

IX. PSYCHOSOCIAL: MOVING BEYOND MANIPULATION AND ABUSE

The Lomé Peace Agreement in 1999 ushered in new hopes and opportunities for reconciliation and coexistence. But three years later, young people are struggling with deep feelings of anger, disappointment and an enduring sense of what they call “marginalization.” Although no victor was declared, young people on all sides of the conflict feel that they are the vanquished. They see themselves as victimized by a peace that misrepresented itself and is not substantially improving their lives. Some of the most distressing and self-defeating manifestations of this mood are increasing divisions, resentment and competition among young people over scarce resources.

A CRITICAL TRANSITION: FINDING COMMON GROUND AMIDST DEEP DIVISIONS

ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH ARE PROCESSING WAR TRAUMA

Young people are at a point of critical psychosocial transition.²⁹⁹ The new peace is calling on them to move on from the war, and they are eager to do so, but as they do, they are preoccupied and haunted by the brutal world of deprivation and abuse they have known for the past ten years, which has not yet fully changed.

Everyone has lost something — an arm, a leg, a home, property, family, school and job opportunities, respect and acceptance in their communities, their health, a discernable future. Many are still experiencing displacement and sexual violence and exploitation. Some are afraid of being confronted by those who harmed them in the past, and others are afraid of being confronted by those they harmed. Many try to alleviate the pain of the abuses they endured in silence, with drug use, crime and commercial sex work. Others are living on the street without support, and some remain with former fighting forces. At the same time, they contemplate recon-

ciliation and dream of a stable peaceful future where they are cared for and their rights are respected.

LACK OF PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE CONTRIBUTES TO DIVISIONS

Despite much excellent humanitarian work, protection and assistance schemes continue to fall far short of fulfilling the rights of most young people and alleviating their burdens. They find comparisons to their wartime and present situations confusing. They ask themselves repeatedly a number of disturbing and conflicting questions: Why did they fight in the war, and why did they agree to this peace and turn in their weapons? Were they used and manipulated by their commanders, or were they fighting for a just cause? Why are some of their families rejecting them, and how can they reconcile? Why are they not getting the help they need, and who can they turn to?

Disappointed in the lack of support from those who manage the peace, they turn on each other in blame and resentment. They see limited assistance parceled out to vulnerable groups — former child soldiers, refugees, IDPs, small children, amputees and others — and feelings of competition increase among them. They are extremely frustrated and increasingly bitter, often stewing over considerations of who has suffered more, who is getting more and who deserves more.

Haunted by Thoughts of His Family Destroyed

“My family and I were about to go to pray the morning of January 6, 1997, when the rebels entered Freetown,” said John, 18. “We were shocked by the sounds of firing. We didn’t know what to do or where to run, so we sought safety by hiding under the bed. After three days we were crying for food, and two of my brothers died. On that very day, the rebels entered our house and commanded us to come out of our hiding place, including my parents. As we got out, they told me to get to bed with my mother. I refused, and they immediately killed my mother and took me outside. They put my hand on a rock and cut it off. When they finished, they burned the house and took my younger sister. I still do not know where she is. Up until now, it makes me sick to think about all this.”³⁰⁰

Blame is a constant preoccupation. When one person says, “You got aid and I didn’t,” a second meaning is heard and implied: “You were the perpetrator and I was the victim, so why wasn’t I considered over you?” Or, the other way around, “You may think I’m the perpetrator, but you don’t understand that I’m really a victim, and I have special needs that no one seems to care about.”

As young people formerly with fighting groups feel they are discriminated against in the provision of aid, others feel ex-combatants have received too much attention. “Everyone is concerned with making the ex-combatants comfortable,” one youth said. “What about the *victims*? My dad and my older sister were brutally murdered by the rebels. My older sister was the breadwinner in the family, and my younger brothers and sister are left with nothing. Ex-combatants go for DDR money, and the rest of us are left idle, without hope.”³⁰¹

In another example, one former adolescent RUF fighter said: “The CDFs committed atrocities against the RUF here in [Makeni]. And now they have come to secure their villages. We won’t ever get packages to be able to go back home to farm.”³⁰² Some civilian adolescents and youth also resent assistance and attention going to former CDFs, who abused the rights of many civilian young people in the conflict. “They stole from us, abducted us and accused us of being rebels,” one adolescent said.³⁰³



Many adolescents and youth are still haunted by their war experiences.

COMMON GROUND

Despite the festering divisions felt by young people, in reality, they share largely the same concerns and ideas

for solving their problems. With few exceptions, most young people perceive themselves to be the “real victims,” no matter which side they were on.

Manipulated and turned against one another by adults in the conflict, and feeling ignored or betrayed by the promises of the peace process, it is difficult for them to see beyond their personal suffering now. They say that only when young people begin to be treated equally and get the care they need will forgiveness and healing occur.

Young people face an enormous challenge to come together, effectively to create “wan salone” — one Sierra Leone — and address their problems constructively together, to repair the divisions among them and the divisions within Sierra Leone. Adolescents and youth revealed many common themes and concerns relating to their psychosocial well-being, despite their differences.

SPEAKING WITH ONE VOICE DESPITE DIFFERENCES

- Young people in Sierra Leone are simply not okay. They are masters of coping, but across the board, are crying out for support.
- At a point of critical transition, they are processing their war experiences and seeing in the stark light of an uncertain peace the war’s very brutal and real effects on their lives. In virtually every one of the more than 100 case studies conducted by researchers, young people interviewed chose to discuss mainly their wartime experiences. This demonstrated a great need for them to voice what happened to them during the war, to better understand and come to terms with these events as they journey to move beyond them.
- Their transition to healing and peace is thwarted by deep feelings of victimization and marginalization whichever side of the war they were on, whether or not they fought in the war, and whether or not they perpetrated violence.
- The vast majority of the more than 600 adolescents and youth interviewed believe that adults, especially those in government, do not consider their views and rights, and that “injustices” are committed against them.
- Successful support to young people through this transition will depend on the ability and willingness of decision-makers and caretakers to deal with the concrete symptoms of their marginaliza-

tion and support their direct, constructive involvement in their own recovery.

- Young people compete over resources and over who has suffered more. They are challenged to identify the common threads in their struggle and come together peacefully to achieve their mutual goals.
- With minimal variation, adolescents and youth consistently name the same top concerns on the adolescent concerns survey. (See Survey Results.) These choices represent the main symptoms of the young people’s marginalization, and they are directly linked to solutions to improve their lives — principally education and livelihood opportunities — they recommended in focus groups.
- Despite their frustrations and struggles, young people are uniformly committed to giving peace a chance.

“WE ARE MARGINALIZED”

Young people frequently term the major source of their unhappiness, or feelings of being vanquished and victimized, as “marginalization.” They say the root of this marginalization is “injustice,” which they find in a wide variety of conditions and sources.

MISTRUST OF GOVERNMENT AND ADULT AUTHORITY

Young people describe deep feelings of mistrust of government and the adult community in general. While they name many supportive individuals and relationships, they regularly point to adult-run systems that do not care for them, do not include them and cannot be trusted. They believe the government pays limited attention to their concerns and involves them in decision-making only when it is politically opportune. Those who were involved with rebel fighting forces wonder why some of their former commanders no longer support or even take an interest in them.

For many, boys especially, who were part of a strong, hierarchical authority structure within the RUF, transition to civilian life is particularly tenuous. They had become takers in the war and are now reduced to being passive recipients — often with nothing to receive. Although RUF leaders agreed to the peace and were integrated into government and security forces, young people associated with them are slow to trust governmental structures and per-

ceive them as biased against them. This is especially the case in Makeni, which has virtually become a ghetto for former RUF youth with nowhere to go. As assistance is slow to come to the north of Sierra Leone, they equate this with a deliberate attempt to marginalize them.

As a result, many continue to look back and remember at least having received a level of respect and sustenance within the structure of the RUF. Many have been so manipulated and brainwashed by the adults who used them that they are unable to fully confront the contradictions in the rights violations they endured within military forces, as targets of armed groups, and now as civilians. They do not know whom to trust. To these and other young people, keeping promises is critical to their well-being and an ability to build trust.

The following excerpts from interviews with adolescent RUF participants show their discouragement and anger at the behavior of the current authorities (see box “Unkept Promises to Youth Could Lead to Further Unrest” on next page). They give credence to the temptation to look nostalgically on their not-so-distant former lives as fighters.

Like the former fighters, civilian adolescents highly mistrust the government and other adult authority, believing the government does not take their best interests to heart when making decisions and does not involve them. They also believe that adults in general discount young people’s opinions, intelligence and worth to society.

Young people say repeatedly that politicians are “greedy and selfish.” They believe that adults “do not consider us...because of our age and our sex,” and “...adolescents are considered to be inferior.”³⁰⁵ These sentiments represent a widespread disaffection from government and adult structures that are decidedly undemocratic and not youth-friendly in the eyes of young people. Even though urban adolescents and youth have better access to information and decision-makers than young people in rural areas, their opinions on this subject are no less strong than in other areas of the country.

Basic Needs Not Met

Because humanitarian assistance has not dramatically improved young people’s lives overall, all young people share strong feelings that their basic rights are not being met. They believe they are excluded by

humanitarian assistance programs or that social welfare systems in general benefit a privileged class. They repeatedly assert that they lack basic services, saying that the “selfishness and greediness” of those in power is evident in young people’s inability to “go to school,” or to have “good schools and good health care.” They say that “the ‘big men’ send their children to the good schools, but they don’t care about us,” and “this country is rich, but we see none of the benefits of its resources.” Whether young people were formerly with fighting forces of any stripe, IDPs, former refugees or others, they repeat the theme of inequitable sharing of resources in Sierra Leone as central to their problems.

Adolescents Speak Out but Are Not Heard

Many young people feel marginalized because they feel they “have no voice” in decisions or activities that affect their lives. Ironically, however, young people have spoken out in the loudest ways imaginable, as fighters and community activists, and still they are not being heard. They were the main fighters, forced to take up arms and fight for a vision imparted to them. This vision was, however, corrupted by misplaced violence, drugs and new levels of greed. Others took up the cause non-violently, becoming highly organized at protesting and community-based activism. Yet, these same young people feel unable to control and shape their lives and their communities. Those who fought have learned that violence has not

Unkept Promises to Youth Could Lead to Further Unrest

Q: “Why did you fight this war?”

A: “I joined this revolution to fight the corruption of this country, and now, we don’t see nothing so far. We don’t get money, no food, no nothing. We suffer. We turn idle. We have no machines. We need practical training, [they] promise[d] but they say it’s not forthcoming. How can we work without them? We fought a senseless war.”

Another said, “I disarmed and was promised assistance, but so far, I haven’t received anything. In this country, if you are poor you stay poor; if you are rich, you stay rich.”

Q: “What is the cause of the problems you face?”

A: “Poverty is the major cause of disputes between us....The politicians come and tell us their focus is youth, but it’s all slush. When they get power they tell them [youth] they’re foolish and give them no respect. Instead of looking at our age group, they look at small girls.”

An adolescent boy adds, “After politicians have gained power, they kick us out. If we had money and a job, we’d expect a salary, and we’d have clothes to put on. That would prove I’m a young man.”

Yet another said, “They do not use politics for development or education.”

Q: “Can there be peace in Sierra Leone?”

A: “I don’t see this peace as anything that will solve the problems of the country unless they develop the northern region. They just concentrate on [other] areas and leave the northern part of the country, so, how can they teach peace?”

Another said: “I took up arms because of selfishness, greed and discrimination by [President] Kabbah.... For us, lasting peace is to keep promises.... There are no improvements now, because the promises are not forthcoming... if [they are] not, and they call us, we will come back [and fight], we are ready.”

Another said: “There is no peace yet in Sierra Leone. All was promised, but nothing is forthcoming. They must disarm and release our leader. We are looking to see what the government will do. It was only Foday Sankoh [the rebel leader] who lived for us; if he’s not released, we’ll join our colleagues in Freetown.... They are still killing Temne in Kono, and the government isn’t doing anything.”³⁰⁴

gotten them what they want, although in the short term it has had more immediate results (you need it, you take it or you force someone to submit to your requests — no more waiting around). Activists have learned that non-violence has many pitfalls and can be very slow without real leverage, especially as others are waging violent war.

Family Care Structures at Times Unsupportive

Young people regularly expressed common concerns about a lack of care or love from parents and other family or guardians and about mistreatment, particularly within polygamous families. One adolescent said, “Children of polygamous parents don’t get enough love or basic needs, so they don’t respect their parents.”³⁰⁶ Some former child combatants who were separated from their families during the war and forced to fight believe that their parents had abandoned them. While efforts are made to reunite young people with their families, their time at home is not always nurturing. Among other things, young people state that parents often encourage and condone their daughters’ participation in prostitution as a means of earning money for the family. Many young people also feel they cannot return home at all, fearing they will not be accepted due to their actions or the abuses they suffered during the war or that they will be violently harmed through acts of vengeance. In the eastern province, however, the IRC has begun to use video equipment to reunite former child soldiers with their families. They use the equipment to tape and show messages from former combatants to the family, and the family can send taped messages back. So far, family members have been excited to welcome the young people home, which underscores the importance of ongoing reunification and reintegration services to break down barriers to adolescents returning home.

THE CHALLENGES OF ADJUSTING TO PEACE

EX-RUF COMBATANTS

The young people who served with the RUF face some of the biggest psychosocial challenges of reintegrating into a peacetime society. They have faced so many layers of rights abuses and have been so psychologically and physically manipulated, they are left with extremely contradictory and confusing feelings about their

wartime experiences. They carry with them the double trauma of forced recruitment and victimization and their commission of violent acts, struggling without tools to reconcile them.

The differences between the experiences of adolescents who spontaneously demobilized and went home to family and those who went through the DDR program are not fully known. It might be the case that most young people fared well through both routes. However, many young people interviewed said that those who received support through the DDR, with care and counseling in ICCs, family tracing and reunification and education opportunities are in many ways doing better than others who did not receive this care. The under-18s who have made it into school with DDR support are feeling more settled and hopeful than older adolescents and youth who are not in school or are in classes ill equipped to train them and where allowances are not being paid. (See Protection section.) Moreover, as sensitization work for forgiveness and reconciliation has reached only limited pockets of the country, many former fighters who are accepted by their own families are still taunted and called “rebels” by others in the community. With no place to turn and still highly traumatized by their experiences, some have ended up living on streets, taking drugs and stealing alongside other disaffected young people. Others threaten angrily a return to war if “promises are not kept.”

CIVIL DEFENSE FORCES

Caritas-Makeni’s Psychosocial Supervisor, Osman Kamara, told the Women’s Commission: “At first, it was hard for many former child soldiers to readjust. In the bush, they were commanders, and they still wanted to be like this and have an edge over elders. They were recalcitrant and stubborn. But with recreation, storytelling, counseling, schooling, vocational training, and discussions about peaceful coexistence, most are doing better. A constructive approach has been to involve both former combatants, separated children who did not fight in the war, and other young people in the same activities to avoid a one-sided reintegration. Many former child soldiers show signs that they are still suffering from trauma, for example, wetting their beds and becoming engaged in stealing and other destructive activities.”³⁰⁷

In contrast, those with the government Civil Defense Forces (CDFs) (see Glossary) have been relatively better reintegrated into communities that supported their



The Sierra Leone Army and UNAMSIL troops at times sponsor sporting events to foster reconciliation and non-violence. As rival high school groups played tug-o-war in Makeni, RUF members and SLA soldiers prepared for a soccer match against one another.

participation in the conflict. But they are still not trusted by all civilians, as CDFs also committed atrocities not only against RUF fighters, but against civilians, including adolescent boys, whom they accused of collaboration with RUF forces.

Overall, for ex-combatants, the DDR represented an agreement to end the war in exchange for a place in the community and a governance system with amnesty and services. As these services increasingly falter, many believe the peace agreement has been violated and feel manipulated and used. Thus, DDR intended as a psychosocial intervention is incomplete without a full commitment to substantive reintegration.

Without the guarantee of full reintegration in exchange for disarmament and demobilization, and without the opportunity for a substantially “better life,” young people are extremely confused, angry and highly volatile, likely to turn back to their former leaders. A big wooden placard of a smiling Foday Sankoh, former head of the RUF (see Glossary), stands firmly posted in the center of Makeni town, and

young people regularly rallied for his release from prison and for the RUF Party during the presidential election campaign in April 2002.

GIRLS

Girls and young women have endured especially difficult transitions out of the RUF. Many who have managed to return to their communities, sometimes with children, have faced rejection and stigmatization and have been branded “rebels” despite their involuntary involvement with the

group. At times, they (and boys) are physically

Converted to the Cause

Abdul is now 19 and stays in Makeni. He said: “When the war started in 1991, my mother was killed by a stray bullet, and our family was divided due to the fighting. The rebels captured me in Buedu, and the older members trained me for nine months. I was given a gun, and I joined the Small Boys Unit, which had around 1,000 members between the ages of six and 15. There was also a Small Girls Unit with hundreds of [members]. [At first] we were not sent to the front line, and we mainly provided food and drinks for older fighters — the guns were more for our protection. In 1993, I experienced my first gun exchange with ‘Momo’ soldiers in Rotifun. I was there until 1997, when I entered Freetown with other RUF and fought the Nigerian troops. I took a home there...for nine months until we were drifted out by Nigerian troops...and we withdrew to Kono. In December 1998, I attacked Makeni with other RUF soldiers. We fought for five days, and I ended up staying in one house where I had three ‘girlfriends.’ My father and I plan to go back to Bujedu, but I do not feel safe enough yet because of possible retaliation. I stayed with the RUF for so long fighting for free education, free medical care and to stop the suffering of young people. I think Foday Sankoh will be released and will help the ex-combatants as he understands our problems best.”³⁰⁸

AN ADULT IN MAKENI REMEMBERS THE SMALL BOYS UNIT

“I remember my first contact with the Small Boys Unit in Makeni. They came to our street at six o’clock in the morning and asked all of us who were not with the RUF to line up and told us to push their car — there was no fuel at that time due to the conflict. We were forced to push their car for four miles while they were seated inside.”³⁰⁹

scarred with the letters “RUF” that they have difficulty hiding or removing. Programs available to those formerly with the RUF and other armed groups have helped, but many have not received any attention. They have received little counseling and support negotiating their “bush marriages” or recovering from the sexual and other violence they endured. Many have turned to commercial sex work for economic survival and because they are trapped in a cycle of self-blame, degradation and feelings of worthlessness. Girl sex workers in Freetown desperately criticized NGOs for not paying attention to their needs, saying they just “come and talk and then nothing ever happens.”³¹⁰

Girls and NGO workers also report that many girls and women remain with their “bush husbands,” frightened to leave or compelled to stay for a variety of reasons. Caritas — Makeni’s Osman Kamara said: “Most girls remain attached to ‘bush husbands’ even if they have gone through an ICC. While engaged in activities at ICCs, if their ‘bush husbands’ came around, the girls

would increasingly do things with them outside the ICCs.”³¹¹

Chris Day at MSF-H in Makeni also said that in the initial phases of demobilization, “Girls fiercely protested being separated from their ‘bush husbands.’ They were extremely worried about their husbands’ reaction. If demobilization did not work out, they were likely afraid they had few other options.”³¹² At the same time, some adolescent mothers interviewed who had gotten away from their “bush husbands” and found support from their families said they did not want to be with these men anymore. Interestingly, however, they said they would take

money from them to help support their children.

The two descriptions in the box below are compelling examples of the trauma experienced by many girls.

YOUNG PEOPLE’S COPING STRATEGIES AND PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

Young people in Sierra Leone developed a variety of coping strategies to get them through the war, both physically and emotionally. Some strategies are more constructive than others, but they all serve a valuable purpose in the quest for survival: love, longing for family, safety, respect and some measure, often illusory, of control. When the strife is over, the healthy needs and positive attributes in even the most destructive and injurious of these strategies, can be used to help young people turn their lives around. If they are not, the healing and future of

The Laughing Stock of Her Community

Ruth, now 19, recalls the day Freetown was attacked on January 6, 1997. “I was 14 on that day when the rebels attacked Freetown. They captured and raped me in front of my parents who could not say anything about it because they were afraid. When they finished with me, they left the house and ordered us not to move. After about five days, they re-entered the house and gave my parents 5,000 leones (US\$2.44) as my bride price. Those rebels took me to their camp and gave me as a wife to one of the commanders by the name of So-So-Blood. When the commander was not around, the other rebels forced me to bed. I had no other option, and I became pregnant. On March 3, 1999, So-So-Blood was killed [and I escaped]. When I finally gave birth I was unable to know the biological father of the baby, and I became the laughing stock of my community.”³¹³

ESCAPED WHEN SHE HAD THE CHANCE

Jariatu was 10 when she was captured by rebels in Freetown. “They took me to the rebel base with many other captured people, especially young girls like me,” she said. “They forced me to go to bed. Most of us were raped by more than one rebel. Some could not get through the pain, but I was lucky to survive. The rebels who took me gave me weapons and trained me because I was very active. But when I was 12, I became pregnant. Due to poor medical treatment, I was unable to give birth to a healthy child, and I lost the baby. I was the most senior woman. I was responsible for the cooking. One day I was asked to prepare food when we heard heavy bombardment from the government soldiers. All of the rebels ran to safety, including the commanders. I was the only one left outside, and I managed to escape.”³¹⁴

young people become extremely tenuous.

COPING STRATEGIES

Rationalization and Belief — Used as principal combatants in the Sierra Leone war and systematically trained to fight under the watchful eyes of their commanders, and often with the support of their communities, many young people came to believe in their mission and their own power. Local communities lauded young people's involvement in CDFs and dressed them in traditional clothing, ritualizing their battles, even convincing them that they were impervious to bullets. RUF recruits were told they were becoming part of a Movement, a revolution, so that they were no longer "abducted" but rather had "joined" the RUF. Mixing drug use into the equation, young people on both sides felt they were fighting for a higher cause, rationalizing their acts as they committed them. Asked in interviews and focus groups about these acts, they often respond with simultaneous contradictions. They were powerful soldiers fighting for a cause and the acts they committed were forced upon them. In reality, the opposing roles of captive and warrior were both real parts of their experiences. To become whole human beings, they need to look to both explanations to understand their experiences.

Criminal Activity: Might Makes Right/Asserting Power and Strength — As the concept of "might makes right" ruled the wartime period, many young people engaged in stealing and looting as a matter of course and the daily siege that constituted their normal life. Today, without livelihood possibilities, positive support for change or a functioning police structure, many young people still depend on stealing as a way of life. Sexual violence, another form of asserting power — derived in part from a lack of control — was widespread in the conflict and continues as social protections, including cultural norms prohibiting such behavior, have broken down and as young people feel out of control in other areas of their lives.

Prostitution/Survival/Need for an Illusion of Control — Young people say that girls and women especially turned to prostitution in large numbers before and after the war. Many resorted to prostitution mainly out of necessity, describing their inability to find support without submitting to the power of males who control resources. Loss of self-esteem and hopelessness have also driven girls to prostitution, compelling them to place their lives at risk or otherwise confirm their feelings of degradation and

worthlessness. Some believe that the proliferation of commercial sex work is a direct result of sexual violence perpetrated against girls and women in the war, perpetuating a state of mind and an explosion of willing customers, including peacekeepers. Less is known about boys' participation in prostitution and the social taboos about discussing it.

Using Drugs/Self Medication — "Ghetto boys" described how they forget their troubles by smoking marijuana and taking other drugs. (See Health section.)

Remaining with Fighting Forces/Loyalty/Need for Protection, Security, Family — Some young people consider their peers and adults who have been a part of fighting groups to be the only family they have known, their main source of support and resources, and that remaining with them will bring the security they long for. Some former RUF fighters have followed their one-time commanders to diamond mines in search of their fortunes. Others remain with former fighting forces in demobilized areas because they are afraid to return to their hometowns and feel more secure remaining in the relative safety and community of others who understand their experiences. Many girls and women who were sexually abused and enslaved during the conflict insisted on not being separated from their "bush husbands" during the conflict, deathly afraid of a life of ostracism and isolation in their communities.

Early Marriage/Economic Security/Need for Protection and Family — Young people say that girls especially are marrying younger in order to find economic sustenance and survival. This may also be connected to initiation into traditional societies, which may reintroduce them to the community following rape or other violations. Such options may be well received by young girls, with few resources or other options. Marriage might also provide young girls with a sense of belonging and a reestablishment of tradition.

TURNING COPING STRATEGIES INTO PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

Young people are also taking steps to turn their lives around and begin again with constructive activities that they believe will recreate a world of stability for them.

Going to School or Getting Training — Education and training is key to psychosocial well-being, accord-

ing to young people, who named it their top concern. It provides them with structure, purpose, skills for the future, integration within the community, identity, hope and more. Of all those in service to armed groups, whether combatants or not, young people who were able to return to formal education through CEIP or other means appeared to be coping the best with the transition back to civilian life. In their crisp, clean school uniforms, in class with other young people, they have a physical place to be, they are integrated into the community, and they have positive goals in sight. While there are still many tensions in school, hope for the future and mutual support can help young people endure these problems.

Working — Young people need and want to work, to be responsible for themselves and to meet their own basic needs. Their ability to take an active part in improving their lives while learning and achieving something raises their self-respect and respect for others. Young people also say they need to “keep busy” or be involved in activities that distract them from other, more negative behaviors and that offer them hope.

Participation in Advocacy and Youth Group Activities — As noted elsewhere in this report, Sierra Leone is rife with youth groups. They are a source of great strength and provide an active role in civil society for young people, although too often they feel their voices are not being heard. Former fighters drawn into groups with civilian young people can offer their skills, contribute and turn their coping strategies into more constructive forms of protest and social change. Girls and young women, especially, need assistance in beginning their own organizing efforts and building leadership among male-dominated youth groups. All of Sierra Leone appears to appreciate radio shows conducted by or pertaining to young people’s issues, which currently occupy about 50 percent of UNAMSIL radio’s programming.

Recreation and Creative Activities, Including Music, Dance and Art — Girls and boys enjoy sports, especially football for boys and volleyball for girls. They say it takes their minds off their troubles, provides opportunities to work out feelings of aggression, and learn team work. Sports have been an effective tool to calm inter-school warring in Makeni and have fostered goodwill between the ex-RUF and the SLA through, for example,

exhibition matches. All players, especially girls, require more materials and organized play. Packages of recreation materials to schools are extremely important, but community-based recreation should also be developed. All Sierra Leoneans, especially young people, enjoy music. They listen to the radio and to tapes they hear in market places. Songs that deliver messages of peace and health are unifying and informative forces. Dance groups also exist, which provide opportunities for young people to come together and work through their feelings and ideas with peers and teachers, and also provide a source of pride and entertainment to their communities.

Peer Relationships — Young people rely on their friends to support them through the difficult times. Some young people are also involved in sexual relationships, which provide them with a level of support. However, many young people identified these relationships with growing cynicism, viewing them as transactions rather than as based on love. They pointed to the ills of early marriage, pregnancy and the transmission of disease.

Taking Care of Others — Young people watch and care for their siblings, younger and older, and parents and elders, which distracts them from their own troubles and provides them with a meaning to live.



At Peace Links’ Art Beats Center (above) and through other youth group activities, young people use creative activities to heal themselves and their communities.

ENSURING YOUNG PEOPLE'S PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING: KEEPING PROMISES AND INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE IN PEACE BUILDING

The improvement of young people's psychosocial well-being will depend upon an ability to build trust between young people and adults. This building of trust in turn will require keeping promises made to all young people in the Lomé Peace Agreement and other national and international standards. It will require concrete interventions to alleviate poverty, reunify separated children with family, create education and livelihood opportunities and provide counseling, traditional rituals and other support mechanisms to young people, especially those who remain especially traumatized by their war experiences.

Young people must also be directly involved in the recovery and reconstruction of their communities. They need more targeted help making the transition to peace, and their contributions must be seen as essential. If not, they will continue to feel vanquished, marginalized and "different" from others they believe are doing better than they are or appear to have more control over their lives. The risks in not placing adolescents and youth at the center of decision-making are a return to violence, a further degradation of their rights and hopelessness for all of Sierra Leone.

Some positive psychosocial interventions that are holistic, community-based and connected to life skills and livelihood include World Vision's Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace Program and Skills Training and Employment Promotion project, Christian Children's Fund's Skills Training and Employment Generation project, War Child's creative workshops and the IRC's therapeutic and educational programs for former combatants. (See Livelihood and International Response sections.) However, more needs to be done; interventions must be expanded to unite young people and address their feelings of marginalization so that they can become productive members of society. In addition, programs must transition from working for young people to working with them to enable them to take matters into their own hands so that they can advocate, listen to and respect each other and reduce differences among themselves.

Donors and decision-makers must understand that for these young people, the enticement to demobilize and try peace came largely through the promise of acceptance and support in reintegration so that life would be better in post-conflict Sierra Leone. Adolescents' trust in the reintegration and reconstruction process will only be built through the just rule of law and the keeping of promises. In particular, decision-makers must ensure that the reintegration process greatly improves opportunities for livelihood and education.

X. SURVEY RESULTS: EDUCATION, POVERTY AND HEALTH CARE ARE TOP CONCERNS

Adolescent researchers chose to survey the top concerns of their peers, older youth and adults as part of their methodology. At the end of their focus group sessions or individual interviews, they invited research participants to rank their highest concerns from a written list the adolescent researchers devised. (See Methodological Materials for sample survey.) The results of the surveys helped researchers understand the relative importance of the issues they discussed in the focus groups. As described below, their findings were highly consistent across locations and sub-groups: lack of educational opportunities, poverty and lack of health care highly outweigh other adolescent concerns.

SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

CONSISTENCY OF CONCERNS

Adolescent researchers created the survey in their training and practice sessions. Although the Makeni and Freetown teams worked separately, they formulated virtually the same survey. This reinforces a high level of consistency in the concerns held by young people in the northern and the western regions. Differences arose in the wording of only two categories. The Freetown team surveyed young people's concern over "teen pregnancy," while the Makeni team surveyed "unwanted pregnancy." In another category, Freetown surveyed concern about "rape,"

while Makeni chose to survey the broader category of “sexual violence.” In the charts and tables showing combined results of the two teams, both versions of these two categories are represented due to their similar nature, but should be read with these differences in mind.

LANGUAGE ISSUES

The surveys themselves were written in English, and adolescent researchers chose not to further translate them into *Krio*, *Temne* or other languages. They felt that many young people they interviewed would have low literacy skills and would be unable to read their native languages well enough to warrant multiple translations. In the end, surveys were often administered verbally, with researchers translating and explaining the full range of survey choices before the process of ranking them began. This practice likely also led to a range of interpretations, and thus, lack of consistency of the wording, but does not appear to have skewed the findings given the consistency of the responses.³¹⁵

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

In addition to providing their age, gender and location of their focus group, survey participants were asked to circle “Yes” or “No” in response to six demographic questions:

- Attending school?
- Formerly a refugee?
- Currently displaced?
- Formerly with fighting forces?
- Formerly displaced?
- Formerly with Civil Defense Forces?

Although the survey was anonymous, this additional information allowed researchers to find out more about the background of each survey participant and track any related trends in the concerns cited. Note that the question “Formerly with the fighting forces?”³¹⁶ was specifically meant to inquire whether or not the respondent had been associated with the RUF rebel group in any capacity — forcibly or voluntarily recruited, abducted for a short or long period, combatant or non-combatant, and the like. Similarly, those who checked “yes” in response to “Formerly with CDF?” could have had a variety of experiences with these fighting groups. Thus, it can-



Adolescent researchers developed their own questions to ask focus groups of their peers, including these former child soldiers in Regent, outside of Freetown.

not be assumed that all who answered yes to either of these two questions were “ex-combatants.”

SURVEY PARTICIPATION

The vast majority of concerns surveys were completed during 46 focus groups held in Makeni and at least 35 held in Freetown. Researchers in Makeni collected 418 surveys, and those in Freetown collected 409, for a total of 827 adolescent, youth and adult survey respondents.³¹⁷

Of this total, adolescents between the ages of 10 and 19 completed 436 surveys in all: 171 surveys in Freetown and 265 in Makeni. The average age of adolescents participating in the survey in Freetown was 15.6, and in Makeni, it was 16.1 years, with a combined average age of 15.8 years.

Youth between the ages of 20 and 24 turned in 181 surveys, and adults 25 years old and above filled out 194 surveys. The average age of the youth was 21 years, and 38 for adults. Twelve children under 10 also completed surveys. They averaged 8.4 years old.

A total of 213 female and 217 male adolescents participated in the study. Female and male youth numbered 75 and 96, respectively, and 102 female and 83 male adults completed surveys.

(See also Tables 1 - 4.)

Concerns Surveyed

Adolescents were asked to rank their top ten concerns from among the following 20 categories assembled by the adolescent research teams. The Makeni survey differed slightly from the Freetown survey in two categories. Makeni language used shown in brackets:

- Lack of health care
- HIV/AIDS and STDs
- Drug abuse and addiction
- Being disabled (loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.)
- Early and/or forced marriage
- Prostitution
- Teen Pregnancy [Unwanted pregnancy]
- Rape [Sexual violence]
- Lack of educational opportunities
- Unemployment
- Lack of shelter/water/food/clothing
- Poverty
- Being displaced
- Being orphaned
- Lack of parental/family/home care
- Violence and insecurity
- Adolescent crime, delinquency and vandalism
- Reintegrating into society after war
- Trauma and psychological problems because of war
- Neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision-making

Table 1: Adolescent Survey Observations (10-19 Years Old)

Team	Female	Male	Gender Not Available	Total
Freetown	84	81	6	171
Makeni	129	136	0	265
Total	213	217	6	436

Table 2: Youth Survey Observations (20-24 Years Old)

Team	Female	Male	Gender Not Available	Total
Freetown	49	40	7	96
Makeni	26	56	3	85
Total	75	96	10	181

Table 3: Adult Survey Observations (25 Years Old and above)

Team	Female	Male	Gender Not Available	Total
Freetown	77	50	3	130
Makeni	25	33	6	64
Total	102	83	9	194

Table 4: Average Age of Respondents

Group	Average Age Females	Average Age Males	Average Age Combined
Children	8.2	8.75	8.4
Adolescents	15.5	16.2	15.8
Youth	20.9	21	20.9
Adults	40.3	34.6	37.5

EXCLUSIONS

Eight surveys received from adolescents in Makeni and seven from adolescents in Freetown were not included in the final survey analysis due to incomplete or indecipherable responses. In addition, gender information was not available for six of the respondents. Thus, **findings of the surveys completed by adolescents are based on a total of 421 adolescent observations from both Freetown and Makeni combined,**³¹⁸ representing 203 girls and 212 boys.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Of the total number of adolescents for whom data was available:

292 (70 percent) were in school at the time of the survey;

85 (20 percent) were formerly refugees;

372 (89 percent) were or are currently displaced;

79 (19 percent) were with fighting forces;

18 (4 percent) were with CDF.

Refer also to accompanying Charts and Tables (pages 70-79) for the following sections.

ADOLESCENT TOP CONCERNS

Participants were asked to rank their top ten concerns from a list of 20 choices that had been compiled by the adolescent researchers. Participants were instructed to mark their top concern with 10, their next highest concern with 9, and so on, down to number 1. (See Methodological Materials for sample survey.)³¹⁹

“LACK OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES,” “POVERTY” AND “LACK OF HEALTH CARE” RANK TOP THREE

Adolescents consistently named “lack of educational opportunities” and “poverty” their top two concerns. “Lack of educational opportunities” scored the highest on average (7.8 out of a possible 10) when the Freetown and Makeni responses were combined. Makeni respondents gave “lack of educational opportunities” a slightly higher average ranking score (7.97) than Freetown respondents did (7.64). “Poverty” scored a close second on average (7.3), with Makeni ranking poverty slightly higher (7.8) than Freetown (6.9).

NO DIFFERENCES BY GENDER IN TOP CONCERNS

Breaking down the survey results by gender across Makeni and Freetown, the same results are observed. Girls and boys both rank “lack of educational opportunities” as their first concern and “poverty” as their second highest concern. The only variation occurred among girls in Makeni, who ranked poverty (7.67) slightly higher than “lack of education” (7.47).

OTHER TOP CONCERNS

Adolescents ranked “lack of health care” their third highest concern on average (scoring 6.8). “Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing” came in fourth (at 5.8), and “unemployment” (3.8) and “lack of parental/family/home care” (3.5) came in fifth and sixth, respectively. Only slight differences occurred between the Freetown and Makeni responses, with adolescents in Makeni ranking “unemployment” slightly higher than “lack of parental/family/home care” and Freetown adolescents doing the reverse.

YOUTH TOP CONCERNS

Youth between 19 and 35 were asked to take the same survey as young people between the ages of 10 and 19. They were asked to rank what they perceive to be adolescents’ main concerns, rather than their own. Given the varied definitions of the stages of childhood in Sierra Leone, it is highly likely that the 20- to 24-year-olds who took the survey interpreted adolescence to include themselves. Thus, their responses should be viewed with this overlap in mind.

YOUTH CONCERNS SIMILAR TO ADOLESCENTS’

Youth between 20 and 24 years old also ranked “lack of education” and “poverty” as the top concerns of adolescents, giving them identical average rankings (7.0 out of a possible 10). “Lack of health care” came closely behind in third (at 6.7), and “unemployment” and “lack of shelter/food/water/clothing” also received identical rankings for fourth (5.2). Notably, however, youth gave a significantly higher average ranking to “unemployment” than adolescents did (5.2 compared with 3.8).

ADULT TOP CONCERNS

Adults were also asked to take the same survey as the adolescents and youth with the understanding that they should rank what they perceive adolescents' main concerns to be, not their own. Unlike the 20- to 24-year-olds, however, the majority of adults 25 and over followed these instructions. Thus, adult responses represent their thoughts about adolescent problems.

ADULT PERCEPTIONS OF ADOLESCENT CONCERNS SIMILAR TO ADOLESCENTS'

Adults in Freetown and Makeni also gave "lack of educational opportunities" and "poverty" the highest average scores. However, adults perceive poverty (scoring 7.2) to be a bigger concern for adolescents than lack of education (scoring 6.7). Adults also ranked adolescents' next highest concerns as "lack of health care," "unemployment" and "lack of shelter/food/water/clothing."

CHILD TOP CONCERNS

The small number of children under 10 years old participating in the survey also ranked "lack of educational opportunities" highest. Their second through fifth concerns, in descending order, were: "lack of shelter/food/water/clothing," "poverty," "lack of health care" and "lack of parental/family/home care."

DISTINCTIONS AMONG CHILD, ADOLESCENT, YOUTH AND ADULT CONCERNS

Although adolescents, youth and adults consistently name the same top five concerns for adolescents, there are several notable differences.

ADOLESCENTS RANK THREE TOP CONCERNS HIGHER THAN YOUTH AND ADULTS

Adolescents rank the following three categories of concern higher than youth and adults:

- "lack of educational opportunities" (7.8 for adolescents, 7.0 for youth and 6.7 for adults);
- "lack of shelter/food/water/clothing" (5.8 for ado-

lescents, 5.2 for youth and 4.8 for adults);

- "lack of parental/family/home care" (3.5 for adolescents, 2.7 for youth and 2.6 for adults).

YOUTH AND ADULTS RANK ONE TOP CONCERN HIGHER THAN ADOLESCENTS

Youth and adults rank the following categories of concern higher than adolescents:

- "unemployment" (3.8 for adolescents; 5.2 for youth and 4.9 for adults).

YOUNG CHILDREN RANK TWO CONCERNS HIGHER THAN OTHER RESPONDENTS

The eight children under 10 from Freetown and the four from Makeni rank two categories significantly higher than adolescents, youth and adults:

- "lack of educational opportunities" (9.8 for under-10s; 7.8 for adolescents.; 7.0 for youth; and 6.7 for adults);
- "lack of shelter/food/water/clothing" (7.3 for under-10s; 5.8 for adolescents.; 5.2 for youth; and 4.8 for adults).

SECOND TIER CONCERNS INCLUDE A GENDER DIVIDE

Beyond the top six concerns ranked by adolescents, (drawing average ranking scores between 7.8 and 3.5), a second tier of concerns emerged related broadly to insecurity, health and psychosocial recovery (drawing average ranking scores between 1.0 and 2.3). Amid these remaining 14 categories a few trends emerged.

ADOLESCENTS RANKED TWO OF THESE CATEGORIES LOWER THAN ADULTS

- "Drug abuse and addiction" (1.2 for adolescents, 1.8 for youth and 2.2 for adults);
- "Prostitution" (1.9 for adolescents, 2.4 for youth and 2.9 for adults).

SIGNIFICANT GENDER DIFFERENCES

Girls and boys ranked the general category of "vio-

lence and insecurity” similarly (1.9 and 2.1 respectively). Girls voiced somewhat higher concern over “being displaced” than boys (2.3 and 1.8 respectively). And boys ranked “neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision-making” somewhat higher than girls (2.6 and 2.1, respectively). Boys also expressed more concern over “trauma and psychological problems because of war” and “drug abuse and addiction” than girls (1.5 and 0.8 in the first instance and 1.3 and 0.9 in the second).

Most notably, however, girls are significantly more concerned *on average* about sexual violence and exploitation and related problems than boys. Girls ranked “early or forced marriage” and “unwanted/teen pregnancy” twice as high as boys (2.1 vs. 1.1 in the first instance and 2.0 vs. 1.0 in the second). Girls also ranked “prostitution,” and “sexual violence/rape” as substantially higher concerns than boys (2.3 vs. 1.5 for the former and 1.4 vs. 0.8 for the latter). Importantly, the major differences in

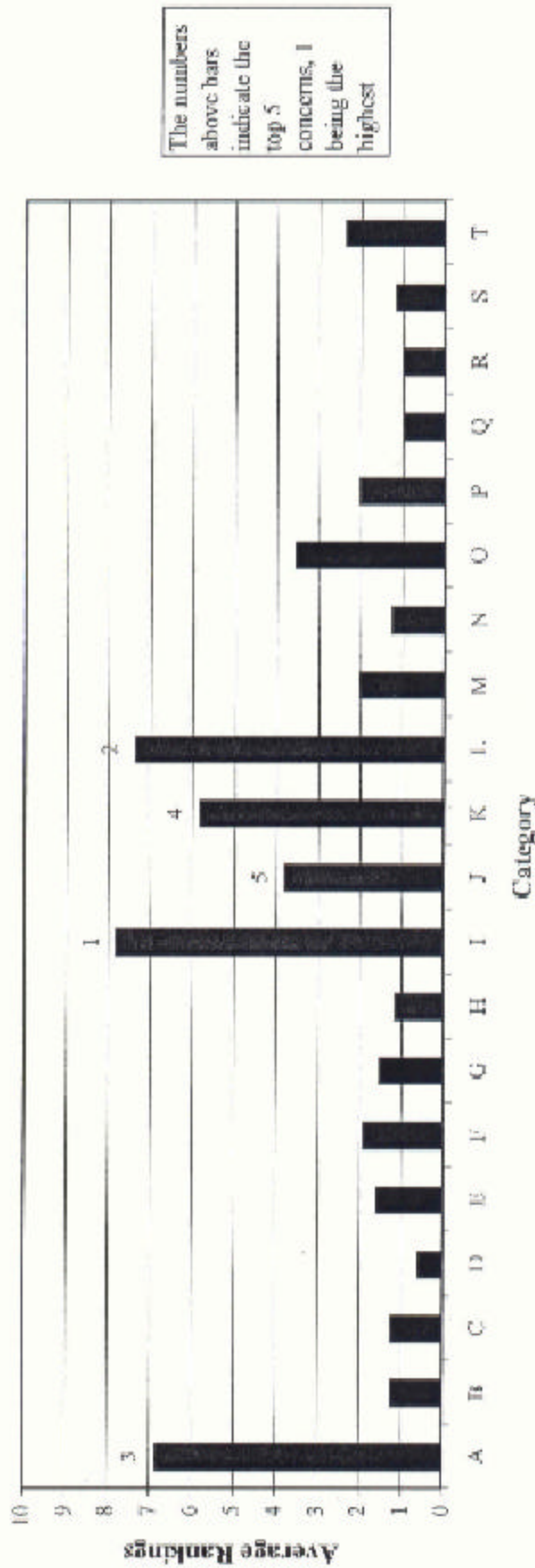
these rankings occurred in the Makeni responses. In Makeni, girls ranked these four categories double and sometimes three times as high as boys. By contrast, in Freetown, girls and boys responded to three of these categories very similarly, the exception being “early or forced marriage,” with girls in Freetown still being more than twice as concerned about this than boys. Boys in Freetown, however, actually ranked concern over “sexual violence/rape” slightly higher than girls.

OTHER SMALL DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

Findings did not reveal significant differences between respondents who were in or out of school, formerly refugees, displaced, formerly with fighting forces or CDFs. However, as would be expected, concerns about displacement received a higher ranking in Freetown, where more displaced persons were interviewed.

Top Concerns of Adolescents in Freetown and Makeni

Average Rankings from Survey Results



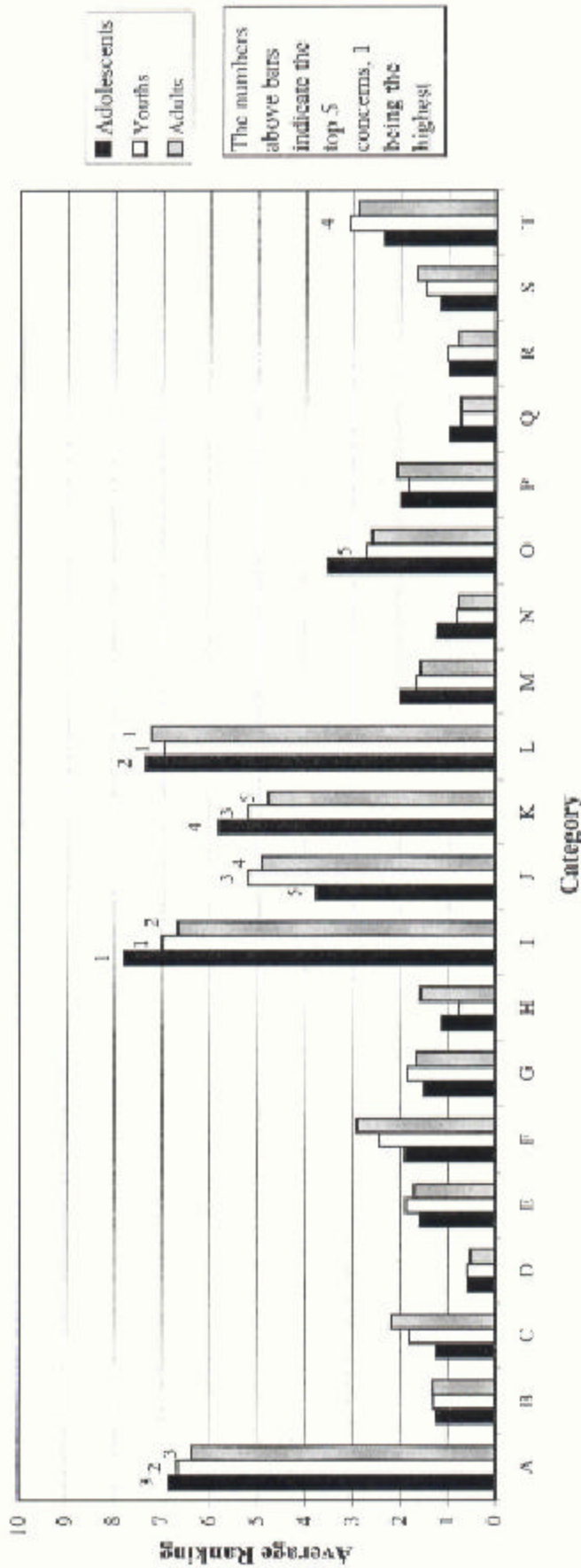
Based on 421 observations, including 257 adolescents from Makeni and 164 adolescents from Freetown.

Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Adolescent respondents were 10-19 years old and averaged 15.9 years of age. Makeni and Freetown surveys varied slightly in categories G and H. For Makeni, G=Unwanted pregnancy and H=Sexual violence. For Freetown, G=Teen pregnancy and H=Rape. All remaining categories were identical between the two groups.

Category Key

A=Lack of health care, B=HIV/AIDS and STDs, C=Drug abuse and addiction, D=Being disabled (loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E=Early or forced marriage, F=Prostitution, G(Makeni)=Unwanted pregnancy, G(Freetown)=Teen pregnancy, H(Makeni)=Sexual violence, H(Freetown)=Rape, I=Lack of educational opportunities, J=Unemployment, K=Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing, L=Poverty, M=Being orphaned, N=Lack of parental/family/home care, O=Violence and insecurity, Q=Adolescent crime, delinquency, and vandalism, R=Reintegrating into society after war, S=Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T=Neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision making.

Top Concerns of Adolescents, Youth, and Adults Surveyed in Freetown and Makeni Average Rankings from Survey Results



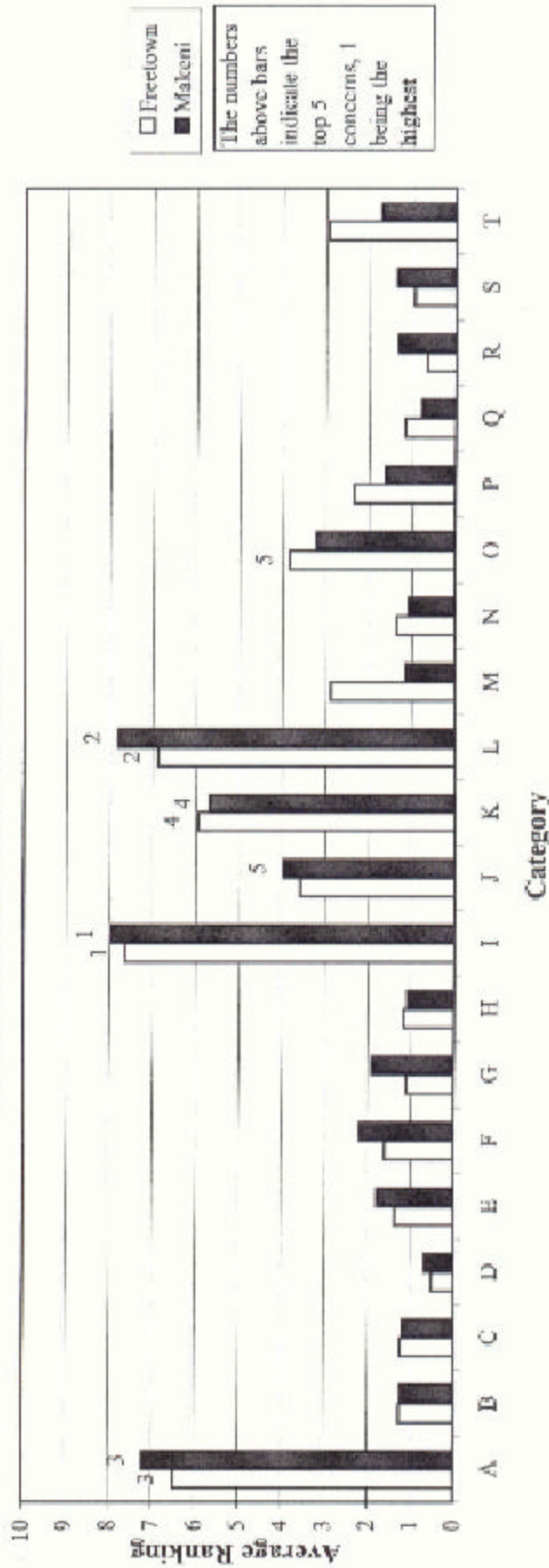
Based on 784 observations, including 421 adolescents, 175 youths, and 188 adults.

Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Adolescent respondents were 10-19 years old and averaged 15.9 years of age. Youth respondents were 20-24 years old and average 21 years of age. Adults were 25 years old and above and averaged 37.6 years of age. Makeni and Freetown surveys varied slightly in categories G and H. In Makeni, G=Unwanted pregnancy and H=Sexual violence. In Freetown, G=Teen pregnancy and H=Rape. All remaining categories were identical between the two groups.

Category Key

A=Lack of health care, B=HIV/AIDS and STDs, C=Drug abuse and addiction, D=Being disabled loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E=Early or forced marriage, F=Prostitution, G(Makeni)=Unwanted pregnancy, G(Freetown)=Teen pregnancy, H(Makeni)=Sexual violence, H(Freetown)=Rape, I=Lack of educational opportunities, J=Unemployment, K=Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing, L=Poverty, M=Being orphaned, N=Being displaced, O=Lack of parental/family/home care, P=Violence and insecurity, Q=Adolescent crime, delinquency, and vandalism, R=Reintegrating into society after war, S=Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T=Neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision making.

Top Concerns of Adolescents Surveyed in Makeni v. Freetown Average Rankings from Survey Results



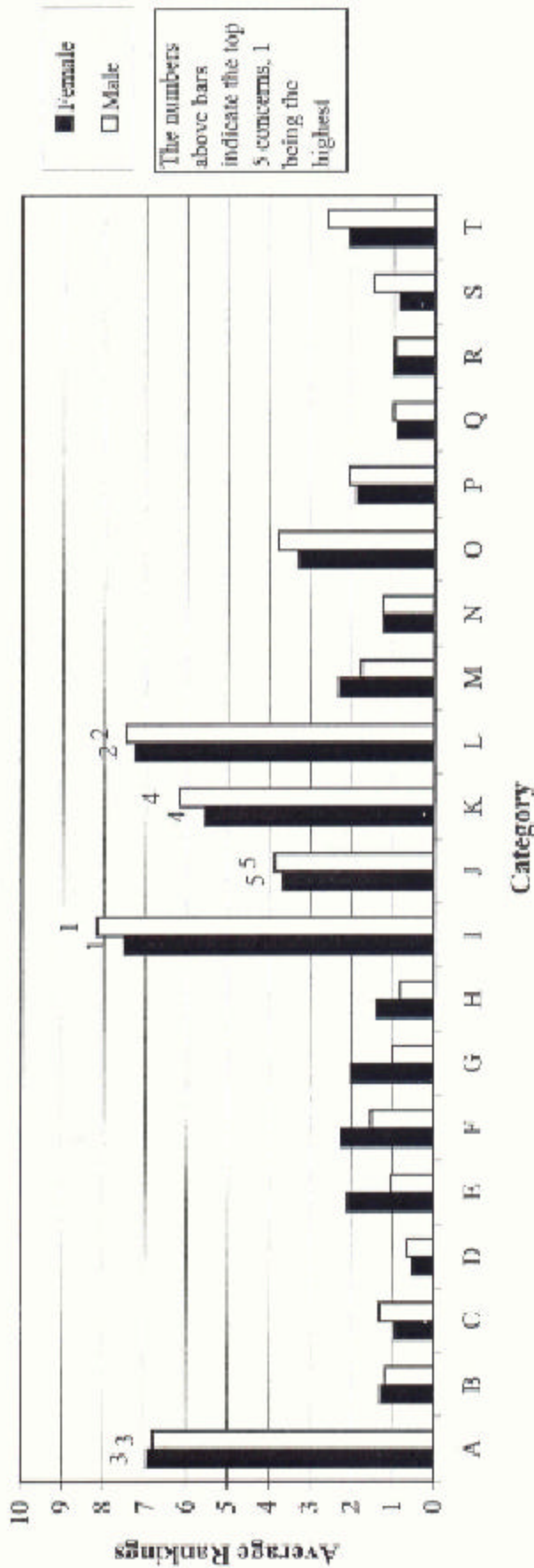
Based on 421 observations, including 257 adolescents from Makeni and 164 adolescents from Freetown.

Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Adolescent respondents were 10-19 years old and averaged 15.9 years of age. Makeni and Freetown surveys varied slightly in categories G and H. For Makeni, G=Unwanted pregnancy and H=Sexual violence. For Freetown, G=Teen pregnancy and H=Rape. All remaining categories were identical between the two groups.

Category Key

A-Lack of health care, B-HIV/AIDS and STDs, C-Drug abuse and addiction, D-Being disabled (loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E-Early or forced marriage, F-Prostitution, G(Makeni)-Unwanted pregnancy, G(Freetown)-Teen pregnancy, H(Makeni)-Sexual violence, H(Freetown)-Rape, I-Lack of educational opportunities, J-Unemployment, K-Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing, L-Poverty, M-Being displaced, N-Being orphaned, O-Lack of parental/family/home care, P-Violence and insecurity, Q-Adolescent crime, delinquency, and vandalism, R-Reintegrating into society after war, S-Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T-Neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision making.

Top Concerns of Adolescents Surveyed in Freetown and Makeni Average Rankings by Gender from Survey Results



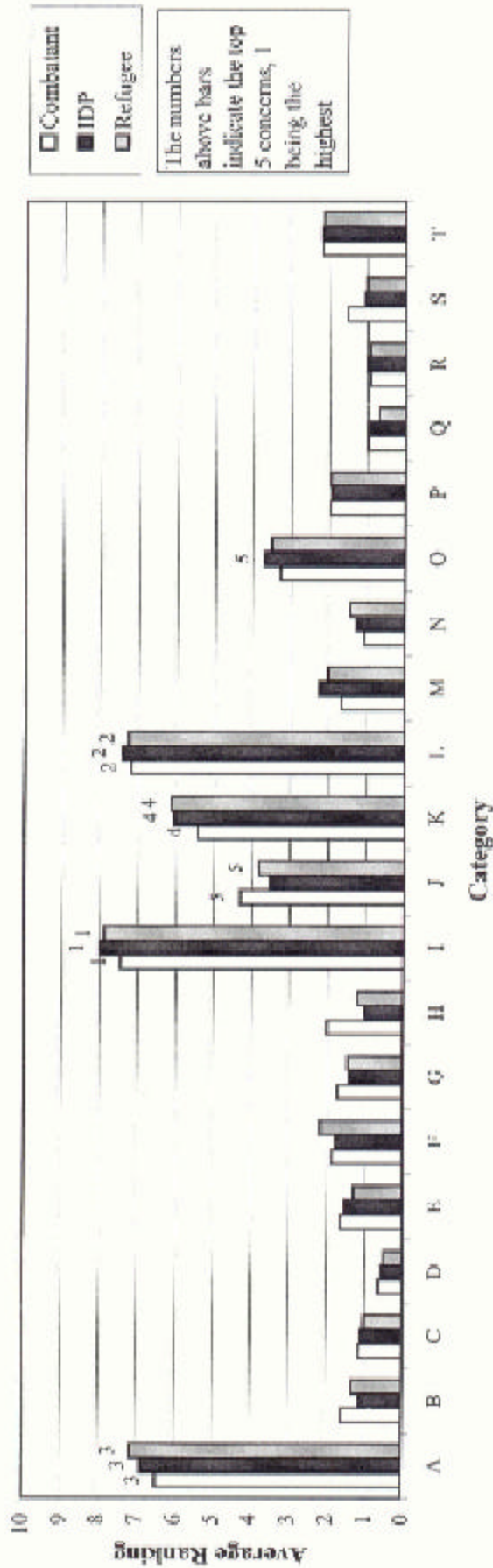
Based on 415 observations, including 203 female and 212 male adolescents.

Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Adolescent respondents were 10-19 years old and averaged 15.9 years of age. Makeni and Freetown surveys varied slightly in categories G and H. In Makeni, G=Unwanted pregnancy and H=Sexual violence. In Freetown, G=Teen pregnancy and H=Rape. All remaining categories were identical between the two groups.

Category Key

A=Lack of health care, B=HIV/AIDS and STDs, C=Drug abuse and addiction, D=Being disabled/loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E=Early or forced marriage, F=Prostitution, G(Makeni)=Unwanted pregnancy, G(Freetown)=Teen pregnancy, H(Makeni)=Sexual violence, H(Freetown)=Rape, I=Lack of educational opportunities, J=Unemployment, K=Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing, L=Poverty, M=Being displaced, N=Being orphaned, O=Lack of parental/family/home care, P=Violence and insecurity, Q=Adolescent crime, delinquency, and vandalism, R=Reintegrating into society after war, S=Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T=Neglect by elders and government/Lack of participation in decision making.

Top Concerns of Adolescent Combatants, IDPs, and Refugees Surveyed in Freetown and Makeni Average Rankings from Survey Results



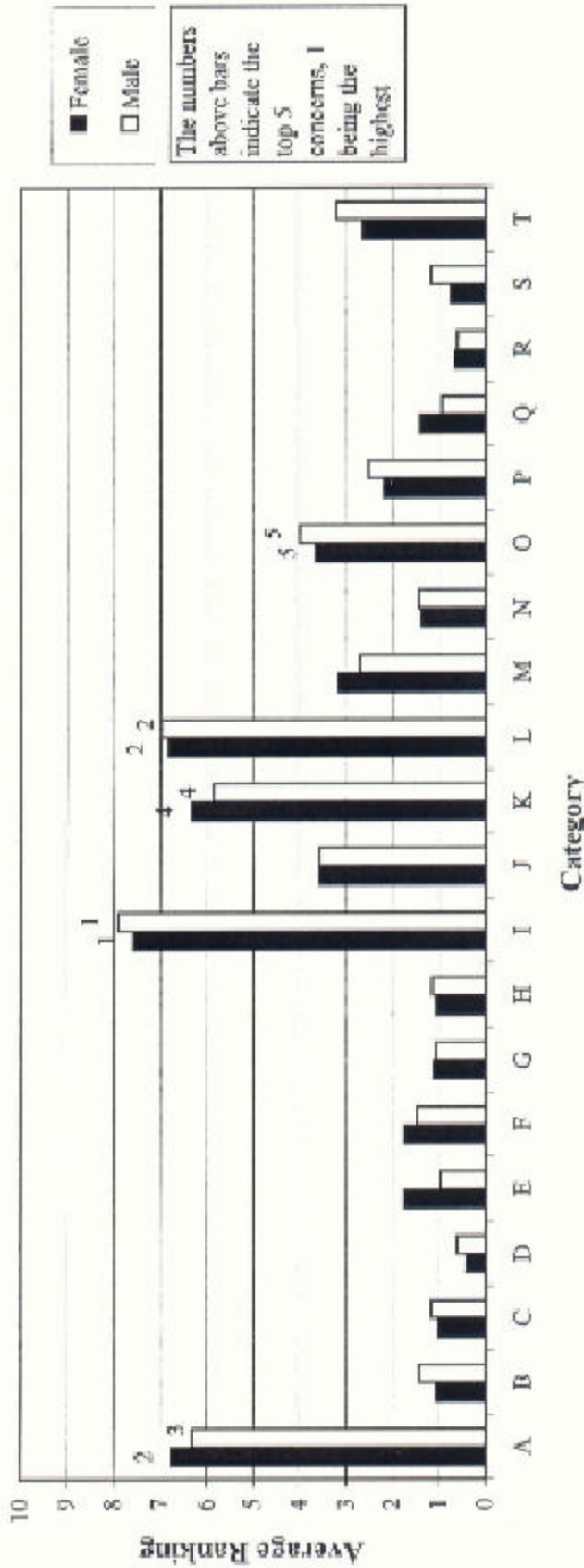
Based on 546 observations, including 89 adolescents identified as combatants, 372 identified as IDPs, and 85 identified as former refugees.

Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Adolescent respondents were 10-19 years old and averaged 15.9 years of age. Makeni and Freetown surveys varied slightly in categories G and H. In Makeni, G=Unwanted pregnancy and H=Sexual violence. In Freetown, G=Teen pregnancy and H=Rape. All remaining categories were identical between the two groups.

Category Key

- A=Lack of health care, B-ILIV/AIDS and STDs, C=Drug abuse and addiction, D=Being disabled, loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E-Early or forced marriage, F-Prostitution, G(Makeni)=Unwanted pregnancy, G(Freetown)=Teen pregnancy, H(Makeni)=Sexual violence, H(Freetown)=Rape, I=Lack of educational opportunities, J=Unemployment, K=Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing, L-Poverty, M=Being orphaned, N=Being displaced, O=Lack of parental/family/home care, P=Violence and insecurity, Q=Adolescent crime, delinquency, and vandalism, R=Reintegrating into society after war, S=Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T=Neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision making.

Top Concerns of Adolescents Surveyed in Freetown Average Rankings by Gender from Survey Results



Based on 158 observations, including 80 female and 78 male adolescents.

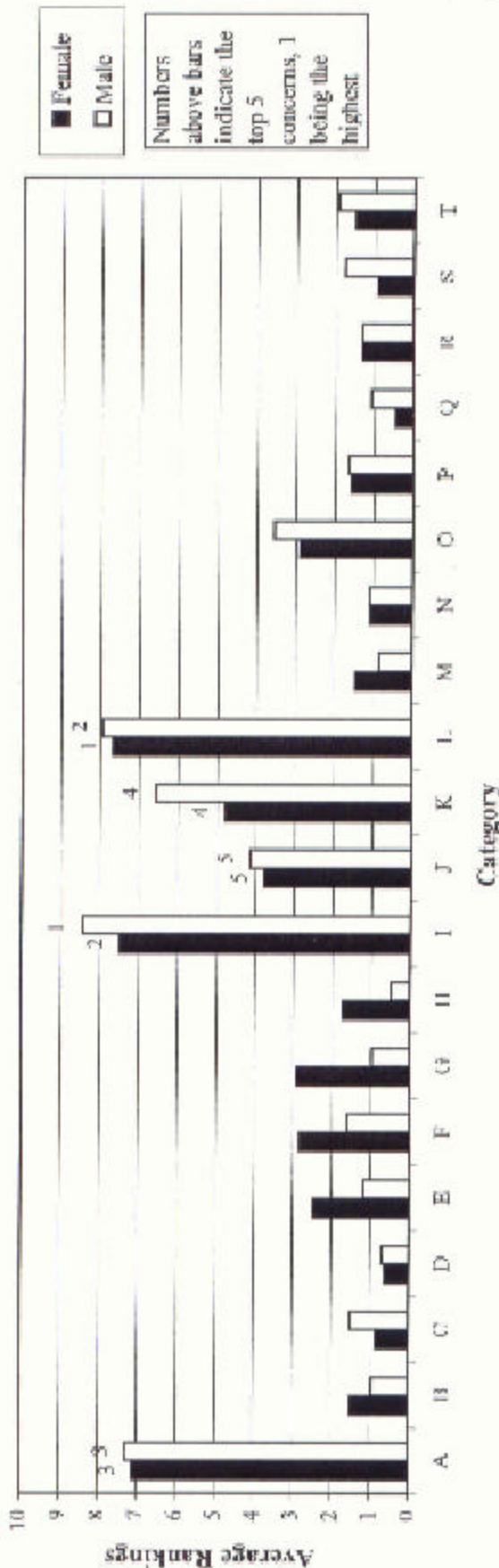
Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Adolescent respondents were 10-19 years old and averaged 15.6 years of age.

Category Key

A=Lack of health care, B=HIV/AIDS and STDs, C=Drug abuse and addiction, D=Being disabled (loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E=Early or forced marriage, F=Prostitution, G=Teen pregnancy, H=Rape, I=Lack of educational opportunities, J=Unemployment, K=Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing, L=Poverty, M=Being displaced, N=Being orphaned, O=Lack of parental/family/home care, P=Violence and insecurity, Q=Adolescent crime, delinquency, and vandalism, R=Reintegrating into society after war, S=Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T=Neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision making.

Top Concerns of Adolescents Surveyed in Makeni

Average Rankings by Gender from Survey Results



Based on 257 observations, including 123 female and 134 male adolescents.

Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Adolescent respondents were 10-19 years old and averaged 16.1 years of age.

Category Key

- A=Lack of health care, B-HIV/AIDS and STDs, C-Drug abuse and addiction, D-Being disabled (loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E-Early or forced marriage, F-Prostitution, G-Unwanted pregnancy, H-Sexual violence, I-Lack of educational opportunities, J-Unemployment, K=Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing, L-Poverty, M-Being orphaned, N=Being orphaned, O=Lack of parental/family/home care, P-Violence and insecurity, Q-Adolescent crime, delinquency, and vandalism, R-Reintegrating into society after war, S-Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T=Neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision making.

Top Concerns in Freetown by Age Group and Gender Average Rankings from Survey Results

Table 7

	Number of Observations	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
All																					
Under 10	8	5.3	0.8	0.0	2.4	0.1	0.0	1.1	2.1	9.6	2.1	7.0	6.6	4.1	0.5	5.0	3.9	1.4	0.1	0.6	2.3
10 to 19	164	6.5	1.2	1.2	0.5	1.4	3.6	1.1	1.2	7.6	3.6	5.9	6.9	2.9	1.4	3.8	2.4	1.2	0.7	1.0	3.0
20 to 24	91	6.3	1.2	2.1	0.5	2.2	2.7	1.9	0.9	6.4	5.1	4.9	6.6	2.1	1.2	2.8	1.9	0.8	0.8	1.1	2.4
25 and Above	125	6.8	1.5	2.0	0.9	1.7	1.7	1.9	0.9	5.8	5.1	6.3	7.3	1.6	1.2	3.0	2.0	0.7	0.9	1.6	2.2
Female																					
Under 10	0	4.3	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	1.2	1.5	10.0	1.8	8.2	7.5	5.3	0.3	5.0	4.0	1.8	0.2	0.3	2.3
10 to 19	80	6.8	1.1	1.0	0.4	1.7	1.7	1.1	1.1	7.6	3.6	6.3	6.8	3.2	1.4	3.7	2.2	1.4	0.7	0.8	2.7
20 to 24	46	6.8	1.0	1.9	0.4	2.3	2.4	1.8	1.0	6.0	4.7	5.3	7.0	2.1	1.3	3.2	1.6	1.2	0.7	0.9	3.4
25 and Above	72	7.3	1.1	1.8	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.6	1.3	5.9	4.6	7.2	7.8	1.5	1.4	3.2	2.2	0.4	0.6	1.9	1.3
Male																					
Under 10	2	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0	4.0	8.5	3.0	3.5	4.0	0.5	1.0	5.0	3.5	0.0	0.0	1.5	2.0
10 to 19	78	6.3	1.4	1.2	0.6	0.9	1.5	1.1	1.1	7.9	3.6	5.8	7.0	2.7	1.4	4.0	2.5	0.9	0.6	1.2	3.2
20 to 24	39	5.6	1.3	2.3	0.7	2.0	2.9	1.6	0.6	6.8	5.6	4.5	6.2	2.3	1.0	2.3	2.4	0.5	0.9	1.4	3.8
25 and Above	50	6.0	2.1	2.2	0.9	1.6	2.2	2.2	0.3	5.8	5.9	5.0	6.5	2.0	1.0	2.4	1.8	1.1	1.1	1.3	3.4

Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Number of observation totals in the "All" category do not equal "Male" plus "Female" because in some cases gender were not reported.

Category Key

A—Lack of health care, B—HIV/AIDS and STDs, C—Drug abuse and addiction, D—Being disabled (loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E—Early and/or forced marriage, F—Prostitution, G—Teen pregnancy, H—Rape, I—Lack of educational opportunities, J—Unemployment, K—Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing, L—Poverty, M—Being orphaned, N—Being displaced, O—Lack of parental/family/home care, P—Violence and insecurity, Q—Adolescent crime, delinquency and vandalism, R—Reintegrating into society after war, S—Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T—Neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision-making.

Top Concerns in Maleni by Age Group and Gender Average Rankings from Survey Results

Table 6

	Number of Observations	Average Rankings																			
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
All																					
Under 10	4	5.0	0.5	0.8	1.8	5.3	1.8	2.3	0.0	10.0	0.0	7.5	5.8	1.8	2.0	1.3	0.0	1.5	4.5	1.5	2.0
10 to 19	257	7.2	1.2	1.2	0.7	1.8	2.2	1.9	1.1	8.0	4.0	5.7	7.8	1.3	1.1	3.2	1.6	0.8	1.3	1.4	1.7
20 to 24	84	7.1	1.5	1.5	0.7	1.5	2.2	1.8	0.6	7.6	5.3	5.5	7.3	1.2	0.5	2.7	1.7	0.6	1.2	1.8	2.8
25 and Above	63	6.3	1.4	2.7	0.5	1.6	3.7	1.8	2.2	6.3	5.5	4.1	7.7	0.7	0.3	1.9	2.0	0.5	0.8	2.3	2.6
Female																					
Under 10	8	6.0	0.7	1.0	2.3	7.0	2.3	3.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	7.0	6.7	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	4.7	0.3	2.7
10 to 19	123	7.1	1.5	0.9	0.6	2.5	2.8	2.9	1.7	7.5	3.8	4.8	7.7	1.5	1.1	2.9	1.6	0.4	1.3	0.9	1.5
20 to 24	26	7.1	1.2	1.2	0.7	2.5	2.5	2.6	0.7	6.7	4.8	5.7	7.2	2.2	0.4	1.8	2.6	0.8	0.9	1.8	1.8
25 and Above	25	6.3	1.9	1.6	0.8	1.8	3.3	3.1	2.2	6.3	4.3	4.6	7.6	1.2	0.7	2.6	1.4	0.5	0.4	2.6	1.8
Male																					
Under 10	1	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	9.0	3.0	7.0	8.0	1.0	0.0	6.0	4.0	5.0	0.0
10 to 19	154	7.3	0.9	1.5	0.7	1.2	1.6	1.0	0.5	8.4	4.1	6.5	7.9	0.8	1.1	3.6	1.7	1.1	1.3	1.8	1.9
20 to 24	56	7.2	1.6	1.7	0.5	1.2	2.0	1.5	0.6	7.9	5.6	5.2	7.4	0.7	0.6	3.1	1.3	0.6	1.4	1.7	3.2
25 and Above	32	6.7	0.8	3.3	0.4	1.3	3.5	1.2	1.7	6.3	6.8	3.9	7.7	0.4	0.1	1.6	2.5	0.6	1.5	2.0	3.3

Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Number of observation totals in the "All" category do not equal "Male" plus "Female" because in some cases gender were not reported.

Category Key

A=Lack of health care, B=HIV/AIDS and STIs, C=Drug abuse and addiction, D=Dying disabled (loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E=Early sexual forced marriage, F-Prostitution, G=Teen pregnancy, H=Rape, I=Lack of educational opportunities, J=Unemployment, K=Lack of shelter/food/water/electricity, L=Proverty, M=Being displaced, N=Lack of parents/family/home care, O=Violence and insecurity, Q=Adolescent crime, delinquency and vandalism, R=Reintegrating into society after war, S=Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T=Neglect by elders and government/lack of participation in decision-making.

Top Concerns in Freetown and Makeni by Age and Gender
Average Rankings from Survey Results

Table 5

	Number of Observations	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
All	Under 10	5.1	0.6	0.4	2.1	2.7	0.9	1.7	1.1	9.8	1.1	7.3	6.2	2.9	1.3	3.1	1.9	1.4	2.3	1.1	2.1
	10 to 19	6.8	1.2	1.2	0.6	1.6	1.9	1.5	1.1	7.8	3.8	3.8	7.3	2.0	1.2	3.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.2	2.3
	20 to 24	6.7	1.3	1.8	0.6	1.9	2.4	1.9	0.8	7.0	5.2	5.2	7.0	1.7	0.8	2.7	1.8	0.7	1.0	1.4	3.1
	25 and above	6.4	1.3	2.2	0.5	1.7	2.9	1.7	1.6	6.7	4.9	4.8	7.2	1.6	0.8	2.6	2.1	0.7	0.8	1.7	2.9
Female	Under 10	5.2	0.8	0.5	1.2	3.6	1.2	2.1	0.8	10.0	0.9	7.6	7.1	2.7	0.2	3.2	2.0	0.9	2.4	0.3	2.5
	10 to 19	6.9	1.3	0.9	0.5	2.1	2.3	2.0	1.4	7.5	3.7	3.6	7.2	2.2	1.2	3.3	1.9	0.9	1.0	0.8	2.1
	20 to 24	7.0	1.1	1.5	0.5	2.3	2.5	2.2	0.9	6.3	4.7	5.5	7.1	2.1	0.9	2.5	2.1	1.0	0.8	1.2	2.6
	25 and Above	6.8	1.5	1.7	0.9	1.7	2.2	2.4	1.8	6.1	4.5	5.9	7.7	1.3	1.0	3.0	1.8	0.4	0.5	2.2	1.6
Male	Under 10	5.0	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.5	2.0	9.3	1.5	6.3	3.5	3.8	4.5	3.0	1.8	3.0	2.0	3.3	1.0
	10 to 19	6.8	1.2	1.3	0.7	1.1	1.5	1.0	0.8	8.2	3.9	6.2	7.4	1.8	1.3	3.8	2.1	1.0	1.0	1.5	2.6
	20 to 24	6.4	1.5	2.0	0.6	1.6	2.4	1.5	0.6	7.3	5.6	4.9	6.8	1.6	0.8	2.7	1.9	0.6	1.2	1.6	3.5
	25 and Above	6.4	1.5	2.8	0.6	1.4	2.9	1.7	1.0	6.0	6.4	4.5	7.1	1.2	0.6	2.0	2.2	0.9	1.2	1.6	3.3

Note: The highest possible ranking is 10, signifying the highest level of concern. Number of observations totals in the "All" category do not equal "Male" plus "Female" because in some cases gender data were not reported. Makeni and Freetown surveys varied slightly in categories G and H. In Makeni, G=Unwanted pregnancy and H=Sexual violence. In Freetown, G=Teen pregnancy and H=Rape. All remaining categories were identical between the two groups.

Category Key

A=Lack of health care, B=HIV/AIDS and STDs, C=Drug abuse and addiction, D=Being disabled (loss of sight, hearing, limbs, etc.), E=Early or forced marriage, F=Prostitution, G(Makeni)-Unwanted pregnancy, G(Freetown)-Teen pregnancy, H(Makeni)-Sexual violence, H(Freetown)-Rape, I=Lack of educational opportunities, J=Unemployment, K=Lack of shelter/food/water/clothing, L=Poverty, M=Rape, displaced, N=Being orphaned, O=Lack of parental/family/home care, P=Violence and insecurity, Q=Adolescent crime, delinquency, and vandalism, R=Reintegrating into society after war, S=Trauma and psychological problems because of war, T=Neglected by elders and government/lack of participation in decision making.