



2016

Annual Report

Network Movement for Justice and Development





**NMJD's Annual
Report
2016**



**Network Movement for
Justice and Development**

Report:

Annual Report 2016

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ACRONYMS

BASMAS Strategies	Bombali Alliance for School Monitoring & Advocacy
CPDC	Community Peace & Development Committee
CHMVG	Community Health Monitoring Volunteer Group
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTA	Community-Teacher Association
CVA	Citizens Voice Action
DHMT	District Health Monitoring Team
DPD	District Platform for Dialogue
FSU	Family Support Unit
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IEC	Information Education Communication
IWD	International Women's Day
IRC	International Rescue Committee
LMMG	Local Mines Monitoring Group
MSWGCA	Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender & Children's Affairs
NaRGEJ	Natural Resource Governance and Economic Justice
NMA	National Minerals Agency
NMJD	Network Movement for Justice & Development
ODW	Operation Days Work
PHU	Peripheral Health Unit
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SGBV	Sexual & Gender-Based Violence
SLBC	Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation
SMAT	School Monitoring & Advocacy Teams
SMC	Schools Management Committee
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendants
WELD	Women's Empowerment for Leadership & Development

Introduction and Contextual Analysis

If 2015 was a challenging year for civil society in Sierra Leone, then 2016 was much more challenging. Threats by government functionaries and other state institutions to further shut down the already limited civil society space formed one of the key talking points of the year. The Government of Sierra Leone, through the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, continued working towards the finalization of the New NGO Policy whose bold intention is to restrict civil society activism in the country. The new policy would make it a near-impossibility to register or renew the registration of an NGO because of the unwieldy processes involved.

Also, the Sierra Leone Parliament set up a "Special Committee on CSOs" towards the end of 2015. Civil society activists and some sections of the public viewed the establishment of this committee as a way of reinforcing the New NGO Policy and its ideals. Recent happenings, which saw a journalist and a civil society activist summoned by this committee, justified the apprehension of the people over this committee. Both activists were summoned after they impugned parliament's transparency and accountability, particularly when some of its members could not give proper accounts of how they utilized the Constituency Development Funds and other resources entrusted to them. The latest ball that came out of the bag was the convening of a meeting of the Sierra Leone Police, Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the Sierra Leone Association of Non-Governmental Organizations by parliament. The purpose of the meeting was to "instruct" these institutions to henceforth subject all NGO vehicles into serious checks on all security checkpoints across the country. NGO vehicles used to enjoy the privilege of not being checked at security check points.

In the eastern district of Kono, two major incidences happened there during the reporting period, which further helped to increase the volatility of an already hot-blooded district. The elected Mayor of the Koidu-New Sembehun city, himself a youth and very popular among his peers, was removed from office by the government and replaced with an appointed one under very suspicious and controversial circumstances. This infamous act by the government almost threw the whole district into a full-blown conflict. As the district was reeling out of this nightmare, the Congo Greek/Bridge that links Koidu with its environs was declared a diamond mining site by the government. This elicited a flurry of activities that pitted the security forces against irate youth.

The year ended with some amount of trepidation and nervousness among lovers and advocates of democracy the constitutional review process hit a solid rock after the ruling All Congress Party protested against the draft report of the constitution thereby creating an impasse; and the unexplained delay by the president of Sierra Leone/National Electoral Commission in announcing the dates for the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. This has created an atmosphere of uncertainty around the democratic landscape of the country.

In the midst of this vagueness, civil society spiritedly continued to come together and organize towards building social movements. Different civil society platforms have come to the realization that the problems confronting the nation required more collaboration and partnership. The Civil Society Forum Sierra Leone is providing strong leadership in this direction. The Forum held two National Conveners meetings and developed a comprehensive two-year strategic direction for civil society activism in the country.



Establishing, supporting and strengthening community structures in NMJD operational areas



OUTPUTS ACHIEVED

- Conducted planning sessions in the five SMATs zones for SMATs community-level awareness raising events on education and on the importance of girl child education
 - Conducted community-level awareness raising events on education and the importance of girl child education reaching out to parents and guardians, pupils in SMAT schools and other community members.
 - Conducted two Community-level outreach meetings by SMATs on the civil, social and political rights of women and girls in 50 communities in Bombali district.
- Facilitated the monitoring of mining affected communities. The principal issues investigated during the monitoring included: indigenes rights to employment (local content policy); human rights abuses; crop compensation and proper resettlement of primary host communities.
- Facilitated the strengthening of a host of community structures in NMJD operational areas. For example, under the Raw Diamonds Sharp Tongues Project, two trainings on monitoring and advocacy

were supported in Kamara and Nimikoro chiefdoms. A total of 100 LMMGs were supported to conduct monitoring visits of mining sites and embark on advocacy for the utilization of mining proceeds for the empowerment of youth and the promotion of education.

- Facilitated the holding of 18 clustered community dialogue sessions, nine chiefdom governance and accountability sessions and one peace and development forum in the southern region.
- Facilitated four inter chiefdom exchange visits for cross cultural learning for Traditional and Religious Leaders to strengthen conflict prevention, mediation and resolution mechanisms in Bo and Pujehun districts.
- Organized 21 clustered community peace and human rights dialogue sessions in the southern region.
- Facilitated two advocacy engagements for key stakeholders in Pujehun district.
- Facilitated the establishment of Governance and Advocacy Coalitions with membership drawn from functional and viable CSOs operating in the WELD project communities in Kenema district. Members of these Coalitions were trained in advocacy, governance and social audit.
- Facilitated the training of 57 Animators drawn from the 57 chiefdoms where the WELD project is being implemented. These Animators are trained to serve as auxiliary to the CSOs whose major function is to reach out to communities on gender issues.

Supported the Kono Women's Network in Governance with one motor bike and two computers. The aim was to increase members of the Network's access to information, as well as to facilitate their movement, particularly to remote and hard-to-reach

communities. The Network was also supported to organize Women on the Move Radio Talk Shows and to establish chiefdom executives that meet on a monthly basis to discuss problems affecting them.

- Provided mediation and counseling support to project communities for the resolution of conflicts between and among families or conflicts involving neighbours and victims of GBV. In all, 14 cases were reported or referred to NMJD: one from the Koidu-New Sembehun City Council, one from the Kono District Council and 12 from the surrounding communities. NMJD resolved six of these cases, two were settled in the Magistrate Court and the six are still pending. Mediation and counseling support provided included First Aid treatment and the provision of food and counseling to the victims.
- Facilitated the Project Team to undertake six monitoring visits, as well as NMJD staff to undertake another three monitoring visits, to the project chiefdoms.
- Organized awareness raising and sensitization events in schools and communities in the five project chiefdoms in Bombali district (Bombali Sebor, Paki Masabong, Biriwa, Makarie Gbanti and Safroko Limba). The events focused on Education Policies, Teachers Code of Conduct, and the Importance of Girl Child Education.

☒ Placed nine people (4 men 5 women) in Kenema on six months skills training courses that included driving, auto-bike and motor mechanic, hairdressing and catering. They have all completed the training successfully and are now readying to undertake a one month on the job training before they embark on an entrepreneurship training to prepare them well enough to start their own businesses.

☒ Facilitated the formation of ten Village Savings Groups; ten village agents from the six chiefdoms in Kenema district have also been identified for training in Village Savings Methodologies: Simbaru, Dodo, Malegohun , Kandulepiama, Nongowa and Small Bo. The membership of each of the Savings Groups is between 10-25 people. The Groups are owned and managed by the group members themselves in a transparent and accountable manner.

☒ Organized two exclusive dialogue forums for 480 people (240 women 240 men) drawn from Gaura, Simbaru, Kandulepiama, Niawa, Small Bo, Lower Bambara and Dama chiefdoms. The objectives of the two forums were: 1) to increase knowledge of men and women on key gender concepts, 2) to identify challenges/barriers women are facing in decision-making and to proffer strategies that will help in lessening the barriers, and 3) to generate discussions around the different roles men and women can play in advocating towards gender equality and women's advancement.

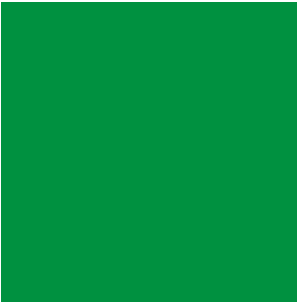
☒ Organized two-day dialogue forums for 16 Paramount Chiefs in Kenema district on their roles and responsibilities in facilitating women's participation in decision-making processes at community level .The objectives of the Forum are to

enable Paramount Chiefs to better understand the focus of the WELD project, to reflect and identify their roles and responsibilities for enhancing women's participation in community decision-making processes, as well as to encourage them to become pioneers of breaking barriers that are limiting women's personal development at local and national levels. The Forum was also geared towards influencing positive behavioural change in their communities in the areas of Gender-Based Violence and other social ills.

☒ Organized dialogue session for 15 male champions, including parliamentarians, local councils and CSOs, whose profiles had been obtained by NMJD in a dialogue session. The objective of the session was to get them to take lead in popularizing and promoting gender equitable policies and gender sensitive planning. The session was held at the Kenema Youth Centre. The main focus of these dialogue sessions was to establish a network of Male Champions with a strong passion for women issues and to advocate strongly for gender equality and gender equity.

☒ Organized a one day meeting with the established WELD Advocacy and Governance CSO coalitions to strengthen their capability for effective engagement on gender issues. The purpose of the meeting was to enable the CSO coalitions develop well-defined joint action plans to monitor district-level policies, plans and budgets, as well as to engage local councils, parliamentarians and to put pressure on them to advocate for gender sensitive policies, equality and women's advancement.

☒

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- ☐ Provided SLL 5,500,000 (Five Million Five Hundred Thousand Leones) to the two established District CSO Coalitions towards the implementation of their joint quarterly plans of actions: familiarization visit to the Kenema District and City Councils to share the action plans with them, visitations to chiefdoms to identify CBOs working on gender issues and to bring them onboard the coalitions. On the whole, a total of 97 community-based groups working on gender issues in the targeted chiefdoms were reached with a total population of 3,495 (95 men, 3400 women) and 10 chiefdom CSO coalitions established.
 - ☐ Undertook monitoring visits to DPDs in Kailahun, Kambia, Kabala, Kenema and Pujehun districts. These visits enabled us

to discuss the critical areas of intervention by the DPDs in the implementation phases of the project, how to ensure that the plans agreed on were implemented on time, key areas to focus on in their report, as well as what they should focus on in their monitoring during the Recovery Phase One of the post-Ebola strategy.

Supported the District Platforms to continue to raise awareness on the Ebola Virus, emphasizing the imperative need for communities not to relent on observing the prescribed preventive measures.

Capacity building events for staff, partners and community structures

OUTPUTS ACHIEVED

- Coached 100 SMATs leaders on women empowerment indicators and developed plans to carry out civic education and information gathering on women and girls empowerment.
 - Trained 30 civil society and local authorities on the Model Mining Legislation.
 - Organized two days training for 30 civil society activists and mining communities on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.
 - Organized training for 120 Influential Community Actors in Conflict transformation skills and engaged in peace building and livelihood activities in three chiefdoms in Bo district. Also, conducted one training in Transformative Leadership and Advocacy in the three operational chiefdoms.
 - Placed 16 EVD youth survivors in Kenema district in two technical and vocational skills training institutions for periods ranging from six to 12 months. They were all provided with start-up kits upon graduation and a cash of Le500,000 given to each youth trainee to set up their own individual businesses.
- Conducted two trainings on monitoring and advocacy for the project (Raw Diamonds Sharp Tongues) staff and ODW monitoring teams in Kamara and Nimikoro chiefdoms in Kono district. In all, a total of 100 LMMGs were trained to conduct monitoring visits to mining sites and to embark on advocacy for the utilization of mining proceeds for the empowerment of youth and the promotion of education.
 - ☒ Facilitated the training of ten women from the Kono Women's Network and five councilors in the effective use of the media to enhance their advocacy engagements. Eastern Community Radio conducted the training.
 - ☒ Provided coaching and mentoring support to the Community Health Monitoring Volunteer Groups (CHMVGs) for an open and accountable health service delivery system.
 - ☒ Held civic education sessions on women and girls empowerment for SMATs and women's group in the five project chiefdoms in Bombali district (Bombali Sebor, Paki Masabong, Biriwa, Makarie Gbanti and Safroko Limba).
- Organized Quiz Competitions for pupils in ten SMAT schools in Bombali district, as well as Education Model Talks.
 - ☒ Organized training workshops for SMATs/BASMAs on Gender (Gender Audit & the Triple Roles of women) and Power Analysis in Bombali district.

Organized two days training for 30 women entrepreneurs and small business owners from WELD targeted operational chiefdoms in Kenema district in *basic business management skills*. The objectives of the training were: 1) to equip 15 women entrepreneurs and 15 small business owners with the necessary knowledge and skills in business planning and management, 2) to enable them improve and strengthen their businesses, and 3) to mentor other interested women. Topics covered in the training were Business Planning, Marketing, Record Keeping, Inventory, Credit Book, Entrepreneurship and Sources of Finance. Certificates were presented to the participants.

Organized two days training for Local Councils, Gender Desk Officers, M&E Officers and MSWGCAs on Gender and Gender Sensitive Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Budgeting. 30 people (7 women and 23 men) participated in the training held in Kenema. The purpose of the training was to increase the level of understanding of participants so that they can be able to adopt gender sensitive planning, monitoring and reporting at District and City Councils-level, as well as at the chiefdom-level and to ascertain whether there is gender responsive service delivery at community-level.

Organized three days training for CSOs, women-led/owned organizations in governance, advocacy and social audit through the use of Citizens Voice and Action Tools. 40 people from 20 organizations (2 per organization) drawn from within Kenema district took part in the training. The objectives of the training included the following: 1) to equip CSOs with tools that will help them make meaningful

contributions towards promoting gender-sensitive issues at local and district-levels; 2) to familiarize CSOs working on gender issues with techniques, tools and methods of advocacy, governance and social audit; 3) to enable CSOs to understand how to use the model of Citizen's Voice and Action (CVA) to advocate for gender sensitive policies and participation of women in governance; 4) to identify the importance of team work, networking in advocating for social, economic and political development of women; and 5) to develop an action plan for improving the political, social and economic of women in their respective local communities.

networking in advocating for social, economic and political development of women; and 5) to develop an action plan for improving the political, social and economic development of women in their respective local communities.

Organized two simultaneous training for journalists and theatre groups for the effective implementation of the IEC/BCC component of the WELD project. The objective of the training was two-fold: 1) to equip journalists and theatre artistes with the necessary knowledge on the barriers and key behaviours that limit women's participation and involvement in governance processes, and 2) to develop practical means of reporting behavioural change that will address the barriers that women are facing in doing gender sensitive reporting. A total of ten journalists (5 men 5 women) drawn from five different community radio stations in Kenema district, including Eastern Radio, SLBC, Star Line, Kamboi Agriculture Radio and Radio Nongowa participated in the training. The training covered the following topics: situating gender

in the context of journalism, gender-based reporting, gender concepts, gender sensitive journalism, social/cultural barriers, power hierarchy and gender discrimination. In like measure, 20 theatre artistes from two theatre groups in Kenema took part in the training. At the end of the training, the theatre groups presented skits in five local languages (Themne, Limba, Koranko, Mende and Kono). The skits were mainly focused on the promotion of the girl child education and women in leadership, particularly Paramount Chiefs.

- Organized training for 30 participants, including traditional leaders, CSOs, FSU, police prosecutors and MSWGCA *on the gender laws, referral pathway and channel of hope methodology* to influence positive behavioural change on women in communities experiencing gender-based violence and other societal ills. The purpose of the training was to deepen and strengthen participants' understanding of the three Gender Acts, referral pathway and channel of hope methodology, to enable participants share experiences, identify challenges that they are facing in the implementation of the three Gender

Acts and strategize ways of addressing these challenges. At the conclusion of the training, participants made wide ranging commitments and recommendations: prepare bye-laws with punitive measures for perpetrators of gender-based violence, form SGBV monitoring committees in all sections of the project chiefdoms and cascade the training to enable more people to benefit from it.

- Organized leadership trainings for local leaders in mediation skills in Bandajuma in Nongowa chiefdom and Gegbema in Tunkia chiefdoms. 100 people participated in the trainings (46 women 54 men). The focus of the trainings was to enhance the level of willingness of local community leaders in identifying and resolving conflicts/disputes in their respective communities.

Organized Negotiation, Mediation, Dialogue and Advocacy training for DPD leaders. 20 DPDs (14 men 6 women) benefited from the training. The training has increased the knowledge and understanding of DPDs of the processes involved in advocacy, mediation, negotiation and dialogue. The advocacy knowledge has given them more confidence to identify issues that require policy change.

Strengthening collaboration, coalition building and networking



OUTPUTS ACHIEVED

- ☑ Conducted reporting, reflection and learning session on the SMATs outreach events on Civil, Social and political rights of women and girls
 - ☑ Organized student-focused activities in the form of Quiz competition and Drama performances on the importance of girl child education and Education Model Talk in the ten SMATS schools. Prizes such as geometry sets, bags, books, pens, pencils, etc. were handed over to the winning pupils to motivate and encourage them.
 - ☑ Facilitated interface meetings between SMAT and community leaders on issues of gender equality and the rights of women and girls.
 - ☑ Facilitated the completion of the second phase of the Home-to-Home parent's engagements on girl child education.
- Held six NaRGEJ learning and sharing meetings in February, March April, September, October and November 2016. The Network has established a common understanding of critical issues relating to the livelihoods of mining communities impacted by the operations of mining companies. They also succeeded in getting government to institute a process of domesticating the African Mining Vision through the • development of a 'National Mineral Policy'.
- NaRGEJ led nationwide civil society

and citizens consultations to generate feedback on the draft Constitution of Sierra Leone with respect to the new chapter they influenced to be inserted in it *Land, Natural Resources and the Environment*. The feedback generated was catalogued and submitted to the Constitutional Review Committee.

- Recruited, trained and deployed 20 Animators as volunteers in the seven chiefdoms in Kenema district where the *Pay No Bribe* project is being implemented.
- 36 Smart phones and six Tablets installed with special mobile Applications, free-toll call line and website were made available to the general public to enhance the anonymous reporting of incidences of graft in their communities.
- 300 personal mobile phones of people in the PNB project communities have been connected to the PNB mobile Applications, free-toll call line and website to enable them report graft in their communities.
- Facilitated regular consultative and partnership meetings with various stakeholders including local authorities and donor agencies in Kamara and Nimikoro chiefdoms. These engagements were aimed at fostering broader participation in the implementation of NMJD projects in these chiefdoms.
- NMJD's Executive Director provided mentoring and coaching support to the field

staff during his routine visits to the organization's operational areas. During these visits, he paid courtesy calls on local authorities and discussed the various projects that his organization was implementing in their communities and how these host communities, particularly local authorities, could contribute towards the realization of the projects objectives.

- Facilitated mentoring and coaching services for 30 female leaders aspiring to contest elections in the local councils (councilors, mayors, district chairpersons) and in the upcoming parliamentary elections. AMNet facilitated this process. The objective of the process was to guide and explore peer mentoring among female aspirants through a shadowing programme, strengthening relationships and solidarity between female leaders with the ultimate aim of creating “power in numbers”.


Facilitated two Post-Ebola Recovery Strategy meetings, four Monitoring of the Post-Ebola Recovery Strategy, five radio discussion programmes, and four coordination meetings. The establishment of the Coordinating Forum for the Post-Ebola Recovery Strategy Partners was influenced by the DPDs, meant to review their interventions and to share information of the status of the strategy with the general public.

Research and Documentation



OUTPUTS ACHIEVED

- ☑☑ Produced and launched two research reports separately titled: 1) *Fantasies and Nightmares of Iron Ore Mining in Sierra Leone Iron Ore Price Crash and its Effect on the Economy of Sierra Leone*; and 2) *Change of Administration of African Minerals Limited to Shandong Iron and Steel Group and from London Mining to Timis Corporation*.
- ☑ Conducted one post-Ebola district level baseline survey on health facilities and personnel and the draft report was validated and shared with the DHMT and Councils.
- ☑ Conducted an assessment of the compliance level of license holders and miners in Kamara and Nimikoro Chiefdoms using a tool that was prepared by ODW partners and organizational staff. Team leaders from the ten operational communities were orientated on the assessment tool. Findings of the assessment were shared and discussed with the NMA, traditional authorities and chiefdom mining committees.
- ☑ Conducted awareness raising events for beneficiary communities and other stakeholders in the diamond mining



chiefdoms of Kono district on the importance of taking licenses and paying other mining dues/taxes - 40 posters, 40 flyers (Stickers, 18 jingles and six radio discussions were held to sensitize miners and mining companies and communities on tax compliance.

- ☐ Undertook one post-Ebola district-level baseline survey on health facilities and personnel in the two chiefdoms of Kamara and Nimikoro. The draft report was validated and later shared with the DHMT and the local councils in Kono district.

Developed a comprehensive training manual to meet the WELD project objectives focusing on practical tools that can be used by participants in their respective institutions/organizations. Topics dealt with in the manual included gender concepts, gender mainstreaming and gender analysis, barriers to women's participation, gender sensitive planning and monitoring, gender responsive budgeting and reporting.

Implementation of the Organisation development and Change (ODC)

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- Paid Administrative/Management staff's outstanding leave allowances and end of contract benefits.
 - Paid salaries of staff and stipends to interns and other auxiliary staff.
- Completed and shared the Organizational

Sustainability Audit with staff, Board members with instruction to develop a Sustainability Strategy & Action plan and related tools/instruments.



Meeting with chiefdom authorities in Kamara chiefdom, Kono district

Collaboration with Government and Development Partners



OUTPUTS ACHIEVED

- 2. • Facilitated the training of 50 civil society activists, MDAs and private sector on the African Mining Vision. The outcome of this activity was geared towards creating a well-informed civil society and citizenry on the rationale and principles of the AMV and the potential it has for natural resource exploitation and governance to: protect rights of communities, ensure community protection and benefits, ensure corporate accountability, and provide collaborative partnership in the management of the natural resource sector.
- NMJD continued to collaborate and partner with relevant government agencies

- such as the Open Government Partnership/Open Government Initiative, Mines and Minerals Agency, Sierra Leone Transparency Initiative and Anti-Corruption Commission.
- Facilitated experience sharing sessions on the utilization of education service deliveries and resources with the Ministry of Education and other relevant stakeholders, as well as frontline service providers in Bombali district. Under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, we joined other institutions and organizations in and outside Sierra Leone in commemorating

- gender parity has slowed down in many places. NMJD in collaboration with the Ministry organized a float parade in the streets of Kenema that brought together over 200 people, including community women activists, school children, and women-led/owned groups and partners. The objectives of the IWD was to enable the public to support gender parity/equality in the district, to sensitize communities on the impact of GBV against women and the right of women in decision- making and leadership processes. Girl child education and the essence of empowering women for community and national development were at the centre of events marking the Day.

- Civil Society Leaders led by the National Civil Society Forum engaged the Chief of Staff in the Office of the President on the New NGO Policy, shared with him the danger it poses to democratic space and the need to have a special meeting with the Cabinet for a direct dialogue on the issue. This meeting is being planned before the Policy is tabled in parliament.

Facilitated the DPDs in Pujehun, Koinadugu, Kenema, Kailahun and Kambia to conduct dialogue sessions with the following sets of structures: Post-Ebola Recovery Team and Communities; the DHMT, Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs and Survivors; Traditional Healers, Local leaders, Communities and District Officers in Koinadugu. The sessions identified gaps in the roll out of the Post-Ebola Recovery Plan, especially the micro- credit aspect, support to and welfare of the Survivors. The sessions also resolved the issue between the suspended chiefs and the District Authorities, as well as with their Paramount Chiefs. In Pujehun district, the DPD's engagements with the DHMT have led to the assigning of a vehicle to the District Health Sister for the effective monitoring of PHUs. Survivors are now also accessing free medical care from the government health facilities. Traditional healers/herbalists are now making referrals of sick persons to the nearest health facility and are now using PPE when treating sick persons.

Key Results and Achievements

➤ There are now platforms in NMJD's operational chiefdoms in Bombali district for collective planning of community members and school authorities that have helped address the issues affecting education service delivery in Bombali district and for the advancement of school going girls in the targeted schools and surrounding communities. Among other reasons, these actions were influenced by the shared understanding among community members on the key problems affecting education in the targeted schools, coupled with the realization that the educational advancement of the girl child should not be left in the hands of teachers and government alone, but should be the collective effort of all including parents, guardians and community members.

There has also been an increase in the participation of community members, especially parents, in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of education services delivered to the targeted schools. This is evidenced by the way parents and other community members are monitoring the punctuality, regularity and behaviour of both teachers and pupils in and out of school. This has reduced incidences of lateness and absenteeism of teachers and pupils in the targeted schools with a corresponding reduction in teenage pregnancy.

➤ The various activities in the natural

resource sector led to the engagement of the Constitutional Review Committee for the creation of a new chapter in the constitution on "*Land, Natural Resources and the Environment*", with human rights principles forming the basis of the chapter. For instance, issues of free prior and informed consent and communities' rights to decide were discussed with the Committee. This engagement was preceded by nationwide consultations conducted by NaRGEJ and NMJD.

➤ The African Mining Vision training organized for civil society, relevant government ministries, departments and agencies helped participants to acquire basic understanding of the principles and relevance of the AMV to our context. The training ended with the development of a Communiqué in which participants catalogued their concerns, aspirations and recommendations and handed them over to the government for consideration in reviewing the country's mining policy. Government has committed and taken initial steps towards the domestication of the AMV with the ongoing development of the 'Minerals Policy'.

➤ As part of the Community Development Agreement Working Group, NMJD facilitated the formation of five Community Development Committees (CDCs) in Bonthe and Moyamba districts in communities where Sierra Rutile Limited and VIMETCO mining Companies are operating. Also, NMJD mobilized and sensitized 50 representatives from Moyamba

and Bonthe districts on the CDA. This was done in concert with the CDA Working Group. The members of the working Group that facilitated the training were the National Minerals Agency (NMA), National Advocacy Coalition on Extractives (NACE), GIZ and NMJD. With this CDA in place, community benefits and security are assured. Tensions and disagreements between the communities and mining companies as well as local authorities can now be discussed openly and issues negotiated.

➤ NMJD, in Partnership with the International Alliance for Natural Resources in Africa (IANRA) and with funds from the European Union (EU), organized a Round Table Meeting with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The meeting was preceded by a training for Civil Society and Local Authorities on the Model Mining Legislation for citizens' understanding. These activities were geared towards creating a well-informed civil society and line ministries working on the natural resource sector on the Model Mining Law and the potential it has to maximize benefits for Sierra Leone in particular and Africa as a whole. This knowledge will enable civil society to input more positively into the policy review processes going on in the country to make the natural resources more beneficial to citizens.

➤ Civil Society organizing has taken an upward momentum. With the development of the Strategy for National Civil Society Forum, the Conveners are more cohesive now, several actions on public interest issues are being addressed including the new NGO Policy to be fully discussed with the Cabinet and necessary amendments made to reflect international best practice and human rights standards; the provisions of the revised constitution to take into account strong

democratic, human rights and accountability measures as recommended; the Electoral Commission to announce as required by the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone the exact dates for the General Elections in 2018; to get the various public institutions such as the Parliament, MDAs, accountable to citizens and in response to the Auditor General's report.

➤ At the district districts level too, civil society are getting more organized and engaged on public interest issues.

Plans of actions have been developed with leadership determined in several districts. Issues of road construction, equity in distribution of national revenue for development across the districts are demanded; police high-handedness is being questioned and challenged; increase in cases of brutal murders of girls and women is a matter of serious concern and engagement with authorities in some districts. More coordinated events are being organized in other districts to

➤ Participation of citizens in decision-making processes in the operational chiefdoms in Bo district has been enhanced, especially for women and youth. This has helped to address issues of rights violations, and also helping communities to advocate for services and to demand accountability from their leaders. The citizens identified armed robbery, burglary and the increasing clique activities in their communities as a serious security threats; they developed strategies for collective actions to address these threats. Community structures such as the Village Development Communities were empowered to champion development in their respective communities and to increase women

chiefdoms. In this year's International Women's Day Leadership Award hosted as part of activities to mark the International Women's Day, chairlady of the Gandorhun Gbane Women's Network proudly recognized this feat: "We the women of Gbane, have strengthened our sensitization against GBV and as a result, incidences of teenage pregnancy, physical assault and forceful marriages are gradually falling. We no longer shy away from reporting cases of violence against women to the police whenever they happen, and no matter who is involved, and we will follow it to its logical conclusions in the courts. The time for compromise is long over," she said. The capacity building events that were organized for members of these networks contributed towards this daring stance of women in the project chiefdoms in Kono district. The women have also paid courtesy calls to their respective Paramount Chiefs, political party and local council leaders.

- There has been an increase in the number of people visiting PHUs and other health facilities in targeted chiefdoms in Kono district after the Ebola virus in the country. This is evident by the fact that more women and children are now attending ante and post-natal clinics, as well as more women giving birth in health centres across the district compared to the period before and during the Ebola Epidemic. During a recent baseline survey carried out by the project staff in January 2016, It was observed that in five out of the ten targeted communities in one month alone, 110 children were delivered in PHUs, of which 57 were males and 53 females; 1436 children attended clinic, of which 639 were males and 797 were females;

205 treated bed nets were distributed and 520 children were immunized, of which 268 were males and 251 were females. It was also evident that there were no maternal and infant deaths reported during the reporting period in communities in our operational chiefdoms in Kono district.

- In the same breath, similar successes have been noted in NMJD's operational chiefdoms in Kenema district. There is a sharp increase in the number of community people accessing the community health facilities. For this reporting period, a record number of 5,956 beneficiaries accessed the community health facilities in their respective areas. This can be attributed to the improved relationship between healthcare workers and the communities that resulted in renewed confidence of the people in the healthcare facilities. The negative perception they used to have about healthcare workers has changed to something positive. As a result, healthcare giver agencies like Marie Stopes, GOAL and IRC now use the PHU facilities to reach out to their clients in these communities. For example, Marie Stopes and SILPA use these health facilities as outlets to deliver family planning information to especially young women, whilst SILPA provides nutritional support to boost the health status of malnourished children. IRC also supports TBAs to encourage them to stop administering child birth in their homes to prevent child birth-related deaths and complications. In fact, TBAs are supplied with exercise books in order to list down the names of pregnant

and youth participation in community initiatives.

- Information sharing has improved the confidence of communities on the project chiefdoms of Bumpe Ngao, Kakua and Tikonko in Bo district resulting in a corresponding improvement in the culture of accountability among chiefdom stakeholders e.g. community people are now becoming courageous to demand explanations for projects undertaken by their authorities and the authorities on the other hand see accountability as an obligation they owe to the people; to share information and facilitate the participation of the people in decision-making and in other development activities. In the three chiefdoms, local authorities accounted for revenue generated from local taxes and licenses and how it was utilized.
 - The conflict that arose in Pujehun over the appointment of the new Pujehun District Chief Imam has almost been resolved. The appointment of the new chief Imam was outrightly rejected by some populations of the Muslim community in the district. This created heightened tensions among the Muslim community in the district resulting in the emergence of opposing factions. Through the intervention of NMJD and the local structures such as the DPDs, the tensions have calmed down to the point that the war of words that used to characterize the conflict between supporters of the opposing parties has stopped.
- In Kono district, the Local Mines Monitoring Groups that NMJD established in

the six diamond mining chiefdoms in the district, have not only intensified the monitoring of mining activities in their respective communities, but also they have become more confident and impactful during community stakeholders meetings, particularly the youth. These groups are using their findings from the fields to engage the appropriate stakeholders and they also flag such issues during community stakeholders meetings. The monitoring exercises are meant to minimize environmental damage and to ensure that miners comply fully with the Mines and Minerals Act of 2009, especially the acquisition of authentic mining licenses to enhance or increase community beneficiation. This increase in people's awareness and participation is as a result of the several trainings, mentoring and other capacity strengthening processes that NMJD facilitated for the LMMGs in the six project chiefdoms in Kono district.

- NMJD facilitated and supported the establishment of women's networks in the six project chiefdoms in Kono district to strengthen the collective voice and visibility of women in those communities. Women have been organized into 118 groups at chiefdom, zonal and district-level to feed the networks that have been established. These networks have, in turn, embarked on monthly community outreach sessions and supporting the Women on the Move radio programmes. Both initiatives are meant to reinforce the empowerment of women. As a result of the awareness, confidence and empowerment that these processes have produced, incidences of violence against women and girls are on the decrease in the affected

women they lead to PHUs. This goes with a special incentive. The more cases one presents, the bigger the incentive. This approach has greatly helped to stem the prevalence of child-birth complications and other related problems in the district.

- In Bombali district, there are now School Monitoring and Advocacy Teams (SMATs) in all the ten targeted schools in the district, comprising of teachers, parents and pupils. Since their establishment in 2013, NMJD has been providing these SMAT groups with relevant capacity and support in the forms of trainings, coaching, mentoring and finances with which they continue to successfully carry out several activities at community-level. They monitor events on education service delivery, through which they hold community-level duty bearers to account, especially on the management and utilization of school subsidies, girl child support, teaching and learning materials. The SMAT groups have also been monitoring the level of awareness among community members on education policies and Police Practices among Teachers especially on the teachers code of conduct, by administering questionnaires and holding focus group discussions targeting: Parents (CTAs, SMCs, School Board and other community members), heads of schools, teachers and pupils. The SMATs engage school authorities, parents and other education stakeholders at community-level on their monitoring findings with the aim of enhancing community participation, transparency and accountability in the

provision of education services.

- The project has enhanced a shared understanding among community members on the key problems affecting education in the targeted schools in Bombali district, which have inspired the development of collective action plans that could help address the problems of education and the educational advancement of the girl child. There is now a change in consciousness, increased knowledge and belief among communities that they are also contributing factors for the problems surrounding the girl child education through their complacency, lack of interest in monitoring the girl child. Therefore, they can also be part of the solution. They have also awoken up to the fact that the educational advancement of the girl child should not be left only with the teachers and the government, but should be the collective concern of all including the parents, guardians and community members. This is because children spend few hours at school (six hours maximum) and the rest at home.
- Progress has also been made in the area of accountability as duty bearers are now providing SMAT groups with information about their schools, especially on school resources and how they are utilized; though with delays and inaccurate information in certain schools. This is a manifestation of the willingness expressed by service providers at community-level to cooperate with SMATs groups in their community-level school monitoring events.
- The different skills training

programmes for Ebola survivors in Kenema district are producing the desired results - building confidence of survivors and providing them with alternative means of livelihoods. Those who registered for the one year programme in tailoring/seamstress have successfully gone half way through their training, whilst those for the six months programme in other trades have successfully completed their training. Those who offered catering can now comfortably prepare both African and European dishes for commercial purposes. In the same vein, those who undertook driving and motor mechanic courses can now drive vehicles and motor-bikes safely and provide mechanical services. Discriminating against Ebola survivors/stigmatization has scaled down significantly in the project communities, as evidenced by the level of interaction between Ebola survivors and those that were never affected by the disease.

"To a very large extent, I now breathe a sigh of relief. At the beginning of the training, I personally felt timid and apprehensive of mingling with my colleagues because of our plight as Ebola survivors and the fear of the stigma that was daily haunting us. But, time proved me wrong. There was nothing like stigma or discrimination. We were all supportive of each other throughout the training. It's now our hope that we will take this camaraderie to the community so that we will not only contribute to the development of our homes, but also the community at large," said Fatmata Kamara, 19, an Ebola survivor in

Kenema.

- As a result of the several dialogue sessions that have been organized in the WELD project chiefdoms in Kenema district, women are now desirous of taking up the challenge of competing with their male counter-parts for elective positions in the forthcoming parliamentary and local council elections. This is the result of the monthly meetings that the women's groups that have been established are holding to discuss their situations and to finding remedial measures to resolve them. Already, 50 women have made their intention to contest for various positions in the 2018 elections known. Of the 50 potential aspirants, 30 have been trained in leadership and electoral processes. These engagements have significantly increased the confidence and determination of these women to pursue their civic and political rights in a more spirited fashion.
- Also, with various forms of support by NMJD, the women in the project chiefdoms in Kenema district have established 27 savings groups. These savings groups are geared towards promoting the concept of savings and loan schemes among rural women with the ultimate aim of strengthening their economic base; the women either embark on agricultural activities or expanding their businesses to generate more income. 17 of these savings groups are functioning effectively after going through training in entrepreneurship, whilst the ten are awaiting similar training.
- The DPD activities in the border districts of Kambia, Pujehun,

- awaiting similar training.
 - The DPD activities in the border districts of Kambia, Pujehun, Koinadugu and Kailahun have helped to scale down the level of violence against women in those districts. Also, in all of those districts, women survivors have benefited from the free health care package. Due to the work of the DPD in Koinadugu, the people saw the need to vote for Madam Mariama Charlie-Bangura as Chairperson of the Local Police Partnership Board. This is the first time a woman is holding that position. This is very important because Koinadugu is one of the districts that are very apprehensive when it comes to giving women space to serve as leaders. It shows that the perception of the district stakeholders, especially traditional chiefs, is gradually changing as they are now involving women in decision-making processes. Through our advocacy and community engagements, women who have been part of our targets for this project, have used the information provided, especially on referral pathways for livelihoods support for survivors, to access Post-Ebola Recovery Packages.
 - The follow-up activities of the DPDs prepared the mind-sets of border communities to mitigate conflicts through constant sensitization on tolerance and with the success of the DPDs in reintegrating survivors and resolving the earlier tensions in these communities; the people are now assured that other emerging tensions can be resolved. Some DPDs have trained community leaders in conflict resolution skills and they have been using the skills to resolve tensions locally; where they
- are unable, they make referrals to the DPDs.
- The DPDs conducted series of Dialogue and Mediation sessions with the District Health Management Teams and the Local Council Authorities and District Officers. They were able to get the health workers to present their situation to the Authorities. They did some investigations from the Ministry of Health and Sanitation head office in Freetown to know the actual situation of the health workers and what plans the government has for them. Through this, they were able to know that there is a temporary moratorium on recruitment of healthcare workers by the government. They are now working on modalities to engage the government on how to address the issue of the moratorium within the context of the prevailing health situation in the country.
- The border communities have accepted the fact that Ebola was a menace and created conflicts among them but due to the DPD work there is now improved interaction among border communities (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone). The communities now share information on issues that put them at risk and identify ways through which they can prevent the transmission of infectious diseases. There are ongoing cross-border activities between Sierra Leone and the other two countries, such as the international market fairs; and stigmatization is fast reducing. The communities on the borders are also accepting and cooperating with government officials, including security personnel.

Challenges and Lessons

Weak organizational infrastructure, particularly in the area of mobility, poses a serious challenge to the effectiveness of the organization. The organization has very few vehicles and motor-bikes, and these are even in the regions. Almost all of them are aged and are costly to maintain. There are some offices that do not have any means of transportation of their own. This is drawing back the work of the organization, particularly monitoring, supportive supervision, coaching and mentoring. Similarly, lack of self sources of funding and over dependence on donor partners does not allow and promote greater autonomy and independence in addressing current and emerging and critical issue of public interest.

There are several delays in the school system that affect the quality of education in the country. There are delays in the payment of salaries of newly-employed teachers, supply of teaching and learning materials and the disbursement of school subsidies. Generally, education is still not a key priority of the present government. Only lip service is paid to this sector and we suspect it is to keep the populace illiterate, uneducated and ignorant so that they can easily be manipulated and used by politicians.

Some donor partners do not make provision to address emerging issues or incorporate new learning into NMJD's future activities. As a learning organization, NMJD does a lot of analysis of its monitoring findings to draw out

lessons with the view to improving the quality of its deliverables. This has resource implications, which some donor partners are frowning at.

Communication within the organization and with external audiences is weak, coupled with the under utilization of the already existing organizational infrastructure. The internet connectivity is poor, the website is not regularly updated, the organizational group emails for staff is also virtually not working and the quarterly newsletter, The Network, has not been produced for a couple of years now. This has adverse effect on the visibility of the organization and its work.

The poor road conditions in the project communities in Kono district are worse off this rainy season than at the same time last year because of the heavier torrential down pours. Major roads leading to the operational communities became flooded more frequently and completely cut-off, thus limiting access to these communities. This state of affairs causes damages to our aged vehicles and motor-bikes, thereby increasing costs of repairs and maintenance. The only manageable means of transportation left for project staff are motor-bikes, which are also not quite old and, therefore, not safe.


Building strong community advocacy groups among a largely illiterate population poses a serious challenge. NMJD facilitated the formation of LMMGs with a membership that

is drawn from the local communities. For these groups to be effective, they needed to understand the project and its objectives, as well as the relevant provisions in the Mines and Minerals Act of 2009. Getting them to get a better grasp of these issues is where the challenge lies. As a way of surmounting this challenge, project staff spend more time in these communities to coach and mentor members of the LMMGs.

The political brouhaha that erupted in Kono district in the beginning of the year that saw the suspension of the elected Mayor of Koidu-New Sembehun city and his deputy under suspicious and controversial circumstances places a huge challenge on the operations of NMJD. The suspended Mayor and his deputy were very popular among the populace, particularly among youth, and their suspension almost threw the entire district into serious conflicts. In all of these, NMJD decided to take the "forbidden path", analyzed the situation critically and carefully and then condemned the suspension as "illegal" from the perspective of good governance. This created bad blood between the acting appointed Mayor and his cohorts. As a result,

councilors who are loyal to the new Mayor refused to take part in NMJD functions. The women who have declared their intentions to contest for elective positions under different political parties in 2018 in Kenema district are not strong financially. This is against the backdrop of the prohibitive candidature fees for mainly members of parliament. Many are looking forward to NMJD to help them raise the required resources to actualize their dreams. The project does not make provision for this, at least as of now.






Issues that are pertinent to citizens' concerns and aspirations are likely to engender more critical discussions among citizens and will increase confidence and the desire for citizens' participation in decision-making. During the nationwide consultations on the natural resource sector to feed into the new Constitution of Sierra Leone, everyone made frantic efforts to contribute to the discussion and to share practical experiences both positive and negative to support their presentations/standpoints.

In the absence of its own means of transportation, an organization spends huge sums of money on hiring of vehicles to enhance movement of staff, and at the same time endanger the lives of its staff who travel on public transportation that are most times old and susceptible to road accidents. In same vein lack of own means of resources or sources of resources renders the organization weak, dependent on donors and prevents it from undertaking those courses of action it deems relevant, critical, urgent and compelling.

Effective establishment and use of communication systems by staff enhances the effectiveness and visibility of an organization and also showcases the quality and relevance of its work. Invariably, the effective use of organizational infrastructure such as emails, telephones, websites, newsletters and other social media platforms will strengthen an organization's image in the eyes of the public, and increases the prospect of stronger partnerships and sustainability.

Youth have the ability to change the negative perception that communities have of them. This clearly comes out in Kono where youth are working in close collaboration with the leaderships of their communities in monitoring all mining activities and in ensuring that there is increased investment in community development projects. Now, instead of seeing them as trouble makers as it were, they are now regarded as development agents by their communities. Helping community structures with regular coaching, mentoring and other necessary resources will increase the ability of such structures to become effective in delivering their mandate. This is evidently demonstrated with the SMATs in Bombali district. Because of the regular coaching, mentoring and stipends that they are receiving from NMJD, they have become more effective and confident to monitor education service delivery in their communities and to engage stakeholders on their monitoring findings. They are undertaking these activities on their own, independent of NMJD.

Involving local authorities, particularly chiefs, in savings and loans schemes to serve as moral guarantors will build the confidence of local communities to participate and invest in the scheme. In the operational chiefdoms in Kenema district, NMJD got the Paramount Chiefs to involve in the scheme and to provide back-up to the savings groups. This has bolstered the confidence of group members to honour their financial commitments, and more people that were not initially members of the groups are now yearning to become members.



Most of the men in rural communities have the inclination that their wives will not obey them if they are strong economically, particularly if they are stronger than them. This is the reason why many men always oppose to their wives doing business that will bring them lucrative income. In other situations where they allow the business to go on, the men will do everything to have control of the profits the business is making just so that they will keep their wives powerless.

Female councilors can contribute more towards influencing policies that affect women at national level if their capacities are strengthened. Already, women councilors in the Kenema City and Kenema District Councils that have gone through series of trainings in gender sensitive development

planning are now using the knowledge they acquired to influence decisions that border on women in their local councils. As a result of their active participation in council functions, they have now been elected to head various committees of their respective councils.

Making space for local communities to participate in the implementation of project activities is a recipe for motivation and local ownership. This is demonstrated with the DPDs in the border communities. They are motivated when they all learnt that they can each play a role in the implementation of the project activities, especially when the activities are blended to enable the sub-teams to be engaged.

Recommendations

NMJD and other civil society organizations working in the education sector should engage education authorities to ensure the prompt absorption into the service and payment of salaries of newly-recruited teachers, provision of learning and teaching materials and disbursement of subsidies to schools.

NMJD should engage its donor partners to ensure that they are flexible in making provisions to support issues emerging from projects that they are supporting. Such consideration should be made at the time of negotiating the project and its budget.

NMJD should revive the effective use of all its communication systems by the staff, as well as to improve the communication infrastructure.

This calls for the development of a full-scale sustainability strategy and action plan to be shared with donor partners for their commitment and input/contribution. In order to track changes in the development path of NMJD, there is need to develop a Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning System at national and regional levels, ensure that financial management systems are revamped and strengthened, personnel and other policies reviewed and capacity building prioritized. Also important is the packaging of the 25 Year and 5 year Strategies and ensure their marketability.

NMJD should improve the organization's logistics on mobility by purchasing brand new 4-Wheel drive vehicles and XL motor bikes, as opposed to the purchase of second hand vehicles and low grade motor-bikes. This approach will not only improve the quality of mobility equipment, but also there will be a significant decrease in the cost of repairs and

maintenance.

NMJD should continue to promote the concept of solidarity and cohesiveness of citizens in its operational communities by facilitating and supporting the establishment of community groups, networks and coalitions. It has become abundantly clear that there is value in team work; and working together in groups and networks will strengthen the voice and visibility of communities.

NMJD should continue to remain faithful to the collective commitments of its founders to the preferential "option for the poor" orientation and the "See, Judge, Act" methodology of training for transformation. In the struggle to build "a free, just and democratic society", the pathway is always littered with several bumps and knocks that may tend to derail people from their path. NMJD MUST remain true to its commitment, no matter what.

NMJD to work with other organizations working on women's issues to identify opportunities and resources that they can link the women that are aspiring to contest for elective positions in the upcoming parliamentary and local council elections in 2018 with. The interest and desire of these women in the project areas in Kenema district have been raised to a level that they are now desirous of testing the waters. If at the end of the day they are unable to do that because of lack of funding, it will not only demotivate them, but also others who may have similar intention].