

National Plan of Action

Working Group 1

Gender Equality in Political and Public Decision-making

What is the problem? (critical issues)

- ◆ The lack of adequate number of women in Parliament.
- ◆ Lack of gender equality in the political agenda.
- ◆ The lack of adequate education/sensitisation on democratic principles or values that can promote women's participation in political and public decision-making.

What are the priority objectives?

- ◆ To increase the number of women in Parliament.
- ◆ To ensure that gender equality is integrated into the political agenda.
- ◆ To carry out adequate public sensitisation activities to promote/enhance women and men's equal participation.

What is being done? Who is doing it?

- ◆ The creation of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, which adopted national policies on gender. The Commonwealth Secretariat's gender policies signed by the Sierra Leone government to ensure 30 per cent women representation by 2005.
- ◆ NCDHR and NEC input from the consultation to go to national conference on electoral reform. GRADOC involved in research and training.
- ◆ The 50/50 Group sponsored by British Council and NDI involved in training potential women candidates. Education and awareness raising by NEWMAP with support from UNFPA. Formation of women's pressure groups: FAWE, Sisters Unite, Women's Forum, etc.

What are the gaps/emerging needs?

- ◆ Poor co-ordination of women's groups. Need to involve men in their sensitisation, advocacy and lobbying drive. Break in sensitisation /educational activities due to the rebel war.
- ◆ Disenfranchisement of women eligible to vote at local government level (tax exclusion of women); Government should remove all barriers; Training facilities for resource persons.

Which other actors/stakeholders should be involved?

- ◆ Government, all political parties and trade unions.
- ◆ NEC; religious groups; traditional rulers; youth groups; educational institutions at all levels; the armed forces.

Existing/required resources

- ◆ Adequate human resources available.
- ◆ Institutional support; financial support required from Government, INGOs, NGOs. Other resources: office space; training centres particularly at district level, logistical support.

Working Group 2

Promoting Gender Equality through Legal Reform

What is the problem? (critical issues)

- ◆ The existence of laws that are discriminatory against women, and the non-functioning of the Law Reform Commission (LRC).
- ◆ Gender discriminatory traditional beliefs and practices.
- ◆ High rate of illiteracy and lack of information about the law in general, and gender and law issues in particular.

What are the priority objectives?

- ◆ To review and reform the laws that are weighted against women, such as laws relating to inheritance, violence against women, etc.
- ◆ To reactivate the LRC, in order to facilitate the law reform process.
- ◆ To carry out research to identify traditional beliefs and practices that are gender discriminatory.
- ◆ To disseminate the research findings nationally.
- ◆ To enact laws that abolish discriminatory traditional practices.
- ◆ To increase access to basic and adult education.
- ◆ To extend media coverage to all areas using local languages.
- ◆ To educate women about their rights.

What is being done? Who is doing it?

Public sensitisation through the media by the following agencies:

- ◆ National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights (NCDHR)
- ◆ CGG; the police; SLBA; UNAMSIL
- ◆ Documentation of customary laws by government.
- ◆ Government ban on some traditional practices, e.g., use of untrained traditional birth attendants.
- ◆ A number of agencies (listed below) are involved in the following programmes:

adult literacy classes; non-formal education programmes for girls; vocational/technical centre for women.

- ◆ Agencies involved: Ministry of Education; FAWE; PADECO; SLADEA; Plan International; UNICEF.

What are the gaps/emerging needs?

- ◆ Non-functioning LRC.
- ◆ Inadequate civil education on gender and law issues.
- ◆ Unwritten customary laws that vary from region to region.
- ◆ Lack of research on women's opinions/knowledge/understanding of the existing laws.
- ◆ Absence of pressure groups for advocacy and lobbying.
- ◆ Dissension between women *vis-à-vis* various traditional practices.
- ◆ Lack of access to information.
- ◆ Need for more public debates on traditional beliefs and practices.
- ◆ Perceived lower status of women by men/male counterparts.
- ◆ Lack of media coverage and access to the media.
- ◆ Low percentage of women in political and public decision-making.
- ◆ Lack of monitoring mechanisms.

Which other actors stakeholders should be involved?

- ◆ The police; SLBA; traditional and religious leaders; women's and other civil organisations; relevant government ministries.
- ◆ Traditional leaders; government; religious leaders; women's organisations; youth organisations; community-based organisations.
- ◆ Line ministries.

Existing/required resources

Existing Resources:

- ◆ Human resources based in the organisations/agencies mentioned.
- ◆ Court officials.

- ◆ Chiefs.
- ◆ Local government and customary local officers.
- ◆ SLBA.
- ◆ FAWE.
- ◆ Regional commissioner.
- ◆ Radio stations.
- ◆ NGOs.

Required Resources:

- ◆ Government funding for office staff and modern equipment.
- ◆ UNDP and UNIFEM assistance.
- ◆ Education and training materials.
- ◆ Government funding for public sensitisation and education.
- ◆ Funds to extend the outreach of radio stations.
- ◆ Improved monitoring.
- ◆ Capacity building and empowerment.

Working Group 3

Violence against Women and Children

What is the problem? (critical issues)

- ◆ Poverty makes women and girls more vulnerable to sexual and other forms of abuse.
- ◆ Violence against women and children is endemic and has been aggravated by the war.
- ◆ Lack of effective laws and law enforcement on violence against women.

What are the priority objectives?

- ◆ To reduce poverty among women and girls.
- ◆ To increase their access to employment as a means to financial independence, including non-traditional and emerging forms of employment.
- ◆ To send a clear message that there should be zero tolerance for violence against women and children in all its forms.
- ◆ To undertake public sensitisation on the issue (through the media, posters/flyers, targeting specific groups—family units, women, children, young people, men, disabled).
- ◆ To provide support services for victims of domestic and other forms of violence (e.g., shelters, family support units, a referral service, psychosocial and parental counselling).
- ◆ To enact laws to protect women and children from violence.
- ◆ To provide gender-awareness training to enforcement officers (particularly the police, army, prison and social welfare officers) to enact the law in all cases of violence against women.

What is being done?

- ◆ Development projects are being put in place.

Who is doing it?

- ◆ Government, through agencies such as SAPA.
- ◆ International agencies.

- ◆ Local and international NGOs.

International agencies and NGOs

- ◆ Support to formal and non-formal education.
- ◆ Child protection unit.
- ◆ Work in collaboration with MSWGCA.
- ◆ UNHCR work with refugee victims of violence, through IRC, MSF, NRC, FAWE, Women's Forum and other NGOs.
- ◆ UNICEF—education and health programmes for child victims of violence.

A number of agencies (listed below) are involved in Gender-sensitisation workshops.

Agencies involved:

- ◆ The police; MSWGCA; lawyers; local and international NGOs.

What are the gaps/emerging needs?

- ◆ Gap between women's existing skills and Sierra Leone's reconstruction needs.
- ◆ Need to expand and diversify skills training for women to include non-traditional skills, e.g., computing, computer repairs, engineering, bricklaying.
- ◆ Need for more affordable skills-training programmes.
- ◆ Need for employment-generating activities and improved wages for women.
- ◆ Need to provide adequate housing for single parents.
- ◆ Need for a one-stop operation led by the police, which also includes linkages with other services, e.g., legal, health, counselling, education, shelters, social welfare.
- ◆ Need to introduce awareness-raising programmes in the formal and non-formal educational systems, in order to bring about attitudinal and behavioural change.
- ◆ Need to sensitise parents, guardians, opinion leaders and especially young boys.
- ◆ Existing laws ineffective—new legislation is needed.
- ◆ Obstruction of existing laws.
- ◆ Need to investigate status of reformation centres, approved schools and the remand home (Banana Island).

- ◆ Ineffective drug control unit.
- ◆ Inadequate support by international NGOs to local NGOs and government programmes.
- ◆ Need for gender-awareness training programmes for law enforcement officers.
- ◆ Need for public awareness programmes on violence against women and children.
- ◆ Need for gender-awareness training programmes for community leaders/trainers.
- ◆ Women's organisations and sympathisers need to organise sit-ins at the law courts to demand speedy trials and just sentences.

Which other actors/stakeholders should be involved?

- ◆ The community (women, young people and elders); local authorities; local and international NGOs.
- ◆ Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs; Attorney-General's office; Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; Ministry of Information; judges, magistrates, lawyers; the police; religious bodies; women's organisations; international agencies; local and international NGOs.
- ◆ Attorney-general's office; University of Sierra Leone; local communities; international agencies; local and international NGOs.

Required resources

- ◆ Relevant technical training programmes; technology; roads; equipment; communications.
- ◆ Enhanced evidence and data collection; local and international training programmes and refresher courses; shelters for SGBV victims; witness protection programmes.

Working Group 4

Resettlement of Displaced Civilians and Rehabilitation/Resettlement of Ex-combatants

<p>What is the problem? (critical issues)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Security: Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) of all combatants.◆ Repatriation of all Internally Displaced Persons and Returnees.◆ Social re-integration; poverty alleviation; building of permanent structures; programmes for disabled; health, skills training, etc.
<p>What are the priority objectives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Deployment of forces—UNAMSIL peacekeepers/observers.◆ Transportation and adequate resettlement packages.◆ To support all social, economic reintegration programmes; build a better RRR for Sierra Leone.
<p>What is being done? Who is doing it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Mechanisms set up by government—DDR and other stakeholders (UNAMSIL).◆ Government has co-ordinated RRR programme in partnership with NGOs, and has formulated and initiated resettlement programmes.◆ Resettlement; agricultural activities; micro-credit schemes; health/medical and sanitation; gender sensitisation; education; training; voluntary resettlement; community development programmes; CBO activities; recreation; government, NCDDR, SAPA, NCRRR, NGOs, EU, etc.
<p>What are the gaps/emerging needs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Inadequate DDR centres; food supplies insufficient.◆ Need for more reconstruction efforts.◆ Untimely delivery of services; inflation; high illiteracy; poor supervision and monitoring; over-centralisation; inadequate services to unaccompanied children and child ex-combatants; information dissemination.

Which other actors stakeholders should be involved?

- ◆ Donor agencies; traditional rulers; community/religious/opinion leaders.
- ◆ OCHA; EU; NGOs (local and international); community participation.
- ◆ FAWE; ADRA; UNICEF; Action Aid; Christian Brothers; etc.

Existing/required resources

- ◆ Donor support; human and material; financial resources.
- ◆ UNCHR; IAM; and technical/media teams.
- ◆ Child protection agencies; public sector; education; shelter support programmes; NGOs (local and international)

Working Group 5

Poverty, Economic Recovery & Empowerment

What is the problem? (critical issues)

Health

- ◆ Inadequate health facilities—affordability, accessibility, availability.
- ◆ High level of illiteracy, weak/poor physical infrastructure, need to review national health policy.
- ◆ Inadequate access to safe drinking water. Need to review the implementation of health policy.

Education

- ◆ Low school attendance and high illiteracy level.
- ◆ Lack of productive opportunities.

What are the priority objectives?

- ◆ To provide basic health services to meet the needs of the people, i.e., women, men, boys and girls, and vulnerable groups.
- ◆ To include health education in the curriculum of all sectors of education. Provision of well-equipped peripheral health units.
- ◆ Sensitisation/conscientisation of health issues.
- ◆ Create access and educate all citizens on the advantages of safe drinking water. Restructure health programmes/policies.
- ◆ To increase enrolment of school-age children to 95% by 2011.
- ◆ To provide sustainable income-generating activities for self-reliance.
- ◆ To provide quality skills training for youths.
- ◆ Improvement of existing infrastructure and utilities: electricity, water supply, roads, banking system, communications (telephone, media).

Private sector

- ◆ Provide employment.
- ◆ Provision of goods and services, especially imported ones.

CBOs

- ◆ Implementation of micro-credit.
- ◆ Implementing partners in development projects.

What needs to be done?

- ◆ Recognise training needs and intervene when necessary.
- ◆ The Ministry of Health and employing authorities should introduce cost recovery programmes—NGOs, international agencies.
- ◆ Introduce parenting policies through IEC.
- ◆ CBOs to provide trained manpower.
- ◆ Provision of basic education for all—more schools, teacher training, teacher/learning materials, science equipment.
- ◆ Establish and strengthen more quality technical/vocational institutions for all by the government.
- ◆ Conscientisation/sensitisation to break down cultural barriers affecting female school attendance.
- ◆ Popularisation of science and technology among female students.
- ◆ Automatic grant-in-aid to all female students that enrol for science and engineering.
- ◆ Establishment and strengthening of learning centres for the disabled.
- ◆ Improved remuneration for teachers and lecturers.
- ◆ Provision and support to non-formal learning centres.
- ◆ Rehabilitation, reconstruction and construction of infrastructure e.g. trunk & feeder roads.
- ◆ Policies and new investment code.
- ◆ Provision of micro-financing.

NGOs

- ◆ Provision of planning materials and tools.
- ◆ Provision of employment facilities.
- ◆ Training programmes.

Private sector

- ◆ Provide employment.
- ◆ Provision of goods and services, especially imported ones.

CBOs

- ◆ Implementation of micro-credit.
- ◆ Implementation partners in development projects.

What are the gaps/emerging needs?

- ◆ The government should recognise problems and needs—inadequate health facilities, free medical facilities for pregnant women and under 5s; weak linkages between policy makers and implementers, ineffective maintaining mechanisms.
- ◆ Inadequate personnel, school health programmes; construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure; massive corruption; over centralisation; poor remuneration; poorly equipped diagnostic lab facilities and services; high cost of specialised drugs.
- ◆ Establishment of mobile clinics.
- ◆ Construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure.
- ◆ Payment of fees for pupils in classes 1 – 3.
- ◆ Full payment of NPSE fees
- ◆ School bus programme.
- ◆ Grant-in-aid, study leave with pay in tertiary institutions.
- ◆ Provision of school furniture.
- ◆ Provision of teaching, learning materials, science equipment, school feeding programmes.

- ◆ Teacher training scholarships.
- ◆ Linkages.
- ◆ Inadequate investment/resources.
- ◆ Inadequate incentives for investment.
- ◆ Limited infrastructure facilities.
- ◆ Absence of the right mix of technology.
- ◆ Lack of national commitment to private sector development.
- ◆ Unpatriotic attitude.

Which other actors/stakeholders should be involved?

- ◆ Local traditional institutions, religious institutions, youths.
- ◆ Parents and guardians.
- ◆ Local authorities.
- ◆ Private sector.
- ◆ International agencies.

Existing/required resources

- ◆ Financial resources required to procure, equip and provide services and medical equipment and drugs.
- ◆ Provide for additional classrooms, labs, well-trained staff and attractive remuneration.
- ◆ Means to develop appropriate technology in terms of material, human and financial resources.
- ◆ Improved energy resources.
- ◆ Research and training institutions.

Working Group 6A

Health

What is the problem? (critical issues)

Beliefs (traditional):

- ◆ Sex is a taboo.
- ◆ Talking about sex is immoral.
- ◆ Sex with a virgin cures AIDS.
- ◆ AIDS is incurable.

Knowledge:

- ◆ AIDS is not a reality.

Perceptions:

- ◆ HIV-infected persons feel that cost of treatment is prohibitive.
- ◆ Coping mechanisms are difficult.
- ◆ People of high socio-economic status feel they are above AIDS.

What are the priority objectives?

- ◆ To create awareness of the existence and implications of HIV/AIDS for all Sierra Leoneans.
- ◆ To change negative attitudes and beliefs about sex and AIDS.

What is being done? Who is doing it?

- ◆ Sierra Leoneans are now being sensitised by radio messages about AIDS by the President.
- ◆ Mass sensitisation campaigns and surveillance by government in collaboration with local NGOs (Red Cross, PPASL, FAWWE); international agencies (WHO, MSF – Netherlands, IRC, IMC, etc.)
- ◆ Formulation by cabinet of a policy document on HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ Jingles, posters, sign posts and drama on AIDS.

What are the gaps/emerging needs?

- ◆ Most of the interventions do not address the needs of grassroots people.
- ◆ Lack of national policy on HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ Inadequate coordination of AIDS programmes and projects.
- ◆ Folk songs by local artists with high-profile women.
- ◆ Allocate more resources to MOH; empower MOH and line ministries.

Which other actors/stakeholders should be involved?

- ◆ Traditional rulers, religious leaders, traditional leaders (TBA, etc), social development workers, agricultural extension workers, youth, women's groups, community-based organisations, local government functionaries.
- ◆ NEWMAP with Jimmy B and other local artists.

Existing/required resources

- ◆ Trained and qualified manpower is needed.
- ◆ Standardised materials on HIV/AIDS and STIs.
- ◆ Logistics, e.g., transport and stationery.
- ◆ Reproduction of AIDS curriculum materials for schools and youth groups, including values clarification approach to attitudinal changes.

Working Group 6B**Health****What is the problem? (critical issues)**

- ◆ No specific training curriculum for service providers on HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ Inadequate incentives/resources in the system.
- ◆ No policy document on HIV/AIDS in Sierra Leone.

What are the priority objectives?

- ◆ The same curriculum should be taught by all interested partners.
- ◆ Adequate incentives/resources in the system will minimise the spread of HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ Achievement of policy document will bring about one message to be carried by all interested agencies (government, as well as NGOs).

What is being done? Who is doing it?

- ◆ Some training for service providers is being done.
- ◆ Very little collaboration/partnership is carried out. MOH and other NGOs.
- ◆ The formation of the council to formulate the policy is in progress by government, other interested INGOs, e.g., WHO, UNDP, UNFPA.

What are the gaps/emerging needs?

- ◆ Varied information in training is carried out.
- ◆ Inadequate training materials for all sectors of the community.
- ◆ Lack of motivation to carry out various services for HIV/AIDS, such as lab clinics, nursing, community-based activities, etc.
- ◆ No standardised policy, therefore varied messages are being sent.

Which other actors/stakeholders should be involved?

- ◆ Health training institutions e.g. MCH, AIDS, TBAs, reproductive health divisions, midwifery schools, PPASL, UNFPA, SLRC.
- ◆ All international NGOs and local NGOs interested in health and SL government (Ministry of Health).
- ◆ Government (line ministries), UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNAIDS, PPASL, Marie Stopes, MERLIN, SLRC and others.

Existing/required resources

- ◆ Equipment for lab, e.g., reagents, gloves, antiseptic lotion, clinical equipment/instruments.

- ◆ Research on HIV/AIDS in Sierra Leone.
- ◆ Funding.
- ◆ Infrastructural: hospitals, clinics, health post units, laboratories.
- ◆ Personnel: trained nurses, TGAs, lab technicians, counsellors, teachers, peer counsellors, social workers, health educators.

Working Group 6C

Health

What is the problem? (critical issues)

- ◆ The decline of the health system due to the war in Sierra Leone.
- ◆ Treatment of HIV/AIDS.

What are the priority objectives?

- ◆ To revitalise the health system by building the capacity of: health institutions; counselling centres; service providers in post-war Sierra Leone.

What is being done? Who is doing it?

- ◆ Needs assessment surveys to assess the extent of damage on infrastructure and available medical facilities in accessible areas (by the World Bank through the MOH & S).
- ◆ Renovation of the facilities and provision of drugs by NGOs through MOH & S.

What are the gaps/emerging areas?

- ◆ No proper co-ordination among NGOs intervening in health.
- ◆ No counselling centre for HIV/AIDS victims.
- ◆ Limited number of trained service-providers for HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ HIV/AIDS drugs are expensive and not available.

Which other actors stakeholders should be involved?

- ◆ Peer groups.
- ◆ Traditional healers.
- ◆ Religious bodies.
- ◆ Family members.
- ◆ Musicians.

Existing/required resources

- ◆ World Bank (finance).
- ◆ WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA for technical advice.
- ◆ NISF (drugs and renovation).

Required resources

- ◆ CBOs need funding, training, equipment, etc.
- ◆ Government needs funding and should provide incentive for personnel.

Working Group 7

Gender Equity in Education

What is the problem? (critical issues)

- ◆ High female illiteracy rate.
- ◆ Low enrolment rate.
- ◆ High dropout rates.

What are the priority objectives?

- ◆ To eradicate the high illiteracy rate.
- ◆ To increase enrolment at primary level to a minimum of 85%.
- ◆ To reduce the dropout rate at basic education level to 5%.

What is being done? Who is doing it?

- ◆ Accelerated literacy programmes.
- ◆ Mass literacy campaigns.
- ◆ Establishment of CECs.
- ◆ Basic Education programmes.
- ◆ Ministry of EYS, SLADEA, PEASL, INSTADEX, UNICEF
- ◆ Non-formal education.
- ◆ Complementary rapid education for primary schools (CREPS).
- ◆ Rapid response education programmes (RREs).
- ◆ Reducing drop-out rate.
- ◆ Free primary education.
- ◆ Reduction in cost of education through supply of learning materials.
- ◆ Increased supply of logistical support.
- ◆ Sensitisation of parents/guardians.
- ◆ School feeding programmes.

What are the gaps/emerging needs?

- ◆ Ill-equipped literacy centres.
- ◆ Untrained literacy facilitators.
- ◆ Poor incentives for most facilitators.
- ◆ Shortage of literacy materials.
- ◆ Irregular attendance of female learners due to women's multiple roles.
- ◆ Negative attitudes of husbands to female learners.
- ◆ Insufficient financial support to government-sponsored literacy centres.
- ◆ Participation of women in politics.
- ◆ Increase in public roles of women.
- ◆ Contribution of education to peace and peace-building.

Which other actors/stakeholders should be involved?

- ◆ Government NGOs/INGOs.
- ◆ Community-based organisations.
- ◆ Individuals.
- ◆ Beneficiaries.

Existing/required resources

Human resources, e.g.:

- ◆ Facilitators.
- ◆ Supervisors.
- ◆ Learners/Beneficiaries.

Required

- ◆ Human: increase the number of facilitators, supervisors and learners.
Physical: transportations for facilitators and/or supervisors.
- ◆ Establishment of additional centres.
- ◆ Provision of logistics/ equipment.
- ◆ Provision of teaching and learning materials.
- ◆ Provision of post-literacy materials.
- ◆ Attractive allowances for teachers.

Working Group 8

The Role of Young Women and Young Men in Post-conflict Reconstruction

What is the problem? (critical issues)

- ◆ There is no national youth policy that is advocating for youth development.
- ◆ Young men and women are always being marginalised in national decision-making.
- ◆ There is a lack of job opportunities for youths.
- ◆ Young women and men are accused and harassed for atrocities committed during the rebel war.
- ◆ Youth are abused and misused by politicians who provide them with drugs and other dangerous substances to achieve their selfish goals.
- ◆ Youth are branded with negative names, e.g., service men, drug men, etc.
- ◆ Young women are also branded with negative names: prostitute, raray girl, kolonko, koro, etc.

What are the priority objectives?

- ◆ To have a national youth policy put in place.
- ◆ Youth should have adequate and free access to education and training opportunities at all levels taking into account/cognisance the culture of peace, democracy and positive change.
- ◆ That affordable health care and shelter should be accessible to all.
- ◆ That a stable, secure and safe environment be ensured to enable young women and young men actualise their potentials.
- ◆ That youth be encouraged and empowered to participate in decision-making at every level.
- ◆ That line ministries and NGOs co-ordinate with the view of providing job oriented training for young women and young men.
- ◆ That all human rights are youth rights.
- ◆ That government revisits the draft national youth policy with a view to ensure its enactment into law, adequate dissemination and implementation.

What is being done? Who is doing it?

- ◆ Development projects are being put in place.