

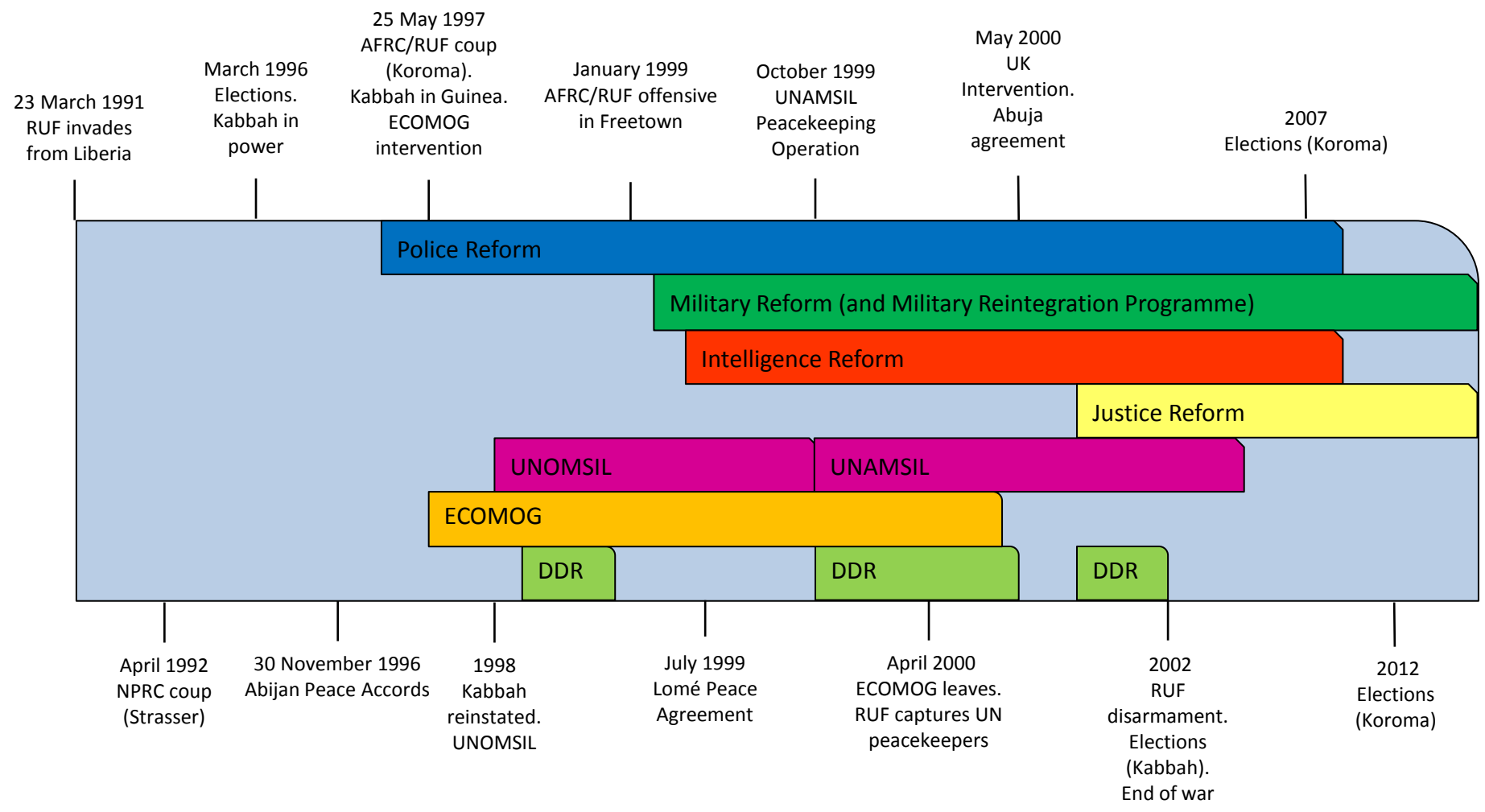
# **The Challenge of Using Research in SSR: A Case Study From Sierra Leone**

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# Case study: SSR in Sierra Leone



# First Period: ‘fire-fighting’ solutions

## THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

- “On our arrival we found Freetown in complete disarray and still in a state of virtual war. The functions of state were practically collapsed, with ministries in confusion and officials lacking clear aims and direction”
- “I walked into an empty building and about three people in there, who hadn’t really an idea of what they were doing. [...]. There must be about 5 people in there. Three of those I had to get out, because they were just political placements”

# First Period: 'fire-fighting' solutions

## POLICY AND RESEARCH CONTEXT

- SSR policy and research agenda starting in late 1990s
- Direct relationship with researchers (Dylan Hendrickson, Nicole Ball – not always used for research)
- Efforts toward a joined-up approach; high amount of freedom at country level
- Importance of personal relationships for policy making
- Direct UK role in Sierra Leone policy making

# First Period: 'fire-fighting' solutions

## USE OF RESEARCH

- No role for research in the decision to intervene; lack of a pre-planned strategy; events and exigencies shaping policy more than research
- Importance of the background and experience of personalities on the ground
- Use of anthropological/historical books, or ad hoc, operational research, rather than academic research from universities
- Ideas and models coming from other experiences

# Second Period: post-conflict years

## THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

- Lift of the Presidential State of Emergency in Spring 2002
- Increased security in the country
- Reformed, reinvigorated, and new-born Sierra Leonean security institutions
- Three peaceful Presidential elections, with change of ruling party
- Reorganisation of some SSR programmes in the country (JSDP staffed by locals and in Moyamba: more security and more capacity)

# Second Period: post-conflict years

## POLICY AND RESEARCH CONTEXT

- Progressive institutionalisation of SSR policy and research
- ‘Post-hoc rationalisation’ of events on the ground
- DFID opening of the office in Freetown
- Problems in passages among programmes; Three layers: HQs, country offices, contractors and subcontractors
- Advisory, mentoring, supporting role for the UK; Collaboration with other donors in the country

# Second Period: post-conflict years

## USE OF RESEARCH

- Increased uptake and use of research (more time, access, availability)
- Examples of use of research: JSDP; ASJP; IMATT perception study; IMATT direct use of SSR book; ONS collaborations
- Formal and informal professional relationships with trusted researchers (Paul Jackson, Peter Albrecht, Richard Fanthorpe)
- Under-use of local researchers (Fourah Bay College; sometimes used as consultants, but mixed accounts)



# Conclusions

- Context stability and policy and research evolution as two main variables influencing the use of research into SSR policy
- Issues on the use of research: time, departmental cultures, personal attitudes
- Osmosis, seepage, justificatory use of research. Two communities
- Structural issues hindering the use of research in SSR: peculiarities of the discipline, lack of evidence of 'what works', political dimension