

by UN-HACU and attended by representatives from the government, other UN agencies and NGOs. These were designed to devise an inter-agency strategy for coping with the problem posed by war-affected youth. As a result of these meetings the Child Welfare Forum was created with the Unaccompanied Childrens Unit serving as an inter-agency co-ordination body.

One initiative that was put into practice came from UNICEF which provided unaccompanied children with learning materials and teaching assistance so that they could continue their educations once resettled. A number of small community-based programmes were also set up to re-integrate child combatants.

Health:

A number of collaborative projects involving both the international NGO community and local organizations were conducted in the health sector. CARE, for example had its Water, Sanitation and Animation for Cholera Prevention Project, which provided adequate water and sanitation services in Freetown through the construction of two gravity systems, three spring systems, ten wells, and 400 latrines. These were built in partnership with the target beneficiaries. A second large scale project implemented by CARE was its Water, Sanitation and Health Education Project which devised emergency rehabilitation and developmental responses to the need for water and sanitation systems in both urban and rural areas.

Other collaborative initiatives included MSF working with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation conducting exploratory missions to assess health conditions in different parts of the country. Similarly, a cholera task force was activated by the Ministry of Health and Sanitation with support from UNICEF, WHO and medical NGOs in order to improve preparedness as the rainy season approached. It compiled an inventory of all items available in country for the prevention and treatment of cholera and also included training for "blue flag" volunteers to assist in the prevention of cholera outbreaks.

Post-Coup:

Due to the uncertainty of the security situation following the coup the majority of the formal reintegration and resettlement programmes were halted as well as the health and child welfare programmes. A few international agencies have managed to continue their operations on a smaller scale. These include the ADRA and Christian Brothers which have continued their reunification programme for separated families. Some programmes which were designed to assist in the reintegration of child fighters have also continued, but many of the children rejoined the fighting factions. A Child Protection Committee was set up in Conakry on to discuss child demobilisation and reintegration schemes by the exiled Kabbah government. The ICRC has also dispatched an engineer to assess the situation concerning water and sanitation in Freetown since refuse collection had been suspended and the spread of disease was a distinct possibility.