The NPFL has been implicated. The victims, including pregnant women, were bound at the hands and legs before being buried alive in shallow graves.

Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

June 9, 2002: The massacre of 110 young men and women in Bopolu, Gbarpolu County by LURD combatant Oforie Diah (a.k.a Iron Jacket). The victims were accused of being GOL sympathizers.

Reference 11 - 0.02% Coverage

March, 1999: Members of the military, searching for a missing man, detained and beat elders in the village of Dambala, Grand Cape Mount County. Villagers complained that the soldiers had raped several women and had looted money and goods. The alleged violations followed several hours of shooting in the village. Military authorities admitted that looting had occurred but denied the allegations of violence and rape.

Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

May, 2002: As thousands of civilians fled fighting around Gbarnga as many as 20 women reported that they had been raped by security forces. They included a 19 year old raped by four government militia. Another woman was abducted, held for two days and reportedly raped by an ATU member.

Reference 13 - 0.01% Coverage

August, 2002: Three women fleeing to Guinea were abducted by LURD combatants between Kotolahun and Honyahun. They were forced to carry loads and then raped. Those responsible were subsequently beaten by their commanders.

Reference 14 - 0.02% Coverage

November, 2003: Persistent reports of killings, beatings, abduction and rape by MODEL forces were received. A 60-year-old man, narrated to Amnesty International how MODEL forces attacked Graie on November 1, 2003 burning most of the houses in Graie, Nimba county. Tied some people, beat them with cutlasses and stripped people- both men and women.

Reference 15 - 0.02% Coverage

March, 2001: Dozens of university students and professors were whipped and severally beaten by the security forces during a peaceful protest in Monrovia against the arrests of more than 40 students. Some were released shortly afterwards without charge, with visible marks of beatings, and at least seven women students were reported to have been raped repeatedly in detention. At least 17 were released over the next three weeks after widespread public protests. In April the university suspended student leaders; most of whom fled the country.

Reference 16 - 0.03% Coverage

During the period from 2001-2003, about 750-1000 civilians, comprising of pregnant women, children, of 12-18 years old, elderly people were taken from their hidden places (bushes) villages, Town and forest by LURD soldiers



and forced to carry ammunition on their heads from Fassama to Mascenta and Bopolu. These civilians were not allowed to go further into Guinea, but some brave ones would escape. While many were killed whenever they complained about hunger or tireless while in enrooted. The content of consignment of goods and ammunition which weight about 50-75kg Another women and girls were used as domestic slaves to pound rice and cooked while other were sexual abused

#### Reference 17 - 0.02% Coverage

The late John Hilary Tubman was a top businessman and prominent citizen of Maryland County. All his Money and other properties were taken from him and was later killed by Jack the Rebel of the NPFL would escape. While many were killed wherever they complained about hunger or tireless while in enrooted. The content of consignment of goods and ammunition which weight about 50-75kg Another women and girls were used as domestic slaves to pound rice and cooked while other were sexual abused.

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