

## **Scenario 1: Sierra Leone — Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers**

**Background:** The civil war in Sierra Leone led to thousands of children being forcibly recruited as child soldiers. Following the conflict, the government and international agencies are attempting to reintegrate these children back into society, a process complicated by social stigma and community resistance.

**Mediation Focus:** The mediation centers on a dispute between the families of former child soldiers, local community leaders, and representatives from international aid organizations working on the reintegration program.

### **Roles:**

- **Mediator:** Leads the discussion, fostering understanding and collaboration.
- **Former Child Soldier Representative:** Represents a group of former child soldiers and advocates for their reintegration rights and access to social support.
- **Community Leader:** Represents community members who are concerned about safety and hesitant to welcome back former combatants.
- **Family Members of Former Child Soldiers:** Seek acceptance and a supportive reintegration environment for their children.
- **NGO/International Aid Representative:** Wants to facilitate reintegration but faces resistance from the community.

**Goal:** To reach a mutual agreement on reintegration approaches that provide former child soldiers with education and job opportunities, and address community concerns about security and support structures.

### **Process Overview**

1. **Opening Statements:** Each party presents its perspective and concerns. Community leaders may express fears about security and the impact of reintegrating former child soldiers, while the families and child soldier representatives emphasize the need for support and acceptance.
2. **Identifying Interests:** The mediator clarifies each group's underlying interests—community safety, support for reintegration, educational and vocational opportunities for the youth, and access to counseling services.
3. **Exploring Options:** The mediator encourages brainstorming solutions that balance community needs with the reintegration goals. Options might include setting up a structured program that monitors former child soldiers' progress and provides resources for community development.

4. **Negotiating Terms:** Parties negotiate terms for educational and vocational programs, agree on support for trauma counseling, and consider transitional measures to address community concerns, such as regular community engagement updates.

#### **Final Outcome**

- **Agreement:** A consensus is reached to implement a reintegration program that includes vocational training for former child soldiers, mental health support, and community development projects to foster trust and alleviate safety concerns.
- **Success Indicators:** Programs are initiated, former child soldiers begin reintegration, and community members participate in workshops to build acceptance and support.

#### **Feedback Focus:**

- **Role Authenticity:** Did students in each role effectively represent their stakeholder's interests?
- **Conflict Resolution:** Assess the mediator's approach in managing high emotions and balancing competing interests.
- **Creative Solutions:** How well did the students propose innovative yet realistic solutions for long-term reintegration?