

LESSON
4.

SIERRA LEONE: CIVIL WAR

LESSON DESCRIPTION

The lesson profiles Sierra Leone and describes the political situation prior to the outbreak of civil war in 1991. Using a timeline, students will learn the details of the civil war as well as learning about the victims of the war, what conflict diamonds are and how Sierra Leone dealt with its troubled past.

LESSON INTENTIONS

1. Explain the reasons why Sierra Leone descended into civil war in 1991
2. Summarise how the conflict unfolded and describe the effects on Sierra Leone
3. Demonstrate objectives 1 & 2 through digital media

LESSON OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to describe how the civil war started, how it unfolded and how it came to an end.
- Students will be able to highlight and explain the issues that had an impact on Sierra Leone during and after the civil war.
- Employ ICT skills to express an understanding of the topic.

HANDOUTS AND GUIDES

- Lesson 4 Key Information
- Comic Creation Storyboard
- Video Editing Storyboard

DIGITAL

- Suggested Additional Resources

SOFTWARE

- Comic Creation Software e.g. Comic Life
- Video Editing Software e.g. Movie Maker

HARDWARE

- Whiteboard
- PCs / Laptops



MODULE 6. INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

4: SIERRA LEONE: CIVIL WAR



ACTIVITY	LEARNING OUTCOMES
<p>Starter - Play Suggested Additional Resource 2 or 3 from the Key Information which will provide students with an overview of the civil war from the point of view of a child soldier.</p>	<p>On viewing the imagery students will get an insight into the reality of war at the front and the types of activities that men faced on a daily basis.</p>
<p>Using the Key Information, teachers will have a choice of activities to engage students.</p> <p>Teachers may choose to split the class into groups and ask students to use the discussion points to discuss some aspects of the Key Information. Students will then share their discussions with the rest of the class.</p> <p>Alternatively, teachers may want to use the Questions/Tasks as group discussion questions or to test individual knowledge.</p> <p>The Alternate Task allows students to work in groups to consider the difficulties that Sierra Leone faced throughout its political history and civil war. Students will have a limited time to explain what they would implement as 'leader' of Sierra Leone before another student 'takes over' responsibility. The students will then reflect on the difficulty of addressing so many problems in such a short space of time.</p> <p><i>*If possible, allow students to research the topic on the internet – suggested additional resources/ search engine.</i></p>	<p>The Key Information is designed to cover the information within the topic and meet the learning objectives.</p> <p>The discussion questions on the Key Information are designed to meet the learning objectives through interaction and Q&A.</p> <p>The questions on the Key Information are designed to meet the learning objectives through the students understanding of the information.</p> <p>The various activities should allow the students to learn while they interact. The activities will also serve to reinforce knowledge and encourage discussion.</p>
<p>Plenary - Play Suggested Additional Resource 1 from the Key Information which offers a brief insight into how the education system in Sierra Leone has revived itself after the war.</p>	<p>The video clip will offer students a glimpse of how the civil war affected Sierra Leone's education system and how it has struggled to revive itself.</p>

KEY
INFORMATION
4.

SIERRA LEONE: CIVIL WAR



Freetown,
capital of
Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is a country in West Africa with a population of roughly 6 million people. Sierra Leone is made up of a number of ethnic groups (the two largest being the Temne and the Mende) and is mainly a Muslim country.

Sierra Leone is a country that is rich in natural minerals (used to produce aluminium, titanium and gold) and diamonds. Throughout the years, the government mismanaged these natural resources which became a contributing factor to the Sierra Leone Civil War (1991-2002).

Since the 15th century Sierra Leone had been a trading post for Portuguese, French and Dutch traders. Sierra Leone became a British colony in the late 18th century before becoming an independent nation in 1961.

SIERRA LEONE'S 'RESOURCE CURSE'

The resource curse refers to countries that have a large quantity of natural resources (e.g. minerals, fuels, gems) but have a poor economy. There can be many reasons for this but in Sierra Leone's case it was widely believed that this was due to mismanagement and corruption within the government.



The flag of Sierra Leone

WHAT IS A COUP D'ÉTAT?

A coup d'état is the sudden and illegal takeover of a government. Coups d'état would become a feature of the Sierra Leone civil war.

INDEPENDENCE AND CORRUPTION

On 27th April 1961 Sierra Leone celebrated independence from British colonial rule. This was a process which began in 1951 and which was led and guided by Sir Milton Margai, leader of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). Margai oversaw this process of decolonisation and as a result, became Prime Minister in 1958. Admired and respected, Margai was again chosen as Prime Minister in the country's first general election in May 1962.

After the unexpected death of Margai in 1964, Sierra Leone's economy deteriorated and its society descended into poverty. This was because of the mismanagement of the country's natural resources and corrupt government officials by a succession of leaders.

LEADER: SIR ALBERT MARGAI

YEAR:
1964-67

REASON FOR LEAVING:
VOTED OUT

- Dismissed government officials who were a threat to his administration.
- Opposed popular policies put in place by the previous Prime Minister.
- Attempted to establish a single-party state.
- After rioting broke out in opposition to Margai's policies and under accusations of corruption, he called for elections.

A number of coups took place 1967-68. Siaka Stevens was voted Prime Minister in 1967 and was overthrown in a military coup by those loyal to Sir Albert Margai. There were a further two coups before Stevens was reinstated as PM in 1968.

LEADER: SIAKA STEVENS

YEAR:
1968-85

REASON FOR LEAVING: RETIRED
FROM OFFICE

- After being restored to office, Stevens tightened his grip on power by executing or exiling any possible threats to his government.
- Stevens was widely accused of corruption and fixing election results to stay in power.
- During his time in office, Stevens and his supporters utilised the natural resources of the country to their own gain resulting in the decline of the economy.
- The economy was so poor that it could not sufficiently run the country with widespread poverty and an almost non-existent education system.
- Turned Sierra Leone into a one-party state and a Republic, declaring himself President.

LEADER: JOSEPH MOMOH

YEAR:
1985-91

REASON FOR LEAVING: OVERTHROWN
IN COUP D'ÉTAT BY MEMBERS OF THE
SIERRA LEONE ARMY

- Chosen to be President by the ruling All People's Congress (APC) and Stevens.
- Corruption from the previous administration continued and the economy deteriorated
- The currency decreased in value
- Could not afford to import gas and oil
- The country went without electricity for months at a time
- Attempted to reform the government from a one-party to a multi-party state but with the country already gripped in civil war, these reforms never happened

Who were the Revolutionary United Front?

Created in 1991 by Foday Sankoh with the help of Charles Taylor, a revolutionary from Liberia. With its promise of free education and health care and the sharing of profits from diamond mining and its goal to change the corrupt government, the RUF was initially popular with Sierra Leoneans.



Image courtesy of Travis Lupton via flickr

A victim of the Civil War



A School destroyed by the war

CIVIL WAR ERUPTS

On the 23rd March 1991 the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) began to attack villages in the Eastern Province of Sierra Leone. The intention of the RUF was to take control of the countries' diamond mines and overthrow the current government. President Momoh sent the Sierra Leone Army to defend and take back areas controlled by the RUF but a lack of resources, supplies and support for the army led to a series of events that would entrench Sierra Leone in poverty and warfare for the next 11 years.

VICTIMS AND CHILD SOLDIERS

By the end of the conflict it was estimated that 50,000 people had been killed. Apart from the mass casualties inflicted at the hands of government troops and the rebel forces, the civilian population of Sierra Leone had to endure terrible atrocities. Instances of kidnapping, slavery, forced labour, shootings, mutilation, amputation and rape were commonplace in Sierra Leone during the war.

A key feature of the civil war was the use of child soldiers by both pro-government forces and the RUF. Children were often forcibly recruited to take part in the fighting and were often exposed to drugs and alcohol as a means to making them more open to commit atrocities. Many of these children were survivors of village attacks, displaced from their homes and orphans, whose families had been killed by the fighting.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

In the aftermath of the civil war, a Truth and Reconciliation Committee and a UN-sponsored war crimes tribunal (the Special Court for Sierra Leone) were established. The purpose of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee was to provide a forum for victims and aggressors during the conflict to tell their stories and help the healing process. The purpose of the Special Court for Sierra Leone was to seek justice for those people that suffered as a result of the brutality during the civil war by putting on trial those who were responsible for the atrocities during the fighting.

Blood Diamonds

Blood diamonds or conflict diamonds, refers to diamonds that are mined and sold to finance the war effort of an army or group. During the civil war in Sierra Leone the RUF captured key areas which were rich in diamond production. The RUF enslaved people to mine diamonds, which they then used to buy weapons to continue their fight.



MODULE 6. INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

4: SIERRA LEONE: CIVIL WAR

Members
of the Sierra
Leone Army



TIMELINE OF EVENTS DURING THE CIVIL WAR

1991

March 1991: The **Revolutionary United Front (RUF)** backed by the **National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)** begin to attack the Kailahun District.

16th January 1996: **Strasser** is removed from office in a coup d'état by fellow **NPRC** soldiers. The reason for the coup was that **Strasser's** fellow soldiers believed that he would not transfer power to a civilian government. **Brig. Gen. Julius Maada Bio** – leader of the coup – briefly assumed control of the government whilst elections were planned.

29th March 1996: **Ahmah Tejan Kabbah** of the **Sierra Leone People's Party** takes Presidential office after winning the election.

May 1997: With the failure of the Abidjan Agreement to be implemented, Sierra Leone experienced another coup d'état. Annoyed the government had failed to implement the agreement, **Maj. Johnny Paul Koroma** formed the **Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)** – which included members of the RUF – and seized power. The **AFRC** faced opposition both internally and internationally – from forces loyal to the exiled **Kabbah** and from the United Nations Security Council.

July 1999: The Lomé Agreement is signed. The agreement proposed a power sharing plan that included the rebels having a place in the government and required **AFRC/RUF** forces to surrender their weapons.

2001: Throughout the year, **United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)** worked to implement a peace based on the Lomé Agreement. **UNAMSIL** successfully disarmed many **RUF** rebels (and pro-government militia) and began to secure previously **RUF** held territory.

2002

29th April 1992: **Momoh** is removed from the Presidency in a coup d'état by disgruntled members of the **Sierra Leone Army (SLA)** – poorly supplied on the front lines in their fight with the RUF – and the **National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC)** is established. The coup was led by **Capt. Valentine Strasser** who became Head of State. During **Strasser's** time as Head of State, the civil war escalated. The **RUF** increased its territory – much of the diamond rich Eastern Province. These diamond mines were important as they were used to fund the **RUF's** war.

Despite their captured resources, the **SLA** and **Executive Outcomes (EO)** – a private military firm – drove the **RUF** out of the Kono diamond producing areas and to the Sierra Leone borders.

November 1996: A peace agreement, known as the Abidjan Agreement – is reached between **Kabbah** and RUF leader **Foday Sankoh**.

February 1998: The **AFRC** are overthrown by the **Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG)** with help from the international community. **Kabbah's** government was restored in March. **ECOMOG** and government forces continued to fight rebel forces.

May 2000: Despite the peace agreement, divisions amongst the rebel **AFRC/RUF** forces resulted in continued fighting culminating in a fierce battle around the country's capital Freetown. With the help of British troops, **Sankoh** – leader of the **RUF** – was arrested and the rebels were driven away from the capital.

January 2002: The civil war is declared over. It was estimated that 50,000 people were killed during the conflict and almost 2 million were displaced as well as hundreds of thousands affected by the violence.

PERSPECTIVES

1. "Shooting became just like drinking a glass of water"

Ex-child soldier, Ishmael Beath, from an interview with CNN, October 9th 2012

2 "The conflict is not about ideology, tribal, or regional differences. It has nothing to do with the so-called problems of marginalized youths or as some political commentators have characterized it, an uprising by rural poor against the urban elite. The root of the conflict is and remains diamonds. The conflict in Sierra Leone is not a civil war, but a rebel war based on brutality, supported by regional, sub-regional, and international surrogates, and more importantly, financed by the illicit trade in Sierra Leone's diamonds."

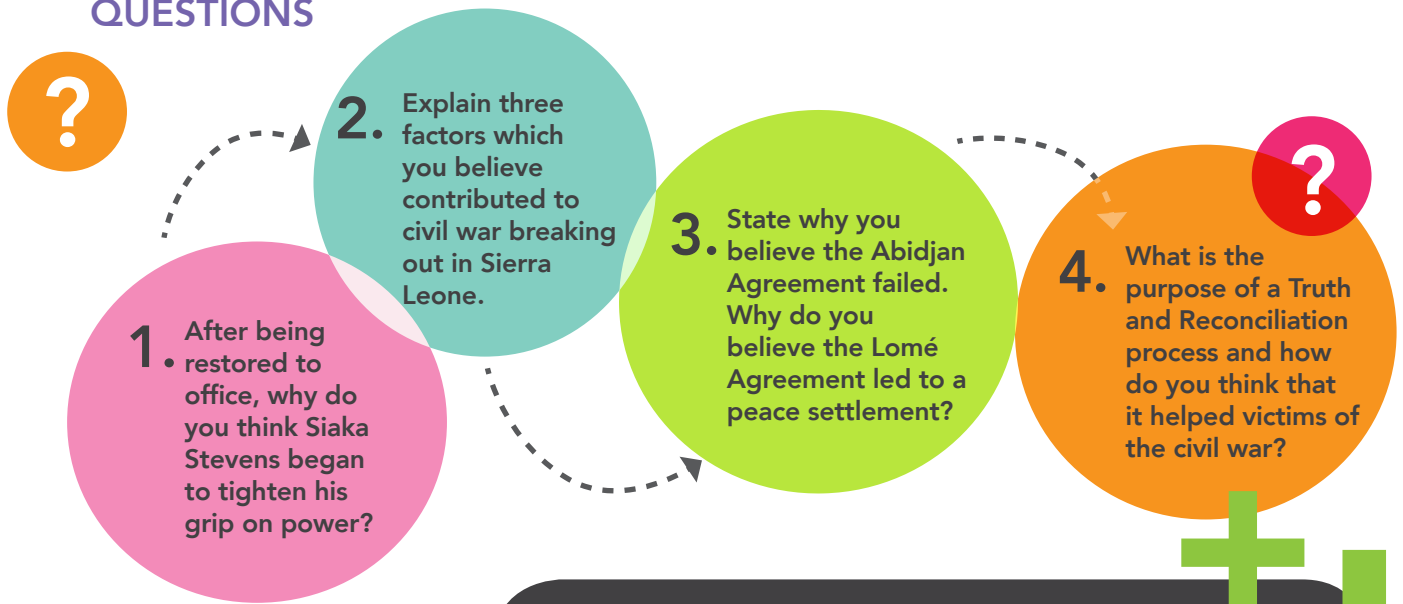
Ibrahim M. Kamara, Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the U.N., 5th July 2000

3. "...diamonds that originate from areas controlled by forces or factions opposed to legitimate and internationally recognized governments, and are used to fund military action in opposition to those governments, or in contravention of the decisions of the Security Council."

The definition of a conflict diamond according to the U.N.



QUESTIONS



EXTENSION ACTIVITY:

Analysing the timeline of the conflict, describe what you believe was the key turning point in the war which set Sierra Leone on the road to a peace settlement.

TASK 1

In pairs, perform research into 'Conflict Diamonds' (also known as 'Blood Diamonds').

- 1) Define what a conflict diamond is and provide three examples (one of these must be Sierra Leone) describing how conflict diamonds have contributed to conflicts around the world.
- 2) How did the international community respond to these conflicts? In particular, explain what the 'Kimberley Process' was.

If possible, display your answer in the form of an interactive presentation using video links and images to illustrate your point.

TASK 2

In pairs, perform research on the Presidencies of Siaka Stevens and Joseph Momoh.

- 1) How did their reigns contribute to the social problems in Sierra Leone?
- 2) How did these social problems contribute to the outbreak of the civil war?

When complete, compare your answers with the pair sitting next to you. Did you have similar answers? What was different?



ALTERNATE TASK

- Throughout the course of Sierra Leone's troubled history, coup d'états and government corruption became a common feature. Each group or leader that took control of the government believed that they were doing so in the best interests of Sierra Leone.
- In groups of four, each person will have one minute to 'take control' of Sierra Leone and answer the following questions...
 - What personal qualities do you think will make you a good leader?
 - How will you use the rich reserve of resources – especially diamonds - to improve the country? What will you focus on – health? Education? Poverty?
 - Which form of government is best for running the country – one party rule or a multi party government? Why?
 - How are you going to keep the multiple ethnic groups of the country involved and happy (there are approximately 16 ethnic groups across 14 districts)?
 - How are you going to deal with possible threats to your authority?
- After all four in the group have answered the questions discuss the following points:
 - Did you have enough time to address all the questions?
 - How did you feel when another person took command?
 - Where their answers different than yours?
 - How do you think coup d'états during the civil war contributed to Sierra Leone being unstable?

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



- 1) http://www.unicef.org/mdg/sierraleone_58237.html - Reviving education in the aftermath of Sierra Leone's civil war



- 2) <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/sierraleone/10450619/The-women-who-bear-the-scars-of-Sierra-Leones-civil-war.html> - The women who bear the scars of Sierra Leone's civil war



- 3) <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/10/08/world/africa/ishmael-beah-child-soldier/> - Ishmael Beah, ex child soldier



- 4) <http://scsl-legacy.ictj.org/timeline-scs> - Timeline of the Special Court for Sierra Leone



- 5) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14094194> - Sierra Leone Profile



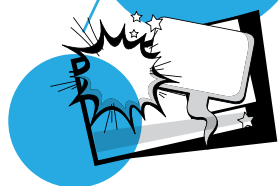
- 6) http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/programmes/global_crime_report/investigation/soldiers1.shtml - The child soldiers of Sierra Leone



- 7) <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/543356/Sierra-Leone/274792/Civil-war> - The Sierra Leone Civil War



COMIC
CREATION
TASK



DIGITAL TASKS

COMIC CREATION TASK

TASK DESCRIPTION

In pairs, students will create a comic of at least three pages which explains how the civil war began, how it unfolded and how it ended. Students will research the topics by reading the Key Information and if possible, performing extra research on the internet. (Alternatively, images and information may be sourced by the teacher prior to the lesson).

PLAN

Images and information will be sourced from the internet and designed in the form of a storyboard.

- Students will be supplied with search terms by the teacher and source appropriate images and text from the internet – ask students to consider the reliability and objectivity of the information they find.
- Students will identify and select images/text to use and save them appropriately in a dedicated folder with a meaningful filename.
- Students will keep an account of the sites they have visited in a saved document.
- Students will use the images and information they have sourced and design their comic on a storyboard.

DO

Students will use images and speech bubbles/caption boxes to communicate the reasons why the Civil War started, how it unfolded and how it ended. Students will use at least 6 images that they have sourced. Students will complete their piece of work by exporting it in a suitable file format (e.g. JPEG).

- Encourage students to consider the size and style of fonts, the size and cropping of images, the colours used and the tools available to them within the software package.
- Remind students to save their work in a dedicated folder with an appropriate filename.

REVIEW

Give students the opportunity to view each other's work. This may be done by displaying the best work on the whiteboard or students may circulate the room viewing others work.

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EXTENSION TASK

Students will create one extra page in their comics which describes how Sierra Leone dealt with the issues created by the civil war.



DIGITAL TASKS

IMAGE MAKING TASK



IMAGE MAKING TASK

TASK DESCRIPTION

Students will use Image Editing Software (e.g. GIMP) to manipulate an image to communicate some facts about the Sierra Leone Civil War.

Students will research suitable images. Choosing 1 image, students will edit it and add text to reflect some facts regarding the war e.g. economic costs, human costs, effects on society, etc....

PLAN

Images and information will be sourced from the internet and designed in the form of a sketch.

- Students will be supplied with search terms by the teacher and source appropriate images and text from the internet – ask students to consider the reliability and objectivity of the information they find. Advise students that it is best to try and source medium/large images.
- Students will identify and select images/text to use and save them appropriately in a dedicated folder with a meaningful filename.
- Students will keep an account of the sites they have visited in a saved document.

DO

Students will import their sourced image into the software and use the colour/filter tools to add an effect to the image. Some students may use these tools in conjunction with the selection tools to highlight areas of the image. Students will then insert the quote/information they sourced by using the text tool. Students will complete their piece of work by exporting it in a suitable file format (e.g. JPEG).

- Encourage students to consider the size and style of fonts, the colour/filter style and the tools available to them within the software package.
- Remind students to save their work in a dedicated folder with an appropriate filename.

REVIEW

Give students the opportunity to view each other's work. This may be done by displaying the best work on the whiteboard or students may circulate the room viewing others work.

Taking other students feedback into account, ask students to justify their choices and decisions, including any difficulties they encountered in the creation of their image. This may be completed in the form of a saved document.