

Land and Conflict in Sierra Leone:

A Rapid Desk-Based
Study



Patricia Sturgess and Christopher Flower

December, 2013



**EVIDENCE
ON DEMAND**

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT
INFRASTRUCTURE | LIVELIHOODS



This report has been produced for Evidence on Demand with the assistance of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) contracted through the Climate, Environment, Infrastructure and Livelihoods Professional Evidence and Applied Knowledge Services (CEIL PEAKS) programme, jointly managed by HTSPE Limited and IMC Worldwide Limited.

The views expressed in the report are entirely those of the author and do not necessarily represent DFID's own views or policies, or those of Evidence on Demand. Comments and discussion on items related to content and opinion should be addressed to the author, via enquiries@evidenceondemand.org

Your feedback helps us ensure the quality and usefulness of all knowledge products. Please email enquiries@evidenceondemand.org and let us know whether or not you have found this material useful; in what ways it has helped build your knowledge base and informed your work; or how it could be improved.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.12774/eod_hd.dec2013.sturgess_flower



Contents

- Report Summary ii
- SECTION 1 1
- Introduction 1
- Purpose of the review..... 1
- Methodology..... 1
- Caveats 1
- Working definition of conflict..... 2
- Background on land and conflict in Sierra Leone 2
- SECTION 2 3
- Overview of land rights, ownership and use (Western Area and provinces) 3
- Land tenure system..... 3
- Land administration 3
- Land legislation and Government of Sierra Leone policies 4
- Power dynamics..... 4
- Paramount Chiefs..... 5
- Excluded groups..... 5
- Youth..... 6
- Women..... 6
- Non-natives 7
- Food security and agriculture 7
- Mining and land use 8
- SECTION 3 9
- Land conflicts in Sierra Leone 9
- Land and the civil war..... 9
- Land and conflict in post-war Sierra Leone 9
- Foreign direct investment (FDI) and ‘land grabbing’ 9
- Impacts of large-scale land investments 10
- Land investments as a potential and actual driver of conflict 11
- Responsible investment and government guidelines 12
- Resolution 13
- Recommendations 13
- Conclusion 14
- Selected annotated bibliography 16
- Full reference list..... 23



Report Summary

This report presents the results of a rapid desk-based review of academic and grey literature on land issues in Sierra Leone, with a particular focus on literature from 2002 onwards. The review explored land ownership and rights in both the Western Area and the other provinces and the concept of land as an actual and potential driver of conflict (both violent and non-violent).

While inequitable land access is believed to have been a driver of the civil war, there is a lack of recent academic literature that connects land issues to existing conflict. However, grey literature raises fears that land issues continue to be a simmering source of conflict. Academic research from 2012 also suggests that investment projects have the potential to reinforce existing inequalities and could stir resentment.

There is broad agreement in the literature that the present land tenure system and administration need to be reformed in order to address both land access issues and labour mobility. Despite the Government of Sierra Leone's stated policies and legislation, women still have limited opportunities to own land and land reform has made slow progress. Although there is no firm data on the incidence of land disputes through courts, they are believed to be on the rise. Women and outsiders are effectively excluded from access to justice through the customary court system.

Academic literature suggests that power dynamics have changed in rural areas since the war, but Paramount Chiefs and elders of landowning family lineages still hold more power over local land allocation than locally elected councils. Chiefs have traditionally controlled access to land by individuals of lower social status such as outsiders, women and young men. There is some indication that inter-generational relations and relations between weaker groups and chiefs have improved in recent years.

Among anecdotal sources, there is a significant perception of 'land grabbing' by foreign companies involved in large bio-fuel and other projects, which cannot be easily verified due to lack of accurate land use records or research. Anecdotally, NGOs, civil society and human rights groups have documented outbreaks of violence in response to such projects.

Further evidence is required to draw firm conclusions on both foreign and domestic investment in terms of their impact on access to land and their role in sparking land disputes or violent conflict. NGOs are calling for greater transparency in land deals and informed consent, which could help to mitigate the risk of conflict.

Structure of the paper

Following an introduction, this paper is divided into three sections:

Section 1 provides an overview of land issues in Sierra Leone, exploring the land tenure and administration system, power dynamics, excluded groups and relevance to mining operations, agriculture and food security.

Section 2 looks at land issues prior to and after the war, focuses on the potential impact of large scale investment projects, provides a case study and considers resolution of conflict through the courts and responsible investment.

Section 3 summarises the main findings and implications of the review.



SECTION 1

Introduction

Purpose of the review

This paper is a desk-based study of land rights and conflict in Sierra Leone. The purpose of the study was to inform DFID's Country Poverty Reduction Diagnosis and to assist DFID in prioritising its programme interventions for the next Sierra Leone Operational Plan. Through a rapid literature review, the authors of this study sought to analyse the key land rights issues in Sierra Leone and, more specifically, land as an actual and potential driver of conflict. The study focused on the following questions:

- What does the existing literature tell us about land rights (ownership and use) in both the Western Area and the provinces in Sierra Leone?
- What kinds of land conflicts (that have occurred in the last 7 years) have been most frequently cited in research and grey literature?
- How have land conflicts been resolved / how are they currently being resolved in Sierra Leone?

Methodology

To source relevant information, the authors conducted tailored searches on Internet search engines and academic journals (with full access through the British Library), and also explored donor and NGO reports, and repositories of international development institutes and think-tanks. The authors checked bibliographies and reference lists from academic papers to find other sources. Additionally, the authors identified and directly contacted an academic who has undertaken relevant field research in Sierra Leone in 2012, to gain access to working papers that are pending publication.

Caveats

This is a succinct and rapid study and does not purport to provide a comprehensive or in-depth analysis of all academic and grey literature on land and conflict in Sierra Leone. Rather, it is intended to highlight major themes and to act as a signpost for further reading and analysis. The annotated bibliography provides a summary for each piece of key literature used in this study and a description of the type of evidence. The authors have focused on post-civil war literature and information published after 2002. Given that much of the literature refers to rural areas in Sierra Leone rather than Freetown and the Western Area, this study reflects that emphasis. Finally, while this study has attempted to refer to peer-reviewed articles that have been published in journals, in the course of the research it quickly became apparent that there was a lack of rigorous, strictly academic literature on the topic of land and recent conflict in Sierra Leone. We have therefore included a lot of grey literature, including NGO and news reports which may draw on anecdotal information rather than evidence in their assertions. While the quality and motivation of such grey literature may be unknown, it still provides an insight into current perceptions of the issues at stake.



Working definition of conflict

For the purpose of this study, the term conflict refers to incompatible or competing interests between two or more individuals or groups. 'Conflict' is not used synonymously with 'violence' since it is possible to resolve competing interests peacefully (Haider, 2012).

Background on land and conflict in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone's civil war is believed to have been partly fuelled by inequitable access to land and unequal power relations (Richards et al., 2004) as well as conflict over minerals. A scoping report for the UNDP (Moyo and Foray, 2009) has warned that urbanisation, foreign and domestic investment, mining and property development are excluding the poor from land access and this is a potential source of instability in the future. The International Growth Centre has also claimed that reforming the customary land tenure system would greatly improve Sierra Leone's potential for growth in agriculture and industry (Johnson, 2011).



SECTION 2

Overview of land rights, ownership and use (Western Area and provinces)

Land tenure system

Both academic literature and grey literature refer to a dualistic or **pluralistic system of land ownership** in Sierra Leone that is a legacy of the colonial era (Williams and Oredola-Davies, 2006; Unruh and Turray, 2006; Njoh and Akiwumi, 2012). A freehold system operates in the Western Area (including Freetown), which is based on archaic British law, while land in the rest of the country is governed by customary law. However, there are **multiple forms of customary law** and in practice, there is an overlap between statutory and customary law (Williams and Oredola-Davies, 2006). For example, statutory law allows non-natives to acquire leaseholds in the provinces outside of the Western Area, although this is often subject to the consent of local chiefdoms and local councils. **Communal land is largely family-owned** (83%) in all districts outside of the Western Area (ActionAid, 2013a).

In their EU/DFID scoping study, Williams and Oredola-Davies (2006) claimed that widespread confusion over land rights was having an impact on transaction costs and leading to insecurity and corruption among land officials. There is a **poor history of leasing in rural areas due to landowning families' fear of losing their land** (Unruh and Turray, 2006) and with large-scale leasing considered to be insecure, this poses a constraint on future investment (Moyo and Foray, 2009). While there is consensus among the authors of the need to reform the tenure system, some authors (e.g. Unruh and Turray, 2006) warn that **attempts to impose freehold tenure in rural areas could meet opposition** and resistance. The concept of selling land in rural Sierra Leone is very different to Western notions involving permanent and exclusive transfer, and is closely linked to the idea that land cannot be permanently alienated from a lineage (Unruh, 2008).

Land administration

There is currently no system of registration of titles or cadastral mapping which covers the whole country and there are few public records and limited data available about land users - even in Freetown, only 200 land transactions were recorded in the official land register in 2006 (Williams and Oredola-Davies, 2006). Moyo and Foray (2009) allege that the **systemic weaknesses of the land administration system have created inaccurate land records, corrupt land adjudication processes, competing claims of land ownership and disputes over boundaries**. War has also destroyed many official records (UNEP, 2010). In the Western Area, lack of land titling has led to the use of fences, signs and watchmen to protect land (Williams and Oredola-Davies, 2006), and there has reportedly been a trend in that area for building first and second homes on dubiously claimed land (UNEP, 2010). In urban areas, there has been a rise in illegal occupation of land due to the expense of urban property and limited access to secure land by the poor for residential and non-farm use (Williams and Oredola-Davies, 2006; Moyo and Foray, 2009). Much of the **land around Freetown is privately owned** and there is an active property market (OECD report, 2007). In rural areas, however, land transactions are informal and are not recorded by the state (Freedom House, 2012). There are concerns among civil society groups and NGOs about the lack of transparency and weak regulatory framework surrounding larger investor land



deals and confusion about the availability of land for investment in rural communities (Oakland Institute, 2011).

Land legislation and Government of Sierra Leone policies

As part of a policy to incentivise foreign investment, the Government of Sierra Leone recently established the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency. In qualitative research into the biofuel sector, Maconachie and Fortin (2013) have argued that the **government has mislabelled land** that has been left fallow to recover from shifting cultivation, as idle or under-used. They contend that the negotiation of leases and compensation of land owners does not adequately address land access rights and fallow periods that are determined by customary law.

While **customary law is largely unwritten, it is enforceable in formal court**, according to the Law Reform Commission (Unruh and Turray, 2006; Unruh, 2008). The main pieces of statutory legislation on land are: The National Land Policy, The Land Commission Act, and The Commercial Use of Land Act. The National Land Policy of 2005 was the first comprehensive land policy in Sierra Leone's history and sought to bring coherence to land ownership systems. While Unruh (2008) hailed it as a positive and innovative attempt to marry formal and customary land tenure laws in practice, authors such as Williams and Oredola-Davies (2006) have dismissed it as more rhetoric than concrete action to reform land. Unruh (2008) has written in depth about land policy reform and the peace process in Sierra Leone. He notes that customary land ownership is equivalent to title in the Land Policy and that **the Land Policy does not advocate a move towards a freehold land market** in rural areas (though freehold titles can be transferred in the Western Area). Furthermore, the **Commercial Use of Land Act acknowledged the role of customary lineage** members in leasing arrangements and other land transactions and makes provisions for both informal yearly land access and more secure lease agreements and has therefore gained the support of traditional elites.

Since December 2011, the government has developed and drafted a **new land tenure policy reform document**, with assistance from the UNDP, that will deal with inequitable access, 'squatting' in the Western Area, the land administration system, capacity in the Ministry of Lands and commercial concessions.¹ As of November 2013, this draft does not appear to have been passed yet.

Power dynamics

Rural land in Sierra Leone is held by landowning lineages who can trace their ancestry in the area (often dating back to pre-colonial times) and their extended families. Land is **allocated under a chieftaincy system** that fulfils a crucial administrative and custodian role (Richards et al., 2004; Unruh and Turray, 2006). Patrimonialism and the concept of **fundamental inalienability of land from these landowning lineages is believed to be a durable institution** in Sierra Leone (OECD report, 2007; Unruh and Turray, 2006) and land transfers require the agreement of most members of a landholding family (Unruh and Turray, 2006). According to Williams and Oredola-Davies (2006), the inequitable and inefficient nature of the land system works in favour of both urban and rural elites and allows them to retain political and economic privilege. However, the landholding **lineages may feel less secure** in their landholdings **than prior to the war** due to the lack of an enforceable legal structure, demands for land by previously marginalised groups and the increasing interest in

¹ Information taken from unsubstantiated online news reports and an NGO paper, available at: http://www.nachdenkseiten.de/upload/pdf/Study_Land_Investment_Sierra_Leone.pdf



land by foreign and domestic commercial actors who are connected to the formal law (Unruh, 2008). But the state lacks the internal coherence to drive land reform and investors can negotiate around the existing system (Williams and Oredola-Davies, 2006).

Millar's (2013b) research into the effects of a large bio-energy project in rural Sierra Leone suggested that an external company was able to wield power and gain legitimacy simply by having the technologies to map local land and capability to draw up paper land lease agreements. This further exacerbated inequality between the literate elites and illiterate people who were already marginalised. **The project was found to have potentially destabilising effects because of confusion about the system of land acquisition, misunderstanding of local dynamics of power and unfulfilled expectations.** Local people had mistakenly believed that they could hide land from the company because they did not understand the company's use of GPS and aerial mapping technology. Land-lease payments were paid to male household heads representing the landowning villages in each family, rather than individuals. Millar (2013c) conjectured that **this could reinforce gender inequalities and foster resentment between young men and elders.**

Paramount Chiefs

The literature consulted recognises that **Paramount Chiefs and community elders are the key custodians of customary land systems**, while allocation of land within extended families is usually undertaken by family heads, in consultation with other male family members. No significant land issues in a chiefdom² are final until the Paramount Chief approves them (Unruh, 2008). In his recent research, Millar (2013b) explains that in northern Sierra Leone, a Paramount Chief has knowledge of the land itself and is a repository of information on land agreements and people's relationships to land. In the absence of formal systems of land titling, the Paramount Chief arbitrates in inter-family and inter-village disputes. Paramount Chiefs retained their traditional power and legitimacy throughout the war (USAID, 2010) and assumed an important role in the aftermath, adjudicating over land claims of returning refugees and displaced people (Unruh and Turray, 2006). This served to re-establish both the chieftaincy structure and the customary land tenure system and the chieftaincy's power was further reinforced by the government's decentralisation plan and the 2009 Chieftaincy Act (USAID, 2010). **While the chieftaincy system has been a stabilising force in some rural areas and is valued as an institution, there are concerns over its potential for perpetuating exploitative relationships** and corruption (Maconachie 2008; Unruh and Turray 2006; Jackson 2007).

Following the 2004 Local Government Act there are now elected local councils across Sierra Leone. However, the Act is vague about the relationship between chiefs and councils with regard to land and local taxes and **in practice, chiefs hold more power than local councillors**, particularly in areas rich in natural resources (Jackson, 2007).

Excluded groups

The customary land system makes it especially difficult for women, youth and outsiders ('strangers') to access or invest in land (FAO, 2013). As Jackson (2012) notes, the coexistence of formal and informal justice systems at a local level reinforces elites in the countryside and prevents justice for excluded groups. The traditional justice system is administered by Paramount and Section Chiefs. Unsurprisingly, a post-war study by CARE-Sierra Leone (Hanson-Alp, 2005, as quoted in OECD, 2007) found that women, youth and non-natives were more favourable to land reform than men from landed lineages. This study

² There are 149 chiefdoms in Sierra Leone.



reportedly identified greater support for land reform in the south and east of the country, than in the north, where only one third of respondents supported change. On the other hand, Cartier and Bruge (2011) maintain that there is evidence that **people may feel better represented in a community ordered by customary land law**, a chieftaincy system and personal ties rather than impersonal statutory tenure systems and that access to land has improved since the end of the war.

Youth

Sierra Leone's conflict has been viewed as a 'crisis of youth' and a rejection of customary institutions (Fanthorpe and Maconachie, 2010) as well as a manifestation of inter-generational conflict caused by unequal power relations (Maconachie, 2008). **Many young males migrated from rural to urban areas following the war.** The reform of land tenure systems is believed to be necessary to encourage modern labour mobility, stable employment and young farming entrepreneurs (OECD, 2007). Some of the literature also claimed that **a cause of the civil war was a tension between exploited rural youth and landowning elites** (Richards, 2005; Maconachie, 2008; Mokuwa et al., 2011). Mokuwa et al. (2011, p341) argued that the "fulcrum of exploitation" was farm labour, not land rents, and this exploitation conceivably pre-disposed lower social classes to insurgency. This forced farm labour was the result of fines issued by ruling elites in local courts, in connection with disputes over marriage between elders and young men with weak social status (Mokuwa et al., 2011). Paramount Chiefs helped to supply labour to landowners by controlling access to land and forcing local youth to work off fines in agricultural labour (USAID, 2010). They also prevented efforts to find alternative livelihoods (Akiwumi, 2012). Young men that have been controlled by kinship obligations and chieftaincy systems have sometimes escaped exploitation in their own village only to be exploited in the legal and illegal mining industry (Akiwumi, 2012). There is some suggestion of positive change; Fanthorpe and Maconachie (2010) have documented **a rapprochement between local chiefs and former artisanal miners, a renewed interest in young men towards farming in rural Kono district and a decrease in intergenerational conflict in Kayima.** The latter was previously linked to chiefs' management of land rights and mining revenues, according to local accounts (Fanthorpe and Maconachie, 2010).

Women

It is well-documented that **women in Sierra Leone generally have less access to land than men through inheritance, gifting, renting and purchasing** (Abdullah et al., 2010, ActionAid, 2013a). This is particularly true in the north of the country, where the strict patrimonial system means that there are practically no female land owners nor powerful female decision makers (Millar, 2013a). Although formal law supports women's rights, there are no bills acknowledging women's independent rights to land and few women own land (Abdullah et al., 2010; USAID, 2010). In 2007, the **Devolution of Estate Act made it illegal to prevent a woman from inheriting** a husband's property after his death and recognised the rights of polygamous spouses, but as the Act only applies to an individual's right to land and not a family's right to land it has not been recognised by Paramount Chiefs and has been overruled by customary law in many areas, according to anecdotal reports (Irin, 2012).

According to an OECD report (2007), between 2000 to 2006, women comprised only 1-2% of plaintiffs in cases presented to three customary courts in the south and east of Sierra Leone. **None of the women interviewed in a 2012 DFID survey (Maguire, 2012) had heard of a satisfactory resolution of a land dispute through formal or informal justice mechanisms** and their ignorance about the marriage registration laws (and men's reluctance to comply) prevented them from being able to access land and property rights. The Government of Sierra Leone has attempted to address these issues within its National



Gender Strategic Plan (2010-2013) but implementation is progressing slowly and women may not be aware of the rights to which they are entitled (ActionAid, 2013a). Despite the fact that women outnumber men in areas such as farming (Abdullah et al., 2010) women's access to land is often dictated by fathers, brothers or husbands and the strength of their lineage family within the chiefdom (FAO, 2013). However, some women in the Limba tribe in northern Sierra Leone do have inheritance rights (USAID, 2010) and there is greater possibility for **land ownership for women in the Western Area** (Williams and Oredola-Davies, 2006). In the east and south of the country, women can also inherit and control land or property and can become Paramount Chiefs (ActionAid, 2013a; Millar, 2013a).

Women in rural areas are often the head of household³ due to migration of men to urban areas but are restricted from putting the family plots to use without the consent of male family members, even in the event of absence or death of their husband (Kabba and Li, 2011; ActionAid, 2013a). Even when women do have access to land they may be denied credit by financial institutions (Abdullah et al., 2010). Single women fare the worst and may be allocated only a small portion of land, which can lead to women entering into relationships just to secure a living (ActionAid, 2013a).

Non-natives

A common theme in the literature was **discrimination against non-natives**, strangers or outsiders in rural areas. 'Strangers' are defined as locals without inherited land rights (Cartier and Brige, 2011) and customary tenure prevents citizens from owning land outside their birthplace, except in the Western Area (Kabba and Li, 2011). In the event of land disputes, **only local citizens have access to local courts** and strangers are unable to plead their cases directly which discourages them from pursuing complaints (OECD, 2007). However, customary systems normally allow those with no kinship rights such as migrants or strangers to access land under historically established community arrangements (Akiwumi, 2011; Unruh 2008). Richards (2005) also mentions the exclusion of children of former slaves, who particularly need access to land and agrarian opportunities.

Glennerster et al. (2013) studied ethnic diversity and local collective action in post-war Sierra Leone and identified that after the civil war there was systematic movement of individuals to areas where their own ethnic group was more numerous. They found that inter-ethnic cooperation was strong and their respondents reported infrequent inter-ethnic physical attacks and land disputes.

There is a note of optimism among several authors that the prerequisite conditions for access to land have changed following the war and **relationships have reportedly improved between weaker community members and Chiefs** (Cartier and Bruge, 2011; Unruh and Turray, 2006; Fanthorpe and Maconachie, 2010).

Food security and agriculture

Almost half of Sierra Leone's population were classed as food insecure in 2011 (WFP, 2011) but agrarian issues have been overlooked by a regime focused on minerals (Richards, 2005) even though two thirds of the population depends on subsistence farming (FAO, 2011). Unruh (2008) links the problems of extreme food insecurity to a widespread problem of restricted land access and large scale rural unemployment, despite the apparent existence of arable land. Nevertheless, a 2011 GIZ/Bank of Sierra Leone report disputes the idea that

³ More than 20% of households are headed by women according to the World Food Programme (WFP, 2011).



large tracts of unused arable land are available and argues that only incremental improvements in agriculture are possible.

While tenure insecurity among tenants may discourage investment in land and agriculture, authors such as Unruh and Turray (2006) have pointed out that landowners' fear of losing their land (through competing claims by tenants using the land) is equally important in constraining productive land use. They argue that **if the customary landowning families had greater tenure security they would have greater confidence to rent land out to tenants, and pursue loans**. Paramount Chiefs and landowning families believe they must retain land to support shifting cultivation rather than more permanent forms of cultivation and that this retention of land will ensure food security (Unruh and Turray, 2006). Kabba and Li (2011) claim that while there has not been any major resentment against the customary tenure system in Sierra Leone, it is characterised by issues that may provoke tension and social instability and it leads to under-investment in agriculture. According to several authors (Maconachie et al., 2006; Peters and Richards, 2011; Cartier and Bruge, 2011) it is primarily **access to labour and labour mobility rather than access to land which constrains food production**, since even those with formal access to land may not have the resources to cultivate the land.

Mining and land use

In the most recent literature consulted in this review, mining was not a dominant concern in the area of land and conflict. Mining operations throughout Sierra Leone affect traditional resource-based subsistence communities and raise concerns over environmental degradation of land, which has led to volatile situations such as disturbances involving 1000 miners in the Koidu mining area in 2007 (Akiwumi, 2011 and 2012). In a study of rutile mining in south-western Sierra Leone, Akiwumi (2011) asserts that **customary land use protocols can be in direct conflict with external interests** and subsistence livelihoods can become marginalised through the loss of ecological resource bases. Furthermore, some landholding families and Paramount Chiefs are prepared to overlook customary laws on land use for monetary gain. Paramount Chiefs receive land rents in areas where there are concessions for mining, quarrying and forestry through either formal or informal agreements which **operate separately from central government policy and oversight** of resources (UNEP report, 2010). As a result, Mende communities in the rutile mining area have been forced to cultivate in upland areas because of scarce land for shifting cultivation and women's shallow-water fishing has been constrained (Akiwumi, 2011).



SECTION 3

Land conflicts in Sierra Leone

Note that much of the information in this section comes from a limited number of grey literature resources emanating from the NGO sector.

Land and the civil war

It has been repeatedly cited in the literature that tension over land, alongside the highly unequal distribution of other natural resources, was a key driver in the Sierra Leone civil war (Richards *et al.*, 2004; Hussein and Gnisci, 2005; Richards, 2005; Unruh, 2008; IRIN, 2012).

Amnesty International (1992) noted that in some areas of the country joining the rebel forces led to the opportunity for people to take lands by force, and at the war's peak, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) controlled large swathes of territory and diamond fields throughout the countryside (Freedom House, 2012). Richards *et al.* (2004) and Hussein and Gnisci (2005) explicitly identify the **debilitation of customary and formal land and property institutions as a major cause of rural marginalisation, disenfranchisement, and poverty** in Sierra Leone, all of which led to pronounced discontent.

Land and conflict in post-war Sierra Leone

It is believed that by the war's end in January 2002 almost a quarter of the population, more than one million people, were displaced either within or outside of the country (CIPU, 2001). When thousands of Sierra Leoneans began to return home at the end of the conflict, many found that their farmlands had been destroyed or occupied (IRIN, 2012).

Post-war land conflicts and disputes in Sierra Leone are believed to stem from **problems of land acquisition, contested land boundaries, multiple land sales, fraudulent documents, conflicting authorities** over land administration (involving land owning families, traditional authorities and state bodies), land use conversion and the weakness of the land adjudication system (Moyo and Foray, 2009). As such, **systematic land issues continue to be an underlying source of social conflict and political instability** in the country, which, according to a UNDP Scoping Paper, could precipitate more intensive violence in the future (Moyo and Foray, 2009). The same paper goes on to suggest that **land disputes have been on the rise** in Sierra Leone since the turn of the century (Moyo and Foray, 2009), with land disputes now believed to be common place across Sierra Leone (USAID, 2010). Substantiating this claim to some extent, a 2001-2006 study found that land disputes accounted for up to 70% of higher court dockets in the Western Area (Unruh and Turray, 2006).

Foreign direct investment (FDI) and 'land grabbing'

It is well documented that the **Sierra Leonean government is seeking to attract (mostly foreign) agricultural investment** through providing opportunities for large-scale land leases for the development of agribusiness, notably for oil palm and sugarcane plantations for ethanol production (Green Scenery, 2011; Melsbach and Rahall, 2012; Christian Aid, 2013). The emphasis of this investment is perceived by many to be on commodities for export, and



not food for local consumption, causing potential for conflict among varying user groups (Oakland Institute, 2011; Christian Aid, 2013; Green Scenery, 2013; Millar, 2013d). Not much is known about the extent of domestic investment in Sierra Leone from either grey or academic literature. According to a 2009 study, the private sector in Sierra Leone is heavily dominated by a handful of large foreign companies although there are many small and medium sized enterprises and a sizeable informal sector (Nnadozie and Abdulmelik, 2009).

The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) provides financial incentives to encourage FDI. General fiscal incentives include a 10-year tax holiday on agricultural investments in tree crops and rice and zero import duty (Oakland Institute, 2011; Christian Aid, 2013). GoSL also allows 100% foreign ownership in all sectors (Christian Aid, 2013).

The main justification for promoting large-scale land deals is the amount of ‘unused’ land that is available in the country. However several researchers believe a closer analysis reveals that **land under the present bush-fallow farming system is already overused** (Bald and Schröder, 2011; Melsbach and Rahall, 2011). According to the 2011 in-depth study on rural and agricultural finance in Sierra Leone by GIZ and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation, despite claims that just 11-15% of the country’s arable land is being ‘used’ and that there is plenty of extra land available for FDI, there is, in fact, **no vast idle productive land under the current patterns** of smallholder upland cultivation and fallow rotation since vast swathes of land have already been leased out for mining and mineral exploration (Bald and Schröder, 2011). While **official data on land use, conversion and transactions is not available**, latest estimates suggest up to 500,000 hectares of farmland have been sold, leased or licensed to foreign investors, or have been under negotiation (Oakland Institute, 2011).

Impacts of large-scale land investments

Despite the scale of investment there has been surprisingly little attention to the potential risks that investments pose for poverty, food security, rural livelihoods, social cohesion and peace (Christian Aid, 2013). Nor has there been much consideration of the real costs and benefits of the land deals to the environment and domestic revenue generation (Christian Aid, 2013). **The vast majority of investments initiated since 2007 have yet to clear land or to become fully operational, and, as such, their full impact is unclear** (Oakland Institute, 2011). Although impacts are in their earliest stages, the surge in large-scale foreign direct investment (FDI) is being perceived by NGOs as deeply disruptive to customary tenure norms, and concerns over their potential to promote conflict are increasingly being raised (Freedom House, 2012; Christian Aid, 2013; Millar, 2013d). Christian Aid has conducted a cost-benefit analysis on the impacts of three large-scale land investments in Sierra Leone. Christian Aid **estimates that since 2009 more than a fifth of the country’s arable land has been leased to foreign companies for industrial-scale agriculture**, and alleges that this has mostly been to the detriment of local people and communities (Christian Aid, 2013, p5).

ActionAid’s September 2013 report *Broken Promises: The impacts of Addax Bioenergy in Sierra Leone on hunger and livelihoods* builds on qualitative community research to criticise the Swiss company’s operations to export ethanol to the EU from sugar cane plantations in the northern province of Makeni. Their research claims the investment project is negatively impacting food security and land rights of local communities, despite its sustainable certifications, backing from the EC, African Development Bank (AfDB) and Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and other international donors (ActionAid, 2013b). The company attempts to mitigate against loss of agricultural land through the Farmers Development Programme (FDP) and training. ActionAid argues that



people voiced discontent with the size of land allocated to them through the FDP; raises concerns over compensation levels and their distribution; and finds that there was inadequate free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) leading up to commencement of the investment. Namati (2013) also claim that the project's community consultations were inadequate and that pledged benefits have yet to be realised. As the project is financed by a number of multilateral and bilateral institutions, ActionAid calls on donors to demand that Addax Bioenergy dramatically improves the lives of communities in the project area (ActionAid, 2013b).

In an open letter to ActionAid in response to the report, Addax Bioenergy raise questions about the document and the methodologies employed for gathering basic research data and facts (Addax Bioenergy, 2013). They further claim that the project is being implemented 'with full dialogue and engagement of local communities' (Addax Bioenergy, 2013: 1). The letter reiterates that the investment has been heralded as a positive example by international organisations such as the FAO and AfDB, the GoSL, and that the company is fully aware of the context of the debate around land-related investments in Africa and as such is committed to demonstrating that private investment can lead to a virtuous cycle of responsible and sustainable development. In light of dialogue between various actors, Addax has indicated that they may be willing to review the terms of the investment agreement, and Namati have said they are looking forward to working with the company's attorney in order to pursue solutions (Namati, 2013).

More negative impacts of large-scale land investments are provided in the Oakland Institute's *'Understanding Land Investment Deals in Africa: Sierra Leone'* report on four case studies of foreign investments in land in Sierra Leone (Oakland Institute, 2011); Melsbach and Rahall's 2012 study of the impact of a large-scale land deal in the Malen Chiefdom (Melsbach and Rahall, 2012), and; Gearoid Millar's ongoing academic qualitative research into land investment in northern Sierra Leone (Millar, 2013a; Millar, 2013b; Millar, 2013c; Millar, 2013d).

Land investments as a potential and actual driver of conflict

Millar, in his research into a large-scale land investment in northern Sierra Leone envisages **four sites of potential conflict surrounding large-scale land deals: between genders; between families and villages; between communities and the company; and between generations** (Millar, 2013d). Millar argues that the influx of substantial new resources has the potential to create significant tensions between genders, with women having less chance of being hired for wage labour, less chance of receiving land lease payments, and having little say in how lease money is distributed or spent (Millar, 2013d). For Millar, land investments bring "great potential" to spur conflict between the genders (Millar, 2013d). Between families and villages, the establishment of set boundaries (needed for the lease of land to investors) is said to go against local traditions and norms of regular renegotiation and malleability (Millar, 2013d). The increase in property values of land, once investors move into an area, has also hardened positions on ownership rights and may provide an impetus for families and villages to engage in land conflicts in which they would previously have had little interest (Millar, 2013d). In addition, youth groups feel that long-term leasing of land to investors means that they have lost their claims to land for the next 50 years (Millar, 2013d).

Melsbach and Rahall (2012, p1) detail conflict which has already taken place between one community and an investor:

"In one area, the community organised itself into the 'Malen Land Owners Association (MALOA)'. In October 2011 they issued a letter of protest directed against the conditions of a local land deal, rent and compensation and the



behaviour of the agricultural investment company in the area. Later that month, landowners blocked the roads to the plantation; as a result, according to media reports, 39 protesters were arrested. Fifteen people were accused of unlawful assembly and riotous conduct, later to be released on bail. In September 2012, when the company conducted surveys of lands in the neighbouring areas that were not covered by the initial investment, there was again protest from the local communities. Four people were arrested for refusing access to the company's delegation and villagers seized a computer from the company delegation and handed it over to the police."

Similar protests and clashes between communities and investors have been reported since 2007 over diamond and rutile mineral mining in the Eastern Province and South-West (Akiwumi, 2012; Fanthorpe and Maconachie, 2010; Wilson, 2013; UNEP, 2010).

Wilson (2013) has examined the dynamics of company–community conflicts over diamonds in Kono District from surveys of 240 households in four chiefdoms, semiformal interviews, focus groups, and secondary data sources. He found that **state and traditional leaders favour industrial mining expansion over artisanal mining, which has reinforced unequal power relations over access to land and diamond mining rights** and bred company–community conflicts in Kono District. He argues that the risk of conflicts could be reduced by greater regulation that addresses the power imbalances.

Millar (2013d) suggests that there is real potential for further conflict over the new wave of agri-business plantations. While the GoSL has reportedly attempted to clear squatters from state land (OECD, 2007), the impacts are as yet unknown.

Responsible investment and government guidelines

It has been argued in the literature that land investments at present lack many of the features required to comply with the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) enshrined in the Guidelines of the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (Melsbach and Rahall, 2012), and in the majority of investment cases, formal grievance mechanisms have not been established (Oakland Institute, 2011). It is argued that **in Sierra Leone, national guidelines for leasing land are still rudimentary** (Melsbach and Rahall, 2012). The Oakland Institute (2011) study claimed a lack of transparency and public disclosure in all four case studies. It further argued that none of the four case studies adhered to World Bank principles for responsible agro-investment, nor to the set of core principles laid out by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, to address human rights challenges posed by large-scale land acquisitions (Oakland Institute, 2011), with only one of the projects having signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the GoSL to protect the environment and prevent loss of local rights to land. While social health and environmental impact assessments (EIAs), mandatory for large agricultural investments, do acknowledge some of risks of large-scale industrial plantations, the Christian Aid report criticises gaps in the EIAs, asserting that they are not rigorous enough (Christian Aid, 2013).

Questions regarding investors' connections to the government have also been raised surrounding land deals, and **anecdotal allegations of corruption are becoming increasingly widespread** (Williams and Davies, 2006; Oakland Institute, 2011; Freedom House, 2012). Given the range of problems and lack of due process highlighted in case studies, civil society groups fear that agricultural investments in Sierra Leone may lead to exploitation and conflict (Oakland Institute, 2011; Freedom House, 2012).



Resolution

Land disputes (outside of Freetown), along with land allocation and access decisions, have been traditionally dealt with by chiefs in Sierra Leone (Richards *et al.*, 2004). The system of local courts applying customary law is the only form of legal system accessible to an estimated 70% of the population (Advocates for Human Rights, 2013). An aggrieved person is usually thought to go to the lowest level of the chieftaincy structure, the village chief, for assistance. Appeals and more serious disputes are taken to the sub-chief, followed by the Paramount Chief (Unruh and Turray, 2006; Manning, 2009; USAID, 2010). Yet as customary law regarding land is unwritten in Sierra Leone, though enforceable in statutory court, **customary mechanisms of dispute resolution tend to favour those already holding power and resources** (Unruh, 2008). Chiefs have been accused of arbitrary, patriarchal, corrupt, and self-serving approaches to decisions in the past (Richards *et al.*, 2004). There is generally a lack of information on land disputes in terms of actors, causes and institutional architecture although a DFID/EU scoping study (Williams and Oredola-Davies, 2006) provide annexes of case study examples of land disputes in the Western Area and Moyamba and also mention disputes among Creole families in Freetown over rival claims stemming from polygamy.

As a more formal rule of law develops, aligning new land policy and laws to more traditional customary tenure, and assessing how these will interact, is highlighted in the literature as a key priority if disputes over land are to be effectively resolved (Unruh, 2008). **The key to conflict resolution over land, it is suggested, is an emphasis on agrarian justice, including reform of customary land tenure in line with formal law** (Richards, 2005). With regard to land investments from outside investors, **formal grievance mechanisms** and informed consent need to become enshrined in law and practice and companies held legally accountable if conflicts are to be resolved peacefully and fairly (Oakland, 2011).

Recommendations

Various recommendations and guidelines emanate from the grey literature regarding land tenure and land disputes. In summary, these are the following:

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) should develop guidelines to elaborate the Environmental Protection Act 2008. These should be legally binding for foreign investment companies and protect local people and the environment (Melsbach and Rahall, 2012; Christian Aid, 2013).
- The tax policy surrounding the agricultural sector should be reviewed, with a view to significantly reducing tax incentives for investment whilst increasing tax revenues to invest in food security and agricultural development (Christian Aid, 2013).
- Due to confusion over the availability of land, **a comprehensive land survey and inventory of ownership and use** is required in order to protect smallholders. A publicly available cadastre should show details of all existing large land leases. It is believed that this is a prerequisite to designing a sustainable land management system (Green Scenery, 2011; Oakland Institute, 2011; Christian Aid, 2013).
- Building on comprehensive land use surveys and mapping, a clear definition of 'used' versus 'available' land should be established; this should consider all uses involved in smallholder farming, including bush and fallow systems (Oakland Institute, 2011).
- The GoSL should focus investment on sustainable smallholder farming and farmers to improve food security and reduce poverty rather than encouraging large land deals (Oakland Institute, 2011).
- International agencies should lend their expertise to the GoSL in leading a land tenure reform process that emphasises equitable and secure land access for all Sierra Leoneans, including women and youth (Oakland Institute, 2011).



Conclusion

This literature review has sought to analyse the key land rights issues in Sierra Leone and, more specifically, land as an actual and potential driver of conflict. The main findings are listed below.

Land use, rights and ownership

- There is broad agreement that the present land tenure system (in which unwritten customary tenure laws predominate outside of the Western Area) needs to be reformed in order to address both land access issues and labour mobility.
- Currently, there is no comprehensive system of title registration or mapping in the country, which lays the foundations for competing claims to land.
- Despite the Government of Sierra Leone's stated policies and legislation, the patrimonial lineage system remains strong and few women own land. Landowners may face decreasing tenure security due to demands for land by formerly excluded groups, government and foreign/domestic investors.
- There is some indication that power dynamics have changed in rural areas since the war, but Paramount Chiefs and elders of landowning family lineages still hold more power over local land allocation than locally elected councils. They have traditionally controlled access to land by individuals of lower social status such as outsiders, women and young men. There is some evidence that inter-generational relations and relations between weaker groups and chiefs have improved in recent years.

Land as an actual and potential driver of conflict

- Tensions over land, alongside the highly unequal distribution of natural resources, were a key driver in the civil war (see Richards et al., 2004; Hussein and Gnisci, 2005; Richards, 2005; Unruh, 2008).
- The perceived emphasis of foreign investment on export commodities rather than food for local consumption, has potential to cause conflict although impacts are in their earliest stage as most acquisitions have taken place in the last six years.
- There is a lack of recent academic literature concerning land as an actual and potential driver of conflict. However, recent academic research from 2012 (Millar, 2013) suggests that investment projects could reinforce existing inequalities, cause tension between genders and potentially stir resentment where there are misunderstandings of local concepts of land and unmet expectations.
- There is a significant perception of 'land grabbing' by foreign companies involved in large bio-fuel and other projects among anecdotal sources, which cannot be easily verified due to lack of accurate land use records or research.
- Analysis of the relationship between land, conflict and mining in the past seven years did not feature heavily in the literature consulted, although there were some references to violent outbreaks caused by diamond and rutile mining operations and their environmental impacts.
- Anecdotally, NGOs, civil society and human rights groups have documented outbreaks of violence in response to these projects.
- Further evidence is required to draw firm conclusions on foreign investment in terms of its impact on access to land and its role in sparking land disputes or violent conflict. No significant literature was identified on the effects of domestic investment.



Resolution of conflicts on land

- There is no firm data on the incidence of land disputes through courts, but they are believed to be on the rise. Women and outsiders are effectively excluded from access to justice through customary court systems, which tend to favour existing elites.
- Many NGOs have called for greater transparency of land investments, formal grievance mechanisms and adherence to international environmental standards. They also highlight the need for comprehensive land surveys, and more accurate definitions of 'used' and 'available' land that reflect traditional shifting cultivation practices. Such measures may be instrumental in mitigating the risk of conflict in future.

Implications

While this was not a comprehensive study, the review clearly identified a lack of evidence and a need for official land use data and further research into land-related conflicts and their resolution.

Selected annotated bibliography

This annotated bibliography provides a summary of the most relevant literature consulted in this review and a description of the literature type.

Key

Research Type	Research Design
Primary and Empirical	EXP- Experimental
	OBS- Observational + method
Secondary	SR- Systematic Review
	OR- Other Review
Theoretical and Conceptual	n/a

Reference	Type of literature and research type	Summary
ActionAid (2013b) <i>Broken Promises: The impacts of Addax Bioenergy in Sierra Leone on hunger and livelihoods</i> , London: ActionAid International.	Grey literature Primary and Empirical (Interviews)	This report criticises Addax Bioenergy's investment in the Makeni province of northern Sierra Leone, stating that the company's sugar cane plantation is impacting negatively on local food security and livelihoods. The report is based on in-depth interviews with local community members. The report was responded to by Addax Bioenergy through an open letter (see Addax Bioenergy, 2013)
Akiwumi, F. A. (2012) 'Global incorporation and local conflict: Sierra Leonean mining regions', <i>Antipode</i> , 44, 3, pp.581-600.	Academic Secondary (SR) Theoretical and Conceptual	This paper draws upon a world-system core-periphery framework to examine the nature and causes of persistent low-level conflict in Sierra Leonean mining regions. Argues that conflict is endemic due to the structural constraints and power relationships that sustain socioeconomic, cultural and environmental inequities. The paper reveals the complex web of micro-politics in the mining sector involving a weak state, exploitative corporations and oppressive traditional social hierarchies.
Christian Aid (2013)	Grey literature	This study examined the social, economic, nutritional, health and environmental



Reference	Type of literature and research type	Summary
<p>Who Is Benefitting? The Social and Economic Impact of Three-Large Scale Land Investments in Sierra Leone: a cost-benefit analysis, London: Christian Aid</p>	<p>Primary and Empirical (OBS +interviews) Secondary (SR)</p>	<p>costs and benefits to communities and individual households in and around lease areas of three large agricultural investors in Sierra Leone. It combines first hand field research with a review of other reports and literature. Towards the end of the document it provides a set of guidelines for GoSL on how to address the negative impacts of large-scale land investment raised in the report.</p>
<p>Fanthorpe, R., and Maconachie, R. (2010) 'Beyond the 'crisis of youth'? Mining, farming, and civil society in post-war Sierra Leone'. African Affairs, 109, 435, pp.251-272.</p>	<p>Grey literature Secondary (OR) Theoretical and Conceptual</p>	<p>Argues that evidence of post-war social change can be found outside of donor-funded interventions. In Kono District new forms of social activism have emerged since the end of the civil war. This is linked to the decline of artisanal mining, the expansion of large-scale industrial mining, and renewed interest in farming among the youth.</p>
<p>Green Scenery (2011) Land Investment Deals in Sierra Leone: Green Scenery Briefings Part I-IV, Green Scenery: Freetown.</p>	<p>Grey literature Secondary (OR)</p>	<p>This document provides a series of Green Scenery organisational briefings from September 2011. It is largely critical of large-scale land in investments in Sierra Leone, and whilst referencing academic and grey literature sources, it may present quite a high level of emotive organisational bias.</p>
<p>Hussein, K. and Gnisci, D. (2005) Land, Agricultural Change and Conflict in West Africa: Regional Issues from</p>	<p>Academic Primary and Empirical (OBS +interviews) Secondary (OR)</p>	<p>This paper by the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) Secretariat of the OECD outlines issues of land, agricultural change and conflict in West Arica, highlighting regional issues from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire. The Annex at the end of the document, despite being relatively brief, provides a particularly useful background note on the role of land and conflict in Sierra Leone.</p>



Reference	Type of literature and research type	Summary
Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire, Phase I: Historical Overview. OECD: Paris.		
Melsbach, G. and Rahall, J. (2012) Increasing Pressure for Land: Implications for Rural Livelihoods and Development Actors. A Case Study of Sierra Leone, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe and Green Scenery: Freetown.	Grey literature Primary and Empirical (OBS +interviews)	This report is based on a study by German organisation Welthungerhilfe and Sierra Leonean non-governmental organization Green Scenery in August 2011. Contributions were also gathered from various other stakeholders from the District Council and Administration, government organisations, the EU delegation and FAO in Freetown. The final section of the paper provides useful recommendations to international NGOs supporting agricultural development in Sierra Leone, as well as more general recommendations for other actors and stakeholders.
Millar, G. (2013a) 'We have no voice for that': Power, gender, and land decisions in rural Sierra Leone. Presented at the Gender and Land Governance Conference. 14-15 January 2013, University of Utrecht, The Netherlands.	Academic Primary and Empirical (OBS +interviews)	This paper, and the three Millar papers that follow, are based on six months of fieldwork in 2012 evaluating the local experiences of a large bio-energy project in rural northern Sierra Leone, where a foreign-owned company has leased 40,000 ha of land. Millar interviewed individuals in 12 villages within the project land lease area. These four papers are all pending publication; two have already been submitted to journals. This particular paper presents Millar's qualitative data comparing the hopes of women in villages yet to see any work on the part of the company with the experiences, and often disappointments, of those who lament it. Millar argues that these women had no say in the decision, experience few benefits, and largely feel disempowered by this process of 'development'.
Millar, G. (2013b)	Academic	This paper describes how various technologies are deployed to make local land



Reference	Type of literature and research type	Summary
Technologies of diffusion: Making local land legible and corporate power applicable. Presented at ISA Annual Convention, San Francisco, 3-6 April 2013.	Primary and Empirical (OBS +interviews)	legible to the corporate eye and explains how such processes are experienced on the ground. The author argues that such technologies of diffusion disrupt traditional modes of authority and allow corporations to apply power, but limit their contribution to peace.
Millar, G. (2013c) Economic development as transitional justice? Needs, recovery, and justice in Sierra Leone. Presented at ISA Annual Convention, San Francisco, 3-6 April 2013.	Academic Primary and Empirical (OBS +interviews)	This paper describes how local people experience the project and explores whether employment, income, and land-lease payments can provide remuneration/reparation that is not forthcoming from the state.
Millar, G. (2013d) Power and authority in transitional Sierra Leone: Local experiences of the liberal peace. Presented at the PSS/ISA conference, Budapest, 29 June 2013.	Academic Primary and Empirical (OBS +interviews)	This article presents ethnographic data from Sierra Leone to illustrate the destabilizing and potentially conflict inducing effects of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). It argues that the dominance of the 'liberal peace' paradigm in international policy has recently combined with a surge in 'land grabs'.



Reference	Type of literature and research type	Summary
Mokuwa, E., Voors, M., Bulte, E., & Richards, P. (2011) Peasant grievance and insurgency in Sierra Leone: Judicial serfdom as a driver of conflict. <i>African Affairs</i> , 110(440), 339-366.	Academic Primary and Empirical (EXP) Secondary (SR)	Primary research uses econometric tools, applied to data from a randomized survey of 2,239 households in 178 villages surrounding the Gola Forest in eastern and southern Sierra Leone. Maintains that peasant disputes over marriage continue to demonstrate a class divide in isolated rural communities. Disputes in local courts mainly involve a village elder suing a young man with weak social protection. High court fines are paid off in the form of coerced farm labour. It is argued that grievances over this exploitation fed insurgency.
Moyo, S. and Foray, K.M. (2009) UNDP Scoping Mission Report: Key Land Tenure Issues and Reform Processes for Sierra Leone, Report commissioned for the Ministry of Land, Country Planning and the Environment, UNDP: Freetown.	Grey literature Primary and Empirical (OBS+ interviews) Secondary (SR)	This Scoping Mission Report, commissioned for the Ministry of Land, Country Planning and the Environment, by the UNDP, identifies the key land policy and land tenure reform and administration challenges facing Sierra Leone. It is based on extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders and review of available literature, undertaken in July 2009. The paper includes a section on land disputes and a chart of incidences of land disputes by region.
Oakland Institute (2011) Understanding Land Investment Deals in Africa: Sierra Leone. Oakland Institute: Oakland, CA.	Grey literature Primary and Empirical (OBS+ interviews) Secondary (SR)	This report provides background information on the institutional and political context of Sierra Leone, the current macroeconomic situation, the state of food and agriculture, and the current investment climate. It documents detailed information regarding four land investment deals currently being carried out in Sierra Leone.
Peters, K. And Richards, P. (2011)	Academic	This paper assesses the extent to which customary governance in Sierra Leone can be held responsible for an increasingly unstable two-class agrarian society. A



Reference	Type of literature and research type	Summary
'Rebellion and Agrarian Tensions in Sierra Leone', Agrarian Change 11, 3, pp.377-395..	Secondary (SR) Theoretical and Conceptual	case is made for regarding the civil war as being an eruption of long-term, entrenched agrarian tensions exacerbated by chiefly rule.
Renner-Thomas, A. (2010) <i>Land tenure in Sierra Leone: The law, dualism and the making of a land policy</i> . AuthorHouse: Milton Keynes.	Book Secondary (SR) Theoretical and Conceptual	This book may be useful for further reading on land policy in Sierra Leone, but was not used in this study due to time constraints. It provides an overview of the history and constructive criticism of the dual land tenure system and offers some proposals for reform in light of stated government policies.
Unruh, J. and Turray, H. (2006) 'Land tenure, food security and investment in post-war Sierra Leone', FAO Livelihood Support Programme, Working Paper 22.	Grey literature Secondary (SR)	Paper prepared for the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in connection with the Livelihood Support Programme The study examines: 1) rural social dynamics and land tenure; 2) tenure security and land access; 3) the labour problem; 4) mechanization issues for agriculture; 5) loans and land as collateral; 6) leasing and partnerships, the options for investment; 7) the problem with changing to freehold; 8) legislative reform; and, 9) themes from Mozambique's land policy reform experience.
Unruh, J. (2008) 'Land policy reform, customary rule of law and the peace process in Sierra Leone', African Journal of Legal Studies, 2, 2, pp.94-117.	Academic Primary and Empirical (OBS + Rapid rural appraisal fieldwork) Secondary (SR)	In this article John Unruh argues that the stakes are high for successfully connecting postwar land tenure laws with informal socio-legal realities in Sierra Leone. He argues that a primary issue is the presence of a large population without access to land, tenure insecurity discouraging investment, large-scale food insecurity and rural unemployment while significant swathes of arable and previously cultivated land stands idle.



Reference	Type of literature and research type	Summary
Williams, S. and Oredola-Davies, P. (2006) 'Land and pro-poor change in Sierra Leone: Scoping Study', prepared for joint EU-DFID Country Assistance Plan for Sierra Leone, July 2006.	Grey literature Secondary (SR)	This July 2006 study was prepared for the joint EU/DFID Country Assistance Plan for Sierra Leone. This contains a comprehensive situational analysis of land tenure, political economy of land reform, policy context and options for intervention. See annexes of this paper for case study examples of 2006 land disputes in Western Area and a land dispute in the provinces (Moyamba) as well as analysis of national land policy and the land related legal framework.



Full reference list

Abdullah, H. J., Ibrahim, A. F., and King, J. (2010) 'Women's Voices, Work and Bodily Integrity in Pre-Conflict, Conflict and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Processes in Sierra Leone', *IDS Bulletin*, 41, 2, pp.37-45.

ActionAid (2013a) *From marginalisation to empowerment: The potential of land rights to contribute to gender equality- observations from Guatemala, India and Sierra Leone*, Johannesburg: ActionAid International. Available at: http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/from_marginalisation_to_empwerment_final_research_report.pdf [Accessed 18 November 2013].

ActionAid (2013b) *Broken Promises: The impacts of Addax Bioenergy in Sierra Leone on hunger and livelihoods*, London: ActionAid International. Available at: http://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/brokenpromises_0.pdf [Accessed 02 December 2013].

Addax Bioenergy (2013) *Addax Bioenergy: Open letter to ActionAid*, Geneva: Addax Bioenergy. Available at: http://www.pangealink.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/ABSA_Open-letter_ActionAid_20130902.pdf [Accessed 02 December 2013].

Advocates for Human Rights (2013) *Background on Sierra Leone*, Advocates for Human Rights: Minneapolis. Available at: http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/background_on_sierra_leone [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Akiwumi, F. A. (2011) 'Transnational mining corporations and sustainable resource-based livelihoods in Sierra Leone. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*', 32, 1, pp.53-70.

Akiwumi, F. A. (2012) 'Global incorporation and local conflict: Sierra Leonean mining regions', *Antipode*, 44, 3, pp.581-600.

Amnesty International (1992) *Sierra Leone: The Extrajudicial Execution of Suspected Rebels and Collaborators*. London: Amnesty International.

Bald, J. and Schröder, P. (2011) *Agricultural Finance in Sierra Leone: Product Innovation and Financial Access- Agricultural Value Chains- Cassava, Rice, Poultry and Cocoa*, Bonn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and German Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ).

Cartier, L. E., and Bürge, M. (2011)' Agriculture And Artisanal Gold Mining In Sierra Leone: Alternatives Or Complements?', *Journal of International Development*, 23, 8, pp.1080-1099.

Christian Aid (2013) *Who Is Benefitting? The Social and Economic Impact of Three-Large Scale Land Investments in Sierra Leone: a cost-benefit analysis*, London: Christian Aid. Available at: <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/who-is-benefitting-Sierra-Leone-report.pdf> [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Country Information and Policy Unit (CIPU) (2001) 'Sierra Leone Assessment, Amnesty International UK', in Unruh, J. (2008) 'Land Policy Reform, Customary Rule of Law and the Peace Process in Sierra Leone', *African Journal of Legal Studies*, 2, 2, pp.94-117.



Fanthorpe, R., and Maconachie, R. (2010) 'Beyond the 'crisis of youth'? Mining, farming, and civil society in post-war Sierra Leone'. *African Affairs*, 109, 435, pp.251-272.

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2011) 'Sierra Leone committed to revitalising agriculture', 6 March 2011, FAO: Rome. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/isfp/isfp-highlights/detail-highlights/en/item/52236/icode/> [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2013) 'Country Pasture/Forest Resource Profiles: Sierra Leone', FAO: Rome. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/aq/agp/AGPC/doc/Counprof/Sierraleone/Sierraleone.htm> [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Freedom House (2012) *Countries at the Crossroads 2012: Sierra Leone*, Washington: Freedom House. Available at: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/countries-crossroads/2012/sierra-leone> [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Glennerster, R., Miguel, E., and Rothenberg, A. D. (2013) 'Collective action in diverse Sierra Leone communities', *The Economic Journal*, 123, 568, pp.285-316.

Green Scenery (2011) *Land Investment Deals in Sierra Leone: Green Scenery Briefings Part I-IV*, Green Scenery: Freetown. Available at: http://www.oaklandinstitute.org/sites/oaklandinstitute.org/files/2011_10_GS%20Briefings_lay_out_web.pdf [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Haider, H. (2012) *Topic Guide on Conflict, Governance and Social Development*. University of Birmingham Resource Centre: Birmingham.

Hanson-Alp, R. (2005) *Who has control of the land? Understanding customary land tenure systems in Sierra Leone*, CARE-Sierra Leone: Freetown. [Unpublished report].

Hussein, K. and Gnisci, D. (2005) *Land, Agricultural Change and Conflict in West Africa: Regional Issues from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire, Phase I: Historical Overview*. OECD: Paris.

IRIN (2012) *Sierra Leone: Fighting for women's right to land*, 22 June 2012, IRIN. Available at: <http://www.irinnews.org/report/95705/sierra-leone-fighting-for-women-s-right-to-land> [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Jackson, P. (2007) 'Reshuffling an old deck of cards? The politics of local government reform in Sierra Leone', *African Affairs*, 106, 422, pp.95-111.

Jackson, P. (2012) 'Decentralised power and traditional authorities: how power determines access to justice in Sierra Leone', *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 63, pp.207-225.

Johnson, O. (2011) 'Reforming the Customary Land Tenure System in Sierra Leone: A Proposal', *Working Paper*, International Growth Centre: Freetown. Available at: http://www.theigc.org/sites/default/files/11_0558_Land_Tenure_Johnson_Final.pdf [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Kabba, V. T. S., and Li, J. (2011) 'One Country, Two Systems: The Dualistic Land Tenure System in Sierra Leone, and the Need for Reform', *Journal of American Science*, 7, 1.



Kamphius, B. (2005) 'Economic Policy for Peace Building' in Junne, G. And Verkoren, W. (eds.) (2005) *Postconflict Development: Meeting New Challenges*. Lynne Rienner Publishers: Boulder.

Le Billon, P., and Levin, E. (2009) 'Building peace with conflict diamonds? Merging security and development in Sierra Leone', *Development and Change*, 40, 4, pp.693-715.

Lentz, C. (2006) 'Land Rights and the Politics of Belonging in Africa: An Introduction' in Kuba, R. And Lentz, C. (eds.) (2006) *Land and the Politics of Belonging in West Africa*. Brill Press: London.

Maconachie, R. (2008) 'New agricultural frontiers in post-conflict Sierra Leone? Exploring institutional challenges for wetland management in the Eastern Province', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 46, 02, pp.235-266.

Maconachie, R. and Fortin, E. (2013) *Institute for Policy Research Policy Brief: Biofuels, development and sustainability in sub-Saharan Africa*. Institute for Policy Research, University of Bath: Bath.

Maconachie, R., Binns, T., Tengbe, P., and Johnson, R. (2006) 'Temporary labour migration and sustainable post-conflict return in Sierra Leone', *GeoJournal*, 67, 3, pp.223-240.

Maguire, S. (2012) Access to Justice for Women and Girls in Sierra Leone: assessment conducted for the DFID Sierra Leone Access to Security and Justice Programme (ASJP), August 2012, DFID: Freetown. [Unpublished report].

Manning, R., E. (2009) *The Landscape of Local Authority in Sierra Leone: How 'Traditional' and 'Modern' Justice Systems Interact*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Melsbach, G. and Rahall, J. (2012) *Increasing Pressure for Land: Implications for Rural Livelihoods and Development Actors. A Case Study of Sierra Leone*, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe and Green Scenery: Freetown. Available at: http://www.nachdenkseiten.de/upload/pdf/Study_Land_Investment_Sierra_Leone.pdf [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Millar, G. (2013a) "'We have no voice for that': Power, gender, and land decisions in rural Sierra Leone", Presented at the Gender and Land Governance Conference. 14-15 January 2013, University of Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Millar, G. (2013b) 'Technologies of diffusion: Making local land legible and corporate power applicable', Presented at ISA Annual Convention, San Francisco, 3-6 April 2013.

Millar, G. (2013c) 'Economic development as transitional justice? Needs, recovery, and justice in Sierra Leone', Presented at ISA Annual Convention, San Francisco, 3-6 April 2013.

Millar, G. (2013d) 'Power and authority in transitional Sierra Leone: Local experiences of the liberal peace', Presented at the PSS/ISA conference, Budapest, 29 June 2013.

Mokuwa, E., Voors, M., Bulte, E., and Richards, P. (2011) Peasant grievance and insurgency in Sierra Leone: Judicial serfdom as a driver of conflict. *African Affairs*, 110(440), 339-366.

Moyo, S. and Foray, K.M. (2009) *UNDP Scoping Mission Report: Key Land Tenure Issues and Reform Processes for Sierra Leone*, Report commissioned for the Ministry of Land, Country Planning and the Environment, UNDP: Freetown. Available at:



http://leonenet.info/documents/Docs/sil_landtenure_scoping_missionrpt.pdf [Accessed 19 November 2013].

Namati (2013) “Everyone above us is tied to the money” – *The land grab in Sierra Leone*, Namati: Freetown. Available at: <http://www.namati.org/entry/the-land-grab-in-sierra-leone/> [Accessed 02 December 2013].

Njoh, A. J., and Akiwumi, F. (2012) ‘Colonial legacies, land policies and the millennium development goals: Lessons from Cameroon and Sierra Leone’, *Habitat International*, 36, 2, pp.210-218.

Nnadozie, E., and Abdulmelik, S. (2009) *From Civil Strife to Peace Building: Examining Private Sector Involvement in West African Reconstruction*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press: Waterloo, Canada.

Oakland Institute (2011) *Understanding Land Investment Deals in Africa: Sierra Leone*. Oakland Institute: Oakland, CA. Available at: http://www.oaklandinstitute.org/sites/oaklandinstitute.org/files/OI_SierraLeone_Land_Investment_report_0.pdf [Accessed 19 November 2013].

OECD (2007) *Land, Agricultural Change and Conflict in West Africa: Regional Issues from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire*, OECD: Paris. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/swac/publications/39495967.pdf> [Accessed 19 November 2013].

Peters, K. And Richards, P. (2011) ‘Rebellion and Agrarian Tensions in Sierra Leone’, *Agrarian Change* 11, 3, pp.377-395.

Renner-Thomas, A. (2010) *Land tenure in Sierra Leone: The law, dualism and the making of a land policy*. AuthorHouse: Milton Keynes.

Richards, P. (2005) ‘To fight or to farm? Agrarian dimensions of the Mano River conflicts (Liberia and Sierra Leone)’. *African Affairs*, 104, 417, pp.571-590.

Richards, P., Bah, K. and Vincent, J. (2004) ‘Social Capital and Survival: Prospects for Community-Driven Development in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone’, *Social Development Paper No 12*, World Bank: New York.

UNEP (2010) *Sierra Leone Environment, Conflict and Peace Building Assessment Technical Report*, UNEP: Nairobi. Available at: http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/Sierra_Leone.pdf [Accessed 19 November 2013].

Unruh, J. (2008) ‘Land policy reform, customary rule of law and the peace process in Sierra Leone’, *African Journal of Legal Studies*, 2, 2, pp.94-117.

Unruh, J. and Turray, H. (2006) ‘Land tenure, food security and investment in post-war Sierra Leone’, FAO Livelihood Support Programme, *Working Paper 22*. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/es/esw/lsp/cd/img/docs/LSPWP22.pdf> [Accessed 19 November 2013].

USAID (2010) USAID Country Profile Property Rights and Resource Governance, Sierra Leone. Available at: http://usaidlandtenure.net/sites/default/files/country-profiles/full-reports/USAID_Land_Tenure_Sierra_Leone_Profile.pdf [Accessed 18 November 2013].

WFP (2011) *The State of Food Security and Nutrition*. WFP: Rome,. Available at:



<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp237463.pdf> [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Williams, S. and Oredola-Davies, P. (2006) 'Land and pro-poor change in Sierra Leone: Scoping Study', prepared for joint EU-DFID Country Assistance Plan for Sierra Leone, July 2006. Available at: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/land-and-pro-poor-change-in-sierra-leone.pdf> [Accessed 18 November 2013].

Wilson, S. A. (2013) 'Company–Community Conflicts Over Diamond Resources in Kono District, Sierra Leone', *Society and Natural Resources*, 26, 3, pp.254-269.