

Security Council Resolution 1325:
Civil Society Monitoring Report

Sierra Leone
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A Project of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

Republic of Sierra Leone

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AU	African Union
ACDS	Assistant Chief of Defence Staff
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-Integration
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FSU	Family Support Unit
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MARWOPNET-SL	Mano River Women's Peace Network – Sierra Leone
NGSP	National Gender Strategic Plan
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues
RSLAF	Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SiLNAP	Sierra Leone National Action Plan
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNAMID	United Nations Mission in Dafur
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNFPA	United Nations fund for Population Activities
UNIPSIL	United Nations Integrated office for Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNDAW	United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolutions
WISSL	Women in Security Sector Sierra Leone
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peace building

I. Women, Peace and Security Profile

A. Nature of the conflict

Armed conflict erupted in Sierra Leone on the 23rd March 1991, when a mixed group (Sierra Leoneans and Liberians) of armed dissidents crossed over from Liberia into Bomaru, a border town in the Eastern region. The brutal conflict raged on up until 18th May 1999, when Peace talks, brokered by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with the assistance of the International Community, in Lome, Togo achieved a cease fire agreement between then rebel Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone and the Government of Sierra Leone.

The Lome Peace Accord, which among other provisions includes the protection of the paramount interest of the people of Sierra Leone in peace and security was done on the 7th July 1999.

The causes of the Sierra Leone Civil war have been explained in various publications¹. They (causes) include issues of bad governance, unjust trends in the history of, especially, the post colonial period, geopolitical roles of external power brokers (such as ex faction leader/ex-President Charles Taylor of Liberia, currently standing trial in the Sierra Leone Special Court, sitting in the Hague, Netherlands, for war crimes in Sierra Leone) prompted by the desire to acquire the diamond wealth of Sierra Leone – the “Blood /Conflict Diamond” issue.

The basic cause of the Sierra Leone civil conflict can be summed up as deeply embedded in governance policies that promoted land disputes, encouraged corruption, non-accountability, inequality and discrimination across gender, but especially against women, by various leadership and actors at all levels of society.

Thus, those vulnerable, in particular, women and children, bore the brunt. They were subjected to all forms² of brutality especially sexual and gender based violence. With the signing of the Lome Peace Accord and the symbolic burning of arms collected in the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process in January 2002, Sierra Leone is currently moving along a post conflict and developmental phase. Every effort is being made by all actors – state, non-state and Sierra Leone’s development partners – to ensure that peace consolidation and peace building initiatives become sustainable. The women’s movement, with support from partners as well as commitment from the Government, are advocating for measures at institutional and operational levels to be put in place, including legal and policy frameworks that can more effectively than hitherto contribute to engendering the peace consolidation and peace building processes.

B. Impact of Conflict on Women

Civilians, especially women and children, bore the brunt of the violent conflict. The consequences of the violence against women continue to linger on, and are a cause of emotional stress for women and their families all over the country. What is even more serious is the continued perpetration of violent activities, especially acts of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls with some victims as young as a few months old.

Also of note is that the justice system has failed to adequately address these concerns by punishing perpetrators of such dastardly acts against women and girls. For instance, sexual offences such as rape, where charged to court, are rarely successfully convicted (cf Appendix II Indicator 7.)

1 Witness to Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Sierra Leone, 2004

2 Rape, Sexual slavery, Forced Marriage, Forced pregnancy, Amputation of limbs, Abduction.

In the end, the civil conflict can be described as senseless, in that it was a disaster for all and only succeeded in the worsened underdeveloped character of the country. The widespread destruction of lives and infrastructure exacerbated and deepened poverty among the citizens, especially women. Basic infrastructure, educational and health service delivery systems became almost non-existent particularly in rural communities. The greater impact of the war on women is also evident in the increased number of women headed households living in abject poverty in post-conflict Sierra Leone.

Women and girls have been recipients of violence as victims, while also a few were coerced and became perpetrators. They have all suffered numerous human rights violations resulting in tremendous physical, social, psychological and economic harm to them and their families.

Also, in the recent past, women activists have mobilized themselves into formidable advocacy groups to agitate for the protection of women and prevention of the occurrence of incidences that expose women and girls to sexual and violent abuse.

Ten years on, since the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), civil society women's groups have been most visible at the operational level, in terms of its implementation. They have focused mainly at the levels of policy advocacy, sensitization/ awareness raising and community mobilization, to lobby and advocate for its full implementation.

C. Relevant Policies

It is therefore noteworthy that Sierra Leone is fully committed to the full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) 1325 and 1820. This commitment is demonstrated in the steps taken so far to elaborate the NAP for the full implementation of the resolutions. Previously, three gender laws, namely: the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, the Domestic Violence Act and the Devolution of Estates were enacted. These are to promote women's human rights, and protect them against discrimination.

Furthermore, the Security and Justice Sector Institutions like the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) have made some progress in the development of equal opportunity/institutional gender policies, enabling access to equal opportunities for female.

Previously, three gender laws, namely: the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, the Domestic Violence Act and the Devolution of Estates were enacted. These are to promote women's human rights, and protect them against discrimination.

However, the full inclusion of women in post-conflict peace and security agenda remains incomplete. This is evidenced in, for example, the delayed domestication of CEDAW, which was signed and ratified by Sierra Leone in September 1988; the non ratification of the AU Women's Protocol which was signed on the 9th December, 2003; and the non-repeal of Section 27(4) d of the 1991 Sierra Leone Constitution which claws back equity and equal rights for women in areas of vital family and social relations. All of these issues have been taken into account for remedy in the Sierra Leone National Action Plan on UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 (SiLNAP 1325 and 1820).

The idea of active collaboration between the Government and Civil Society to enable a speedy elaboration of a SiLNAP 1325 was born during the UNECA/OSAGI sponsored "High Level Policy Dialogue" on the full implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Africa

at Addis Ababa in February 2008. Both the then Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (MWSGCA) and the Focal Point, MARWOPNET-SL attended the workshop during which they discussed the need for developing an NAP.

Back home, the process of developing SiLNAP was put in place, with funding support secured from Cordaid Netherlands under a joint Project proposal from MARWOPNET(SL) and WANEP titled WANMAR 1325 (WANMAR is coined from WANEP and MARWOPNET). A broad constituency of government actors/stakeholders from different Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), different women's organisations/groups and mixed human rights non-governmental organisations at various levels, participated in four regional level consultative meetings which followed a mapping assessment/survey of existing and ongoing fragmented attempts to implement UNSCR 1325 in Sierra Leone.

As part of the participatory process, the Gender Division of the MSWGCA chaired the Government-Civil Society Task Force on 1325. The terms of reference of the Task Force include responsibility for and oversight of the elaboration activities co-coordinated by MARWOPNET (SL) and WANEP(SL).

The process of developing the SiLNAP 1325 and 1820, through active partnership between civil society, and the MSWGCA contributed largely to the ready development of the SiLNAP. Also, it has led to the increased understanding of elements that foster positive partnership among government, civil society and UN agencies. UNFPA, UNIFEM and UNIPSIL have played significant supporting roles throughout the process.

The Sierra Leone National Action Plan was showcased during the 54th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women held in New York in March 2010. It was signed and launched in-country at a special event on the 8th June by the Head of State, H.E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma. The keynote address of the President demonstrates the country's commitment to address issues of concern raised in the resolutions and to advance the realization of the benefits to be derived in the full implementation of the plan.

This report is based on the indicators for monitoring progress towards the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and reflects the current situation with respect to women, peace and security in Sierra Leone. It will serve as a baseline against which we can assess the implementation of the Resolutions in the future. The indicators were agreed by participants at the workshop organised by the Global Network of Women Peace Builders (GNWP) to which a number of women's networks/groups in Sierra Leone belong.

II. Data Presentation and Analysis

A. Participation

Indicator 1 - Index of Participation Of Women In Governance

This section examines a number of indicators including the percentage of women Cabinet Ministers, the number of female Deputy Ministers and Parliamentarians as well as those in Local Governance structures.

Cabinet Ministers - With regard to women's participation as cabinet ministers, the number remained constant at three for a very long time until recently when two out of the three women appointed by the government in 2007 were replaced by men. Currently out of 21 ministers in cabinet only one is a woman.

Deputy Minister - No more than three women deputy ministers have ever been appointed in government at any one time. The number of deputies has remained constant at three for years now.

Parliamentarians - There are one hundred and twelve elected members in parliament of which only sixteen are women. This accounts for 14.3 percent of the elected members. When paramount chiefs are included, the total number of members increased to 124 and the number of women increased to 17, lowering the percentage to 13.7.

Local Government Structures - When local government structures are examined, the results show that the situation for women's participation is not different from that at national level described above. In the last local council elections conducted in 2008, one thousand two hundred and sixty-four candidates were nominated, out of which four hundred and fifty six were elected as councillors; only eighty-six were women. Each councillor represents a constituency, which is further divided into wards.

It is worth noting that the Local Government Act of 2002 stipulates that at least fifty percent of ward committee members must be women. Because of this provision, over fifty percent of the members of some ward committees are women. This type of gender parity stimulating Act is a demonstration of the political will to advance the status of women.

A total of sixty candidates were nominated to contest for the position of mayor and chairpersons of councils; nineteen of these were elected. None of the four women nominees who contested for these positions was elected. The situation now is that all nineteen mayors and chairpersons of cities and town councils are males. There are two women Deputy Mayors, one in the Northern and the other in the Eastern Region. It is encouraging to have a female in such a high position in the North where women are culturally barred from Chieftaincy roles.

The participation of women in the institution of paramount chieftaincy is very low. Out of one hundred and forty-eight paramount chiefs in the whole country, only 6.7 percent are women. In fact, as indicated above, the participation of women is strictly prohibited in the northern and eastern regions of the country. Evidence³ of open discrimination against women who are entitled to hold these positions exist and there is no sign that the traditional beliefs and cultural practices regarding this issue would be reviewed in the near future. Also, this is the evidence of the constraining power of patriarchy over gender equity and equality moves in Sierra Leone.

On the whole, the available data indicates that men dominate in all positions in the various spheres reported, and the participation of women in all of these positions is minimal. This situation has remained the same over the years. However, bearing in mind the commitment made by His Excellency President Ernest Bai Koroma to recognise the women's lobby for a minimum 30% quota for women in all decision making positions including governance, it can be stated that there is prospects for improvement.

Indicator 2 – The Percentage of Women In Peace Negotiating Teams

Women bore the brunt of the war and were no doubt an integral part of the negotiating teams

³ A daughter of a deceased Paramount Chief who declared her candidacy for the Paramount Chieftaincy election in Kono, in the Eastern region this year was prevented from contesting. She was disqualified under the provision of the Chieftaincy Act (2009) which states that customary laws take precedence. The custom is that women cannot inherit such a position even though she is by birth qualified. She sued on the grounds of gender discrimination, but the court could not find in her favour based on the customary law in that region.

to stop the civil war. They participated actively in the process especially as members of civil society organizations. They were also part of the government delegation and the CSO observer team at the negotiations in Lome from 25 May to 7 July in 1999. Although the documented evidence on the number of males and females in the delegation was not readily available, stories recounted by a Female CSO participant on the Observer team, who represented the Women's Forum, Sierra Leone indicate that women comprised about thirty-seven percent of all persons who participated in the negotiation process.

Indicator 3 - Index of Women's Participation In The Justice And Security Sector

This section will examine the level of participation of women in the Security and Justice sector. Evidence from the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and the Military indicates that each of these institutions are currently implementing an equal opportunity policy that provides equal access for men and women to be recruited and promoted to positions of trust and responsibility.

The Police

Data obtained from the Police shown in Table 1 indicate that the strength of the force is nine thousand, six hundred and eighty-two. The evidence shows that 16.5 percent of the membership is women. Women occupy less than 20 percent of the top most level of the institution.

The data also show that the largest number of women is among the constables. This may be connected with the minimal level of education required to qualify for recruitment at this level; in spite of this, the positions in the lower levels are still dominated by males.

The complete absence of women in the top most cadres is significant, in spite of the fact that these positions are relatively few. No woman has ever reached the level of inspector-general or deputy inspector-general in the history of the force.

The table below gives a current breakdown by rank and sex.

Table 1: Sierra Leone Police Staff Categories disaggregated by rank and sex

Rank	Male		Female	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Inspector-General	1	100	0	0.0
Deputy Inspector-General	1	100	0	0.0
Asst. Inspector-General	10	83.3	2	16.7
Chief Superintendent	23	100	0	0.0
Superintendent	62	92.5	5	7.5
Asst. Superintendent	133	91.7	12	8.3
Inspector	470	89.4	56	10.6
Sergeant	1966	89.4	234	10.6
Constable	5144	81.5	1168	18.5
Auxiliary Staff	13	100	0	0.0
Support Staff	266	69.6	116	30.4
Total	8089	83.5	1593	16.5

Source: Systems Administration, Sierra Leone Police, May, 2010

Support staff consists of nurses, labourers, administrative and clerical staff who are rarely involved in decision making of any kind. The dominance of women in this category is evident. Due to stereotypes relating to subject and career choices, clerical work and nursing are considered inferior and are assigned to women. All auxiliary staff members are males who are trained in technical and mechanical skills required within the force. This category of staff includes drivers and motor mechanics and others like cleaners, all of whom are males.

If the lowest decision making level is taken as the rank of Inspector, then it can be concluded that there is a concentration of personnel in levels that are not likely to be involved in making major decisions in the Police. Available statistics show that the majority of women belong to the latter category.

The Military

Table 2 below gives a sex disaggregated distribution of members in the army. The pattern in the military is similar to that already described for the Police and data show that 3.7 percent of the force are women.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Military Personnel disaggregated by Sex

Class	Level	Rank	Male % Percentage	Female % Percentage
Commissioned	Senior Officers	Brigadier to General to Major	81	19
	Junior Officers	2nd Lieutenant to Captain	96	4
Non Commissioned	Senior Officers	Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class 1 and 2	97	3
	Junior Officers	Corporal to Private	96	4

Source: Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces, 2010

The first female brigadier in Sierra Leone, and also the first in West Africa, was recently appointed as a step towards implementing an equal opportunities policy adopted in 2009 by the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF). The strategy of implementing a gender policy has contributed to a significant increase in the percentage of females in the senior ranks. In spite of this, the evidence continues to portray a predominance of males over females in the military. No woman has ever attained the rank of Chief of Defence Staff in the RSLAF. The woman Brigadier is one of the Assistant Chief of Defence Staff and she is in charge of training and personnel.

The military has encouraged the formation of an association of Women In Security Sector in Sierra Leone (WISSL), to which female members from other Security Sector Institutions (SSI) viz Police, Prisons, Immigration, Customs and Private Security Agencies, also belong. Other SSIs that do not yet have a gender policy could be encouraged to put such an enabling instrument in place. The current president of WISSL is a Lieutenant in the military.

The Judiciary

A lot of progress has been made in improving the participation of women in the judiciary over the years. In 2009, the first female chief justice was appointed. Apart from the current chief justice, nine of the nineteen judges of the various courts (High Court, Appeal Court and Supreme Court) are women. Only two out of fourteen magistrates are women.

The high percentage of females in the top echelons of the judiciary may be attributed to the preference of most senior male lawyers to be in private practice (self-employed) which is more lucrative, unlike women who have stayed on in government employment.

Indicator 4 - Percentage of Women in Peacekeeping Missions

Information obtained from the Peacekeeping section of the Sierra Leone Police show that seventy-five police personnel are currently on mission to various conflict areas especially in the African countries, e.g. with UNAMID in Dafur, Sudan. Almost 19 percent of all officers in peacekeeping missions are women. Five senior officers are included in the contingent but only one is a woman who was in rank, an Assistant Inspector General before her deployment. She is responsible for donor coordination of peacekeeping operations.

The current military contribution to peace keeping consists of a company strength of 130 officers, 4.7 percent of whom were women. In addition, six service personnel comprising women and male majors were given responsibilities to serve as commanders of the troops. The inclusion of women in Peace Support Operations deployment is a recent phenomenon in Sierra Leone. This is no doubt attributable to the existence of gender policies that are being actively implemented within the police and military institutions. But based on the available statistics, there is still a huge gap to close by reviewing recruitment, capacity building and retention issues.

Indicator 5 – Number and Percentage of Women Participating in each type of Constitutional or Legislative Review

Data obtained from a key informant revealed that 35 percent of the members on the Constitutional Review Commission that completed its sittings and submitted its report in 2008 were women.

There is a Law Reform Commission whose Chairperson is a female Supreme Court Judge.

Indicator 6 – Percentage of Civil Society Organisations In Task Forces On UNSCR 1325 And 1820 Out Of Total Task Force Members

Forty percent of the thirty-three member Government-Civil Society National Taskforce on UNSCR 1325 are from Civil Society Organizations. Of the Civil Society members, 52.3% are from women's groups/organizations. The Government-Civil Society Taskforce with the leadership of the Gender Division of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA) actively implemented the activities for the development of the Sierra Leone NAP on UNSCR 1325 and 1820. The MSWGCA chaired the Taskforce with joint coordination of activities by MARWOPNET and WANEP. Nationwide consultations were conducted to ensure that all shades of opinion were captured in the plan which covers the implementation of both Resolution 1325 and 1820. Following its full content elaboration with a monitoring plan and budget estimate, validation and adoption at the 3-day National Consultative Workshop took place from the September 2-4 2009. A refinement of the initial 63 monitoring indicators was undertaken with technical assistance and funding support from UNFPA and UNIFEM, and led to the final 35 indicators. The President of the Republic of Sierra Leone signed and launched the SiLNAP at a special event on the 8th June, 2010. Plans are underway



40% of the thirty-three member Government-Civil Society National Taskforce on UNSCR 1325 are from Civil Society Organizations. Of the Civil Society members, 52.3% are from women's groups/organizations.

to commence a coordinated implementation of the SiLNAP, with the formal establishment of a Steering Committee for Implementation.

B. Prevention and protection

Indicator 7 - Number of Sexual And Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Cases Reported and Percentage of Cases Investigated, Referred, Prosecuted And Penalized (Out of Cases Reported)

Reported cases of SGBV in Sierra Leone increased drastically during the conflict and post-conflict period in the country. During the war years women and girls suffered a number of abuses including gang rapes, forced marriages and physical violence which were perpetuated by the fighting forces.

Women and girls continue to suffer in silence from various forms of abuses. The most common forms of SGBV are: sexual abuse and assault, various forms of domestic violence, child cruelty as well as human and child trafficking. Victims of sexual abuse range in age from a few months to sixty years and over.

Information obtained from the Rainbo Centres being supported by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), and from the Family Support Unit (FSU) established as part of the Police shows that even after the war, incidences of sexual abuse of women and girls are on the increase, and remain a security threat of great concern in the country.

Table 3 which gives a national picture shows that not all reported cases are investigated, charged to court and/or successfully prosecuted. Apparently, a good number of cases are reported to the Police and other authorities in the communities, but it is believed that many more remain unreported because of traditional beliefs that cases of sexual abuse should be handled as family matters to be dealt with in secrecy in the home.

There is usually a low rate of conviction. Some cases were thrown out of court, because the prosecution lacked convincing evidence for them to be pursued to a successful end. Also, of note are the cases which are withdrawn and resolved out of court. This is because the families of the victims are generally poor and illiterate, and there is a tendency for perpetrators and their families to bribe their way out of such matters by paying monies that would normally seem to be attractive to poor people.

Table 3: Pattern of Reported and Responses to SGBV cases in 2009

Type of SGBV Cases	Total Cases Reported	Percentage under Investigation	Percentage Resolved/ Withdrawn	Percentage Prosecuted	Percentage Kept in View	Percentage Dropped for (Lack of Evidence)	Percentage convicted
Sexual abuse/ assault	1,004	49.8% (492)	12.1% (113)	33.7% (353)	4.3% (44)	0.2% (2)	20
Domestic Violence	1642	49.2% (777)	6.9% (106)	18.8% (205)	25.0% (485)	0.1% (1)	15
Child Cruelty	254	37.4% (95)	7.1% (18)	8.3% (21)	47.2% (120)	(0)	
Human and Child Trafficking	22	40.9% (9)	45.5% (10)	13.6% (3)	(0)	(0)	

Source: Family Support Unit, Sierra Police. The parenthesis show the actual numbers

In addition, some cases are kept in view for protracted periods for reasons best known to the police investigators, during which victims get frustrated and drop the cases that had earlier been reported to the Police. There are also instances where perpetrators of sexual violence are forced to marry their victims, thereby denying such women the right to choose their partners.

Although the Police reported that there were no convictions in 2009, the report from the Rainbo Centre states that out of approximately four thousand cases reported in their operational areas during the year, only seventeen were successfully prosecuted. Perpetrators were found guilty and convicted to serve jail sentences of between seventeen months and seven years.

Indicator 8 - Number and Quality Of Gender Responsive Laws And Policies

Women and girls continue to face all forms of gender-based violence perpetuated on them by close relatives and people they know and trust with their security and protection.

Policy formulation in the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs started in 2000 when the Policy on the Advancement of Women and that on Gender mainstreaming were formulated. The main aim of these policies was for promoting gender issues in development while at the same time closing the gap between men and women at all levels in society. These are significant policies as they represent the first sincere attempt to accord equal rights to all citizens in Sierra Leone.

These policies set the tone for government's commitment to embark on gender reforms. They have contributed to bringing to the fore the section 27(4d) of the 1991 Constitution which claws back what the non-discrimination principle of the Sierra Leone Constitution in Chapter 3 (section 15-27) gave, and thus nullifies the equality principle against women (TRC report Volume III, chapter 3, page 110).

Although much of the provisions of these policies were not fully implemented, their contents were constantly in focus among gender activists in non-governmental organisations. They also serve as reference material for championing the cause of women and have provided a framework for including gender perspectives in policy making, development planning and implementation agenda in Sierra Leone.

More significantly, the issue of the need to enact gender responsive laws and policies gained ground through the recommendations on women in the TRC report, which explicitly linked the perpetration of rape and other forms of sexual violence, particularly during the civil war to the discrimination against women. The report called for the repeal of all laws that were discriminatory against women.

The Gender Division of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA) has the mandate to coordinate gender-related activities taking place all over the country. In pursuance of a renewed effort for effective implementation of its mandate as the government machinery for gender mainstreaming, MSWGCA spearheaded in collaboration with women's organization, gender activists from NGO circle, the formulation of a number of policies and legislations to ensure that women's issues are addressed in order to achieve parity in all spheres of life. Most notable among these are:

- The Devolution of Estate Act 2007
- The Registration of Customary Marriage Act 2007

- The Domestic Violence Act 2007
- The Child Rights Act (2007) is particularly friendly to the girl child and makes provision for protection of their rights in all spheres of life.
- Following the conduct of a national survey on Gender-based violence by MSWGCA, a National Committee on Gender-Based Violence (NaC-GBV) has been formed at headquarters. The plans to have similar committees at provincial and district levels all over the country are still in the offing, although a Roll out plan has been developed.
- The Sexual Offences and Matrimonial Causes Bill are moving slowly through the process of enactment.

In addition, the Ministry has developed a National Gender Strategic Plan (NGSP), which spells out strategies for a coordinated approach to promoting gender issues through the effective implementation of the policies that have been enacted so far, while pushing for others that are pending to be passed into law.

The NGSP is also meant to maintain a comprehensive record of all gender related activities that are being implemented by government and interested non-governmental organisations in the country. The UNSCR 1325 is explicitly referred in the NGSP as one of the International Frameworks reviewed for information/data in establishing the content and structure of the NGSP.

In addition, the Ministry has developed a National Gender Strategic Plan (NGSP), which spells out strategies for a coordinated approach to promoting gender issues

Sierra Leone signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) without reservations in 1988. Attempts to implement provisions of the instrument are ongoing but its full domestication is yet to be accomplished. However, efforts to comply with international reporting obligations culminated in the submission of the combined first to fifth report to UN Division for The Advancement of Women (UNDAW) in 2007. The next periodic report due this year is nearing completion.

Gender is reflected in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP1&2) as a crosscutting issue to be addressed in all thematic areas in the strategy. In line with this, government recently launched a free health care initiative that targets pregnant and lactating women as well as children less than five years of age.

In spite of these efforts, a number of challenges remain, particularly relating to inadequate resources for the gender ministry, the sheer ignorance and non-acceptance of gender equality principles among men in all circles, the strong adherence to and applications of customary laws as well as the high levels of illiteracy especially among women.

Indicator 9 - Number and Nature Of Provisions/Recommendations In The TRC And Other Transition Justice Reports On Women's Human Rights

Although some efforts have been made to implement the TRC recommendations on women, a lot more is pending, especially in the Imperative Category. i.e. recommendations linked to governance issues which were to be implemented urgently. They include the following:

- ratify the AU Protocol on the rights of women in Africa;
- grant minimum 30 percent quota for women in the political sphere including cabinet and parliament and other decision making a positions in all administrative and managerial spheres at national and local levels;
- repeal the provision in the protection of women and girls act, which links the prosecution of sexual offences to moral character of women and girls;
- endorse and respond to the campaign to end the customary law/practice of compelling rape victims to marry the perpetrators.

In the category of “Work Towards” government was required to enact national laws on sexual violence crimes in line with the provisions of the Rome Statute, and a free education policy for girls at senior secondary school level.

All of the above re-echo the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s claims that there are deep-seated discriminatory practices against women, which pre-date the war. These forms of discrimination are rooted in provisions to be found in Section 27(4) d of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone, which states that although all citizens are equal before the law, yet in matters of marriage, divorce, adoption etc, customary law shall prevail. Representations have been made by the Women’s Movement to the Constitutional Review Committee to have this clause expunged from the Constitution. The action is yet to be effected.

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) with a composition of five Commissioners, of whom two are women, has assumed the responsibility of following up on the implementation of the TRC until the official appointment of the Follow Up Committee.

It is believed that the absence of a fully fledged follow-up committee to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the TRC is largely responsible for the slow pace in meeting the set objectives that pertain directly to women. From a broader context, patriarchy and unfavourable customs and traditions have contributed immensely to the low status of women to date.

C. PROMOTING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Indicator 10 - Extent to Which Gender and Peace Education Are Integrated In The Curriculum Of Formal And Informal Education

In recognition of the need to prevent conflict and build peace in the post conflict era, the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports as well as a number of other institutions nationwide have included peace and conflict studies in their curricula targeting varying groups of people at various levels of the educational system. At the tertiary level, both the University of Sierra Leone and Njala University offer certificate, diploma and degree programmes in Peace and Conflict Studies. This is also the case in a number of private institutions around the country. The curriculum of the polytechnics that engage in teacher training, have also been reviewed to include emerging issues relating to gender, peace and development. It is expected that these issues will be included in the school curriculum after building the capacity of teachers to deliver on these subject areas.

Indicator 11 – Percentage of Women Vs Men Who Receive Economic Packages In Conflict Resolution And Reconstruction Processes

In order to address the plight of citizens who suffered immense physical and psychological

damage during the war, government is in the process of implementing a reparation programme that targets victims of all ages and sex. Victims benefited and continue to benefit from services including micro-grants, education support, emergency medical assistance, screening for and repairing fistula, as well as performing surgery to correct anomalies and provision of psychosocial counselling services. Beneficiaries were classified in the following categories: children, amputees, war wounded, war widows and victims of sexual violence. The table 4 below provides information on the beneficiaries disaggregated by sex.

Table 4. Reparation Beneficiaries by Sex

Categories	Registered Victims	No. of Females	Percentage of Females	No. of Males	Percentage of Females
Amputees	1085	255	24	808	76
Children	6984	3012	43	3993	57
War Wounded	4374	1365	31	3013	69
War Widows	4746	4744	100	-	-
Victims of Sexual Violence	2918	2917	100	-	-
Total	20107	12293	61	7814	39

Source: SL Reparations Programme, Annual Status Report (Dec 2008- Dec 2009)

Evidence from the table shows that relatively more women than men were registered and a lot more benefited from the programme. Apart from the brutality that women suffered as the major victims of sexual violence and war widowhood, they were also amputated and wounded. Even their children were amputated, leaving them to carry the burden of single-handedly caring for their disabled children.

Indicator 12 - Detailed Breakdown of Gender Issues Addressed In Peace Agreements Including Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration (DDR) Programmes for The Female Ex-Combatants, Support For Survivors/Victims Of Sexual Violence

Recognizing that women were particularly victimized during the war, Article XXVIII of the Lome Peace Accord called for special attention to be accorded to their needs and potentials of women in formulating and implementing national rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programmes, to enable them to play a central role in the moral, social and physical reconstruction of Sierra Leone.

Following the declaration of the end of the war in 2002, a comprehensive programme of disarmament, demobilization and re-integration was implemented for ex-combatants. The package provided access for formal education for persons who chose to go back to school, while others benefited from informal training in selected skills and start-up kits for those who completed their respective training programmes.

As already stated above, women were exposed to all forms of sexual exploitation during the course of the conflict. They were constantly raped and sexually abused by the fighting forces and even forced to serve as 'bush wives'. Apart from the provisions in the reparation package which has already been presented, there was no evidence that women who had been sexually abused were directly singled out for support from the DDR programme. If anything, the gun submission criteria excluded the females. However, programmes initiated by a number of non-governmental organizations and UN agencies especially UNICEF, provided various forms of support to the women and girls who were seriously traumatized by the experiences of the conflict. Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI), its national club in Freetown (SI Freetown), for instance,

provide educational and skills training support to girls who became mothers through rape by the combatants in the war, as well as facilitate access to and support for medical care, psychosocial and trauma healing services for them. SIGBI's Quadrennial project in Sierra Leone is also supporting education and livelihood skills training to build the capacity of such girls for self-reliance including day care support for their babies.

Indicator 13 – Number And Percentage Of Pre Deployment And Post Deployment For Military And Police Incorporating UNSCR 1325 And UNHCR 1820, International Human Rights Instruments And International Humanitarian Law

All troops deployed to Peacekeeping Operations by the Police and Military are given training including these elements.

Modules used have been developed with the help of the UNIPSIL and adapted from DPKO Training Modules.

Indicator 14 – Allocated and Disbursed Funding To CSOs (Including Women's Groups) Marked For Women Peace And Security (WPS) Programmes

Under the Peace Building Fund, Women's Forum, the national umbrella body of women's organizations received equipment to the tune of Le 34,000,000 (\$8,550) in 2009.

Also in 2009, a nationwide consultative conference for women's groups was funded with a total amount of Le 72,051,000 (\$18,012,975). In addition, the sum of Le 30,000,000 (\$7,500,000) was disbursed for sensitization on the gender laws in the Tonkolili District. Information on disbursements made to other groups around the country is not now readily available.

Indicator 15 – Allocated And Disbursed Funding To Government Marked For Women Peace And Security (WPS) Programmes

The sum of about \$802,000 from the Peace Building Fund was allocated in 2008 to the Gender Division of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, specifically to implement a project titled 'Gender Mainstreaming, Women's Empowerment and Child Protection'. The Project included components focused on Institutional Support to and Capacity Building for women's groups.

The Women's Forum implemented this project in partnership with the Ministry and UNIFEM. The impact of the project which has already ended is yet to be assessed.

Indicator 16 – Percentage of Women Representation In Political Power And Decision Making In Media Content

The data collected for indicator 16 do not provide the exact information that the indicator calls for which is "Percentage of women's representation in political power & decision-making in media content." GNWP hopes to integrate this indicator again in the next phase of the project and focus on the portrayal of women and men in the media particularly in the coverage of armed conflict.

A survey is to be conducted to gather this data for the country; more time and resources are needed to be able to organize such a survey. This is one research area that the GNWP in Sierra Leone would like to focus on as part of its way forward/next steps.

III. Conclusion and Recommendations

As evident from the report, a number of interventions have taken place and aimed at addressing issues relating to women/gender, peace and security. It is, however, noted that most of these have been implemented in a somewhat uncoordinated and ad hoc manner, and many of these efforts were not appropriately documented. The Sierra Leone GNWP team sees this monitoring activity as a productive exercise in laying the foundation for the monitoring of and reporting on the full implementation of the resolutions in Sierra Leone.

It is noteworthy that the government of Sierra Leone is demonstrating definite and increasing commitment to advancing the status of women through partnership and collaboration with Civil Society Organizations/Women's Movement in the design and implementation of some initiatives which include women's leadership building programmes for instance.

Some of the data collected shows that integration of a gender perspective in Security Sector Institutions (SSIs) and Security Sector Reforms is progressing, albeit slowly. Much more needs to be done nationally within SSIs, particularly in the area of women and girls' access to justice and protection. The issue of impunity for SGBV, which continues to rise even though now that the war ended almost 11 years ago, needs to be fervently grappled with. This is why Pillar 3 of the NAP on UNSCR 1325 highlights the element of prosecution; the culture of impunity for SGBV against women/girls appears to be a challenge which just won't go away.

This is one other area in which the GNWP members in Sierra Leone, in alliance with gender sensitive men at all levels, aim to work by reviewing identified good practices and lessons learned in combating SGBV in and outside Africa. A number of specific recommendations are highlighted for moving this work forward as follows:

We call on the Government, through particularly the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs to:

- Lead efforts in partnership with the National Task Force on NAP 1325 to mobilise resources and institutionalise operations of the National Steering Committee for the coordination of the full implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 as mapped out in the NAP 1325 and 1820;
- Intensify actions to coordinate with other Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs) and structures in Agriculture, Trade and Industry, Internal Affairs and Local government, Lands and Environment, Education and Health, for instances, in the engagement with women, gender, peace and security issues;
- Earmark resources from its quarterly allocations and other sources for routine monitoring of implementing gender perspectives in MDA's policies and continuous sex disaggregated data collection, including documentation for reporting and accountability on women gender, peace and security matters;
- Coordinate with the Ministry of Finance and Development as well as the Statistics Sierra Leone to ensure that sex disaggregated data on budget allocations and spending on peace building, peace and security consolidation processes and interventions are collected and published.

We call on Development partners, particularly the UN Country Gender Team, Bilateral Agencies and Institutions to support technically and to allocate resources to women's organizations at national and community levels, in efforts of institution building and strengthening of succession planning in peace and security fields.

As GNWP members in Sierra Leone, we commit to:

Engage all sectors of the Sierra Leone society, in particular the media, traditional and religious institutions, in peace and security dialogue and processes during the struggle against the impunity of sexual and gender based violence, including the building of a culture of peace in the communities.

Conduct researches, seminars and workshops particularly focused on community level to enable the popularisation of the principles/provisions of UNSCRs 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and the contents of the SiLNAP 1325 and 1820, including their linkages to the AU Women's Protocol and the Solemn Declaration of the Heads of States and Government on Gender Equality in Africa.

After the publication of this report, GNWP members in Sierra Leone intend to organize, on the ground here, as an element in maintaining the momentum for the full implementation of the SiLNAP 1325 and 1820, a seminar/workshop for the widest possible dissemination of these monitoring tools and these initial data gathered in order to lay the foundation for monitoring, reporting and holding ourselves, government and other actors accountable.

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