



**Justice Sector
Coordination Office**
Enhancing Justice Delivery

**Half Yearly Report
of
Sierra Leone Justice Sector Institutions
January – June 2021**



Produced by the Justice Sector Coordination Office



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List of Abbreviations/Acronyms

AGMoJ	-	Attorney-General and Minister of Justice
ACC	-	Anti-Corruption Commission
CRA	-	Child Rights Act
CJ	-	Chief Justice
DPP	-	Director of Public Prosecutions
FSU	-	Family Support Unit
IDLO	-	International Development Law Organisation
JSCO	-	Justice Sector Coordination Office
JRSIP	-	Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
MGCA	-	Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs
MoJ	-	Ministry of Justice
MSW	-	Ministry of Social Welfare
NASSIT	-	National Social Security and Insurance Trust
OAGMoJ	-	Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice
NCC	-	National Commission for Children
SDG	-	Sustainable Development Goal
SLCS	-	Sierra Leone Correctional Service
SLP	-	Sierra Leone Police



Executive Summary

The report mainly captures data on activities of 15 justice sector institutions in Sierra Leone for the first half of the year 2021. It outlines brief backgrounds and overall mandates of the institutions, and it also highlights key activities the justice sector institutions undertook in the first half of 2021. This report further covers information on key deliverables and challenges faced by each institution. It also covers some recommendations for improving the work of some of the institutions. It was also essential for us to include the statuses of the activities undertaken by the institutions in the first half of the year.

The report is segmented into sections representing the different institutions; each section encompassing the details captured on that institution. It is noteworthy that institutional challenges of some institutions were highlighted as these will represent the challenges the justice sector grappled with in the first half of 2021.

After discussing the activities of institutions, the report measures those activities against the Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan 2019-2023 (JSRSIP IV). This strategy was intended to gauge the relevance of the activities to the justice sector reform drive of the Government of Sierra Leone. Thus, each activity was carefully examined to determine whether or not it correlated with any of the Outcomes of the JSRSIP IV.

Our findings were that the activities of each institution corresponded with at least one of the JSRSIP IV Outcomes. While there were not many activities performed by certain institutions, all the institutions executed their mandates in accordance with the Government's position on the reform agenda of the justice sector. From mandates to work in practice, each institution performed indispensable tasks which contributed, in the first half of the year, to the Government's overall agenda in providing access to justice for all.

Another finding was that while the gender gap is not absolutely wide, there is gender disparity in the leadership of these institutions as only 33.4% of the institutions covered are headed by females.

For all of the institutions within the justice sector, low or inadequate budgetary allocation was the greatest hindrance in performance. Insubstantial human resource was the second most cited challenge. Another common challenge within these institutions was logistical. In the end, their recommendations were mainly directed towards the Government support to surmount those challenges.

Shahid M. Korjie
Coordinator, Justice Sector Coordination Office



Introduction

This is the **First Half Yearly Report for the Justice Sector** produced by the Justice Sector Coordination Office. The production of the report is a task mandated by the Attorney General and Minister of Justice. The essence of the report is to provide the public an opportunity to not only learn about the activities the justice sector institutions perform in the first half, but also for the public to learn (through their mandates) about what the justice sector institutions should do, (through their activities and their statutes) how they do them and (through their challenges) why they do not sometimes.

This half yearly Report for the Justice Sector further provides an account of the interrelationship of the Government of Sierra Leone's Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan (JSRSIP) IV 2019-2023 and the work of the justice sector institutions. It shows whether there is alliance or discord between the work of institutions and the broad agenda of the government in relation to justice sector reforms. Additionally, the activities recorded of the institutions are more detailed accounts for the first half of the year.

Hence, while the report informs, it also prompts relevant stakeholders to take the necessary actions to address current issues holding back the work of the justice sector institutions.



Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice

Background

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) was originally the Law Officers' Department under the colonial administration, and it was headed by the Solicitor-General who reported to the Governor-General. Before the MOJ's transformation into its current state, the 1978 Constitution of Sierra Leone required that the Solicitor General supervise the Administrator and Registrar-General who now has the mandate of effective administration and registration of businesses, land transactions, industrial property, marriages and estates of deceased persons as mandated by law.

The Attorney General and Minister of Justice's principal assistant is the Solicitor-General. As a key part of the MOJ, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) has the mandate to prosecute or discontinue the prosecution of criminal offences for the State.

In recent times Abdul Serry-Kamal (2007-2010), Frank Kargbo (2010-2015), Joseph Fitzgerald Kamara (2016-2018), Charles Margai (2018) and (the first female to serve in the office) Dr. Priscilla Schwartz (2018-2020) have served as the country's Attorneys General (AGs).

The current AG is Anthony Yeiwoh Brewah, appointed in 2020. He has worked as a senior legal practitioner for about 30 years and is Notary Public.

Overall Mandate

Section 64 of the 1991 Constitution mandates the Attorney General and Minister of Justice to serve as the principal legal adviser to the Government of Sierra Leone and Sections 65 and 66 provides for the appointments of the Solicitor-General and Director of Public Prosecutions, respectively.

PROJECT/ACTIVITIES

1. Recruitment of State Counsel

During the period under review, the OAGMoJ deployed six State Counsel to Port Loko, Moyamba, Kailahun, Kabala, Kenema and Bo. The Counsel have resumed



work in those districts. Recruitment is ongoing to add the number of State Counsel to help with the effective and efficient delivery of justice services nationwide.

2. Implementation of the Government White Paper

The High Court has delivered ruling on, for example, 31 properties to be confiscated. As a result, in the first quarter the OAGMoJ pushed for the enforcement of the recommendations in the White Paper.

3. Drafting and Amendment of Bills and Acts

In the first quarter of 2021, the following Acts were passed: Breast-Milk Substitute Act, Courts (Amendment) Act, Other Financial Services (Amendment) Act, the Professional Engineering Regulatory Council, the Universities Act, the Wildfire Conservation (Amendment) Act, Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency (Amendment) Act, Forestry (Amendment) Act, Independence Commission for Peace and National Cohesion Act, Finance Act and Appropriation Act.

Two Acts, including Income Tax (Transfer Pricing) Regulations and Electronic Cash Register Regulations, were awaiting publication by the end of the first quarter, while the National Drugs Control (Arrest and Seizure) Regulations and the Magistrates Courts (Small Claims Commercial) Rules had matured.

Additionally, drafting of the following Bills was in progress by the end of the first quarter: Arms and Ammunition (Amendment), the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, the Tobacco Control, the Institute of Chartered Accountants Sierra Leone Bill, the National Revenue Authority, Access to Information Regulations, Local Government Bill, Sierra Leone Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission (Enforcement Provisions) Regulations, National Water Resources Management Agency (Dam Safety) Regulations, National Water Resources Management Agency (Water Use and Catchment) Regulations, National Water Resources Management Agency (Ground Water Development and Protection) Regulations, National Water Resources Management Agency (Water Pollution Control) Regulation, National Development-Induced Resettlement Bill, Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training Certification and Watch Keeping for Seafarers) Regulations, Sierra Leone Correctional Center Rules.



Also, by the end of the first quarter, the National Protection Area Authority and Conservation Trust Fund Bill was being printed and the Environmental Protection Agency Bill was being taken for printing, while the Mines and Minerals Bill and the National Mineral Agency Bill were being reviewed.

4. Indictments

Forty-three indictments on Sexual Offences, one hundred and eight indictments on other offences, including murder, armed robbery, were done.

5. Establishment of Access to Justice Directorate

In the first quarter, the MOJ continued work for the establishment of an Access to Justice Directorate. The Public Service Commission has been mandated to advertise positions for suitable candidates. The Directorate will be responsible for designing, implementing, coordinating and supervising the informal justice system, and it will establish Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms in order to ensure efficiency in Justice delivery systems in remote areas in the country.

6. Service Charter

The Service Charter is designed to be a public document that sets out the basic information on the services provided by the MOJ to the public. It documents the standards of the service that MOJ's clients can expect to be offered. Additionally, the document will state how the public can make complaints or suggestions to the MOJ for improvement in service delivery. The Charter was drafted in the first quarter and is awaiting implementation.

7. Social media

In creating visibility for the Ministry, a Facebook and Twitter account had been setup with the web page in process. These will help create awareness and build partnership for the Ministry.



8. Presentation of the National Human Rights Report to the United Nations Human Rights Council

The Attorney General & Minister of Justice presented the national human Rights report to the United Nations Human Rights Council in May 2021. The report was the third review of Sierra Leone's Human rights record, demonstrating the country's long-established policy of cooperation and engagement in the field of human rights. It detailed new measures adopted, relating to the introduction of the visibility of disability policy, clustered in chapter 5 of the country's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023; the establishment of a new sexual offences Model Court (with powers as those conferred upon the High Court) by the Judiciary of Sierra Leone with the sole mandate of applying the sexual offences Amendment Act 2019 and other relevant laws to protect women and girls.

9. Retreat on the review of the Sexual Offences Act 2012 and its Amendment of 2019

A one-day retreat was held in May 2021 at the Occasions Resort Centre, Lakka, for the review of the Sexual Offences Act 2012 and its Amendment of 2019. The review was to look at the provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2012 and its Amendment of 2019 in order to reduce the difficulties faced by prosecutors and Judges in handling sexual offences cases. In the retreat, State counsels from the Law Officers Department deliberated and proffer recommendations on the Sexual Offences Act 2012 and its Amendment of 2019 that will ease the process of dispensing justice regarding same.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome One: Improved Public Confidence in the Justice and Judicial System

Outcome Three: Justice Is Expedited

Outcome Five: Commercial Law and Justice Improved

Status of Projects/Activities

The enactment of the eleven Acts were complete while the other activities were ongoing.

Deliverables

The eleven Acts as mentioned above.



Challenges

Inadequate budgetary allocation, insufficient logistical support and the COVID-19 pandemic were among the key challenges the MOJ faced in this quarter.

Recommendations

An immediate response to these challenges, especially the logistical and budgetary ones, is needed.

Justice Sector Coordination Office (JSCO)

Background

The JSCO was established in 2007 in the spirit of post-war reconstruction in Sierra Leone. Investigations into the causes of the country's more-than-decade-long civil war had revealed that the failure of the state to provide public access to justice was one major cause of the war. In line with recommendations for a peaceful and prosperous nation, the country has established key institutions to enhance political and legal reforms, among which the JSCO is playing a leading role.

The JSCO essentially serves as the hub for the interfacing of Government, CSOs and development partners in the development and implementation of justice sector reform priorities.

In its early years, the JSCO was a mainly donor-funded unit with about five key staff. Today it is a fully government-subvented agency.

The Office is headed by the Coordinator, with oversight of the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

Since 2007, the JSCO has been headed by five persons including Ms. Sarah A. A. Lewis (2007-2009), Mrs Olayinka Creighton-Randall (2009-2015), Dr. Henry Mbawa (2015-2018), Ms. Bridget Onike Osho (Acting – 2018-2019) and Mr. Shahid M. Korjie (2019-present).



Overall Mandate

The overall mandate of the JSCO is to coordinate the development and support the implementation of the Government of Sierra Leone's strategic reform priorities in the justice sector through: development of the Government of Sierra Leone's strategic reform plan for the justice sector – the Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan (JSRSIP), mobilisation of GoSL and donor resources to support implementation of reform initiatives, facilitation of the implementation of institutional and sector-wide strategic plans, generation of information to inform policy development synergy and sequencing of implementation, and ensuring effective communication of the priorities, achievements and challenges of the sector.

The JSCO has successfully implemented three Justice Sector Reform Strategies and is currently implementing the fourth generation of the Government of Sierra Leone's JSRSIP IV.

In the first half of 2021, the JSCO did the following:

Briefing Memo to Attorney General & Minister of Justice

The Office presented a memo briefing the Attorney General and Minister of Justice about the JSRSIP IV and its implementation as well as ongoing projects/activities the office is implementing.

Local Courts Administration

The JSCO held meetings with the Hon. Attorney General and Minister of Justice and the Hon. Chief Justice on the administration of the local courts. A concept note detailing the practical steps to be taken for the effective operationalization of the Local Courts have been agreed to by the Chief Justice and the Attorney General and Minister of Justice. One of the key recommendations is for the Chief Justice and the Attorney General and Minister of Justice to undertake a nationwide tour of Local Courts and meet with its present officials. In sourcing resources for this activity, the JSCO approached the IDLO for support. The IDLO has approved a budget for the tour, now pending administrative arrangements. The JSCO has also prepared both recurrent and development budgets for the administration of the Local Courts for submission to the Ministry of Finance.



Justice Sector M&E Coordination Unit

In collaboration with IDLO, the JSCO recruited an M&E Consultant on a 6 months contract, for implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Reporting on SDG 16. Funds were provided for this activity by the Government of the Netherlands under a pilot programme that aims to advance Agenda 2030, focusing on the Rule of Law and Access to Justice (SDG 16). The Consultant is presently working with justice sector institutions (government and non-governmental) nationwide to coordinate the implementation of the SDG monitoring framework. A Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Working Group was revived, and several coordination meetings have been held in that regard and a reporting format developed for the various institutions to aid MDAs and CSOs on reporting SDG 16.

Justice Sector Communications Coordination Unit

The Communications Coordinator, employed at the end of 2020, convened several Justice Sector Communications Team monthly meetings in which key issues about the justice sector communications needs were discussed. The Team comprises members of key justice and security sector institutions. One remarkable outcome of those efforts was the publication of a Justice Sector Newsletter titled **The Justice Sector Limelight**.

With support from Government of the Netherlands, the IDLO and the JSCO recruited a Communications Consultant to develop a comprehensive **Communications Strategy** for the entire justice sector. This intervention seeks to improve justice sector institutions stakeholder engagement and communication with the public and strengthen national cohesion, political stability and economic development thereby transforming the general image of the country's justice sector. The activity is ongoing.

Juvenile Justice

The JSCO supported the coordination of the Child Justice Working Group which mandate and composition comprised key child justice actors within MDAs as well as civil society stakeholders and donor organizations. The key mandate of the working group is drawn from the Child Justice Strategy, which aims at bringing partners together to share resources and information on child justice issues. Thus the Working Group is concerned with translating implementation data and challenges into



advocacy issues to engage strategic justice sector policy makers for which JSCO serves as the coordinating institution.

Reviewed and validated the draft Diversion and Alternatives to Detention Framework for Children

The JSCO in partnership with the Child Justice Working Group (CJWG) and with support from UNICEF held a two-day workshop on the review and validation of the draft Diversion and Alternative to Detention Framework at the conference room of the justice sector on Wednesday 23rd and Thursday 24th June 2021.

The draft Alternatives to Detention Guidelines had been drafted by the consultant after a pilot exercise conducted in November 2020. This draft Guidelines were incorporated into the draft National Diversion Framework for children in Sierra Leone. The Child Justice Working Group (CJWG) had immensely supported the process and the document was only awaiting review and validation.

However, in June 2021, participants (CJWG) representing child justice actors in the justice sector (MDAs and CSOs), reviewed the draft Framework on the first day and the process was climaxed the following day with the validation of same. The process is at an advanced stage and near finalization. The end product is the Diversion and Alternatives to Detention Framework for Children in Sierra Leone.

Web portal Development

In collaboration with IDLO, the JSCO recruited a website developer to develop a JSCO web portal to feed in information and activities of the sector. The web portal aims to:

- (i) Act as a repository for information/content that will provide good/best practices and guide justice delivery services in Sierra Leone;
- (ii) Showcase the work of justice sector actors;
- (iii) Provide update on trending issues in the justice sector;
- (iv) Collate data on access to justice that will inform policies, monitor progress on access to justice and develop plans to enhance delivery in the sector; and
- (v) Provide accessibility of the justice sector to the general public.



Consultative Meeting on the Development of a Justice Sector Communications Strategy

The JSCO with support from the Government of the Netherlands, through the International Development Law Organisation (IDLO), held consultative meetings with key stakeholders in the provinces for the development of the Justice Sector Communications Strategy.

JSCO and the IDLO had hired the services of a consultant who developed the Justice Sector Communications strategy. And as part of the process, the consultant held national consultative meetings with stakeholders in the Justice Sector to get their buy-in and input into the process of developing the strategy. Inputs gathered and experiences shared were to be incorporated into the draft Communications Strategy. This activity is ongoing.

Review of the Criminal Procedure Act 1965

The JSCO developed a concept paper with which it approached the UNDP, the Government and the IDLO for expedition of the enactment of the Criminal Procedure Bill, as an amendment to the Criminal Procedure Act. UNDP had approved a partial budget for this activity. The JSCO convened a retreat with the Technical Review Committee for the review of the Criminal Procedure Bill 2015. The retreat was first preceded with the setting up of a **Technical Committee**, a **High-Level Committee** and the planned engagement with members of the **Legislative Committee of Parliament**, as the review process required working with several key stakeholders to finalise the Bill and passing it into law.

The Technical Committee, led by a Supreme Court judge, the Honourable Justice Nicholas Browne-Mark and some of Sierra Leone's best legal minds reviewed section by section the draft Amendment to the Criminal Procedure Act 1965. Passing the Bill into Law will strengthen Sierra Leone's criminal justice system and improve service delivery. The next step of engaging the Legislative Committee of Parliament is underway.



JSRSIP IV Outcome (s)

Outcome Three: Justice Is Expedited

Outcome Four: Respect for Rights and Accountability

Outcome Five: Commercial Law and Justice Improved

Outcome Six: Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Improved

Status of Projects/Activities

All activities are ongoing.

CHALLENGES

Donor coordination

Weak justice sector donor coordination continues to affect funding of reform activities and unsustainable initiatives and duplication of efforts.

Manpower

Additional staff especially in research and development and professional training (local and overseas) to meet current demands for justice initiatives is lacking.

Funding

Subventions provided by GoSL budget is inadequate. Development Partners' support to justice sector reforms has dwindled over the years. Untimely receipt of allocation to the office affects intervention activities.

Recommendations

1. Adequate and timely allocation of funds will enable JSCO effectively perform its coordination role in the justice sector.
2. Additional staff and professional trainings will increase proficiency and increased level of work entrusted to JSCO.

The Judiciary of Sierra Leone

Background

The Judiciary of Sierra Leone was established under Chapter VII of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. Under Section 120(1) of the Constitution, the judicial power of the country is vested in the Judiciary of which the Chief Justice is the head.



The Judiciary comprises the Superior Court of Judicature and other inferior and traditional courts established by Parliament.

The Judicature is composed of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal and the High Court. In the country, the Supreme Court is the highest in rank, followed by the Court of Appeal and the High Court. The Magistrate's Court is the inferior Court of Judicature, and under the Courts Act No 31 of 1965 it is constituted into judicial district. Section 4 of the Act particularly provides for the constitution of Magistrate's Courts in every judicial district of the country.

By implication of Section 120(4) of the 1991 Constitution, Local Courts also fall under the jurisdiction of the Judiciary.

With the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission, the President of Sierra Leone appoints the Chief Justice and Parliament approves the appointment. Other information on the Judiciary of Sierra Leone can be found at the institution's website¹.

Overall Mandate

By the 1991 Constitution, the Judiciary is the third arm of the Government, mandated to exercise judicial functions subject to only the Constitution and the laws of the country. So, the Judiciary adjudicates over all criminal and civil matters.

PROJECT/ACTIVITIES

Deployment of Magistrates and Judges

By the end of the First Quarter, the Judiciary had deployed 34 Magistrates and 43 Judges to all the regions of the country. In essence, each of the following districts had one Magistrate and one Judge: Kailahun, Kono, Port Loko, Koinadugu, Bombali, and Moyamba.

Furthermore, Kenema had 2 Magistrates and 1 Judge, Kambia had 1 Magistrate, Tonkolili had 1 Magistrate, Bo had 2 Magistrates and 1 Judge, Pujehun had 1 Magistrate, Western Area Rural had 18 Magistrates and Western Area Urban had 2 Magistrates and 35 Judges.

¹ <https://www.judiciary.gov.sl/>



Additionally, by the end of the first quarter, in the Eastern Province, Kenema had a resident Judge who covered the entire district; Kailahun had 1 resident Judge for the entire district; in the Northern Province Falaba also had 1 resident Judge who covered the entire district; Port Loko and Kambia had a resident Judge for the two districts, while Moyamba and Bonthe had 1 resident Judge for both the districts.

Inspection of Courts

In the first quarter, the Hon. Chief Justice inspected High Courts in Bo and Kailahun Towns with the aim of renovating the courts, as they were in dilapidated state.

Capacity-building Training

On 28 January 2021, the Judiciary, through the Judicial and Legal Training Institute (JLTI), conducted a three-day capacity-building training for Magistrates at High Court No. 1, Siaka Stevens Street, Freetown. The training was on several issues including aspects of the Magistrate's Court's jurisdiction, preliminary investigations, environmental law, and prosecution of social security cases in Magistrate's Courts. It also included Anti-corruption laws, execution of the Bail Regulations, taking of evidence, adjournments, treatment of children and other vulnerable persons, among others.

High Court Criminal Sessions

In the first quarter of 2021 the Judiciary held High Court criminal sessions across the country. In the Southern province, they were held in Mattru Jong and Pujehun Towns. In the Northern Province, they were held in Falaba District, involving seven cases ranging from sexual penetration of a child, rape, larceny; in Magburaka with 48 cases; in Kamakwie Town of Karene District with 12 cases ranging from manslaughter, possession of small firearms, conspiracy, wounding with intent and sexual penetration among others; in Tonkolili District with 48 cases ranging from manslaughter, sexual penetration, dangerous driving, robbery, conspiracy, murder etc.

The essence of the criminal sessions is, according to the CJ, 'to take justice to the doorsteps of the people who normally struggle to travel to bigger towns in their efforts to secure justice'.



Admission of 140 new lawyers

In March 2021 the Chief Justice admitted 140 new lawyers to the Sierra Leone Bar.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome One: Improved Public Confidence in the Justice Sector

Outcome Two: Justice Is Easily Accessible Locally

Outcome Three: Justice is Expedited

Status of Projects/Activities

Completed

The Law Reform Commission of Sierra Leone (LRC SL)

Background

The Law Reform Commission was originally established in 1975 under the Law Reform Commission Act 1975, Act No. 12. But it became non-functional in 1989 because of several financial and logistical snags. However, it was revived in 1994 with the enactment of the Law Reform Commission Decree 1994 as amended under the Repeal and Modification Act 1996. Even with this statutory re-establishment, the Commission only became fully operational in 2003 with the appointment of Dr. Peter L. Tucker as its Chairman.

Overall Mandate

The general mandate of the LRC is declared in Section 3 of the Law Reform Commission Act 1994 as amended in 1996 to 'keep under review all the law both statutory and otherwise, from time to time in force in Sierra Leone for the purpose of their reform, development, consolidation and codification'. The Commission also has a mandate to take other initiatives for the enactment of new laws in appropriate circumstances.

PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

The activities undertaken by the LRC in the first quarter were mainly to review a number of laws including:



- a) the Courts Act 1965;
- b) the Law of Evidence;
- c) the Law on Mediation;
- d) Offences against the Persons Act 1861;
- e) the Town and Country Planning Act, Cap. 81 of the Laws of Sierra Leone 1960;
- f) the Rent Restrictions Act 1956; and the Forestry Act 1988.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Five: Commercial Law and Justice Improved

Status of Projects/Activities

Ongoing: The Commission has re-constituted sub-committees as well as constituted new sub-committees with the mandate of reviewing the various laws stated above. Some of these sub-committees have already commenced sittings while others are about to start.

Challenges

- ❖ Financial constraints in the implementation of these projects.
- ❖ The need for capacity development of staff.

Recommendations

Adequate budgetary allocation and capacity building of staff are in urgent need.

Office of the Administrator and Registrar General

Background

The Office of the Administrator and Registrar (OARG) was established as a Corporation Sole to house the General Registry for the depository of all registers, instruments, records and copies thereof as directed by any Ordinance. It makes provision for the appointment of the Official Administrator and Registrar General, the Deputy Administrator and Registrar General and such other Officers to support in the dispensation of the duty of the Administrator & Registrar General.

The Office has seven sections; Lands Registry, Business Registry, Marriage Registry, Intellectual Property Registry, Estates, Gratuity and Legal Section.



Apart from the head Office in Freetown, three additional Offices were established in Makeni for the Northern Region, Bo for the Southern Region and Kenema for the Eastern Region.

The Port Loko branch was established recently to cover the North-Western Region.

Overall Mandate

The OARG's mandate is to ensure an efficient and effective administration and registration of entities such as business registration, land transactions, industrial property, marriages and administration of the estates of deceased persons as provided by law.

PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

There are many strides taken by the OARG to enhance quality and efficient services to the public at the same time generating revenue for the Government.

The following were achieved during the period under review:

1. The approach made to the Public Sector Reform Unit (PSRU) and Human Resource Management Office (HRMO) to look into the existing structures of the OARG and to make reforms where necessary to meet current trend of events. Since the Department is dealing with legal instruments, it was agreed that the Office also recruits more lawyers to handle legal issues within the OARG. This demand has almost been met as we are in its final stage of addressing it.
2. Added to the above, both PSRU and HRMO recommended review of the laws guiding the operations of the OARG as many of the laws were obsolete and needed reforms.
3. The Administrator and Registrar General (ARG) also made a strong case for the deployment of four State Counsels in the OARG from the recruitment made by the Law Officers Department. The Attorney General and Minister of Justice with other senior officials in the Judiciary saw the need and granted the request. Three of the lawyers were sent to the regional headquarter towns of Bo, Kenema and Makeni acting as heads of the respective offices. The other State Counsel is stationed at the



head office in Freetown to assist the legal section and also serve as the Public Relations Officer. This has helped the OARG in a way that the numerous legal matters are now being addressed amicably.

4. Also, in order to maximize the welfare of staff members, the ARG had relentless engagements with authorities concerned for salaries of lawyers at the OARG to be at par with their colleagues at the Law Officers.
5. Another great stride made by the ARG is the appeal through the HRMO for the promotion of staff members that have been static for over 15 years. On that note diligent and hardworking staff were promoted across the board.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Four: Rights and Accountability are respected

Outcome Five: Commercial Law and Justice improved

Status of Projects/Activities

Though the OARG started with quite a good number of projects, there are more to it since almost all of the projects never ended. The COVID 19 hindered most of the activities especially in the area of awareness-raising that was gaining momentum. Just after the completion of the first sensitization drive to the provinces, there was a surge in the pandemic that puts on hold the media engagements started.

Also, the institution is still grappling with the digitalization dream. Funds are yet to be made available for the project. There are however promises made by the World Bank and the government to salvage this situation.

Deliverables

- A call service centre for lawyers to access processed documents in a timely manner.
- Public sensitization for increased knowledge on registration in the regions.
- Deployment of four State Counsels in the OARG (3 in the provinces and 1 in Freetown).

Challenges

With all the achievements aforementioned, there are indeed shortcomings. They include:



1. **Conflict in Mandate:** The OARG has been in contention with institutions claiming to be having the same mandate. One of such institutions is that of the NCRA claiming to conduct and register civil marriages.
2. **Understaff:** The numerical strength in terms of staff at the OARG is small especially when the volume of work keeps increasing. The Office has therefore engaged volunteers to fill in gaps as a tentative measure.
3. **Digitalization:** Most of the documents we process are still paper based, thus exposing to worn and tear. The process of going digital is still at a snail pace. That notwithstanding, the ARG has been working very hard to ensure that the documents are digitalized by using other tentative means.
4. **Late Disbursement of Funds:** Funds allocated to the OARG are not received on time. This sometimes hinders the operations of the Office. The OARG is also not receiving a percentage of the income it generates as in the case of other MDAs.
5. **National Revenue Authority (NRA) /Bank:** Customers are finding it difficult to do their payments on time with the NRA. Time allocated by the NRA for verification is a bit long for the customers. In addition to that, the working hours of the NRA in attending to our customers are not conducive as time for payment ends at 2:00 p.m.

Recommendations

1. That the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice clarifies the mandates of various institutions.
2. That the PSC considers the recruitment of staff for the OARG.
3. That the Ministry of Finance facilitates the digitization process under the new World Bank project.
4. Those obsolete laws governing the OARG be repealed or amended.
5. That salaries and backlog of initial lawyers assigned to the OARG are harmonised and paid.
6. That the Ministry of Finance disburses allocations on time and ensures that the OARG benefits from some percentage of the revenue generated.
7. That NRA reviews its work plan to complement our work.
8. That the Ministry of Lands endeavours to send in returns timely.



9. That provision is made for the setting up of VPN connectivity between the Ministry of Lands and the OARG.

That the Ministry of Finance provides funds for the replacement of the server.

Office of the Ombudsman

Background

Chapter VIII of the Constitution of Sierra Leone (Act No.6 of 1991) and the Ombudsman Act (Act No.2 of 1997) provide for the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman, but the Office was set up in 2000. The Office is an independent institution within the country's justice sector, and it has now been headed by four persons since its establishment, including (in their order of service) Francis Gabbidon, late Justice Edmond Cowan, Melron C. Nicol-Wilson and the current head, Leon Jenkins-Johnston.

The Ombudsman is appointed by the President with the approval of the House of Parliament. The Office receives, investigates, mediates and resolves complaints laid against administrative decisions, malpractices of the public sector, institutions of higher learning set entirely or partly out of public funds.

At the moment, the Office consists of 47 staff members distributed across its offices in Freetown and the four regions across the country. More information about the Office can be accessed at the Office's website.²

Overall Mandate

By law, the Office of the Ombudsman is responsible for investigating any administrative act of a public authority, about which a complaint has been lodged with the Ombudsman. Essentially, the Ombudsman is to remedy, correct or reverse the act which has been complained about.

Among other things, the Ombudsman is also mandated to inform the Government of any defect in any law which he discovers during any investigation and to provide recommendations to remedy the defect.

² <https://www.ombudsman.gov.sl/>



PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

1. Complaints

In the First Quarter of 2021, the Office of the Ombudsman received 109 complaints from across the country. In Freetown, it received 61 complaints, in Bo 12, in Kenema 22, in Makeni 12 and in Port Loko 12. These complaints range from unlawful dismissal, failure in service delivery and non-payment of emoluments.

2. 2019-2020 Annual Report

On 4th February, 2021 the Ombudsman presented the 2019-2020 Annual Report to President Julius Maada Bio. The Report mainly covers complaints lodged with the Office against various Ministries, Departments and agencies with 246 lodged at the Head Office in Freetown, 121 in Bo, 71 in Kenema, 16 in Makeni and 30 in Port Loko totalling 329 complaints concluded as at the time of presentation.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Four: Respect for Rights and Accountability

Status of Projects/Activities

Investigations into complaints are ongoing.

Deliverables

The 2019-2020 Annual Report

Challenges

- ❖ There is need to employ more lawyers as there are only two lawyers within the office.
- ❖ Staffing in the Port Loko office: The Office of the Ombudsman based in the North-West region has only two staff, an investigator who is the head of office and the intake Clerk.
- ❖ There is need to capacitate this office for it to function properly.
- ❖ The office received its first and Second quarter allocation for 2020 but could not secure those for the third and fourth quarter of that year.
- ❖ The Office of the Ombudsman is facing challenges with finances as there are competing needs for government institutions.



- ❖ There are vehicles that are over 10 years old still being used by the office as well as motorbikes.

Recommendations

It is critical that these challenges be addressed with a sense of urgency.

Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL)

Background

The HRCSL was established by the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone Act 2004 (No.9). It is one of the results of the country's post-war recovery efforts, and it has a remarkable chapter in the Government's human rights successes. The Commission is headed by Commissioner Patricia Narsu Ndanema who has been at the Commission since its earliest years.

Overall Mandate

By law, the Commission's overall mandate is to protect and promote human rights in the country. Sections 7, 8 and 9 of the 2004 Act confer wide-ranging powers on the Commission in the execution of its mandate.

PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

Public Awareness and Education

- In Freetown the HRCSL continued to raise awareness about human rights and peace, particularly targeting the Human Rights Peace Clubs that had been established in the following schools: Prince of Wales Secondary School, Albert Academy Secondary School, St. Joseph's Secondary School, Freetown Secondary School for Girls, West African Methodist Collegiate School, Government Model Secondary School, Government Rokel Secondary School. The purpose of the Commission in these engagements was ultimately to sustain the Human Rights and Peace Clubs in the various schools.
- Also, in Freetown the Commission published press releases and held press conferences on the following issues:
 - a) the Commission's findings on the Yenga and Guinea dispute (the press release, published on the Commission's website, mainly was about security, economic and social concerns expressed by the Sierra Leoneans on the border with Guinea);



- b) Commemoration of **21 March** as the day the more-than-decade-long civil war started in the country.
- Additionally, in Freetown the Commission presented the State of Human Rights Report 2018 and 2019 to the Speaker of Parliament (among other things, concerns relating to the 2018 general elections and the establishment of Human Rights Peace Clubs in secondary schools in Bombali District and Western Area formed the thrust of the 2018 report, whereas key issues in the 2019 report the violent confrontation between supporters of Brookfields United and Fullah Town FC in Freetown which culminated in the death of one person and the destruction of property worth millions of Leones, the mass burial of 60 unidentified and unclaimed corpses by the Connaught Hospital Mortuary and the increase of convicts on death row). These reports and other documents can be found on the HRCSL's website³.
 - In the Southern Region, the HRCSL held four radio discussions on the following issues: the popularisation of the Sexual Offences Act 2019 as amended; the country's commemoration of 30 (thirty) years of the more-than-decade-long civil war; issues of human rights in the communities of Gerihun and Gbaima Songa in Gbo Chiefdom; cases referred awaiting advice from the State Counsel and police medical reports to aid police investigations of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) cases (discussions on these SGBV matters were held on a weekly basis with FSU Line Managers).
 - In the Northwest the HRCSL translated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into the Themne local language (which was aired on Radio Bankasoka 97.5 FM) and hosted a radio discussion programme to raise awareness on the human rights atrocities committed during the country's civil war and their effects on women, children and the country generally, while in the Eastern Region the Commission conducted six radio programmes on human rights and political participation in Kailahun, Kenema, and Kono as well as conducted outreach sensitisations in two schools at Kenema human rights issues generally.

Complaints

- Regarding complaints handling, the Commission's headquarters in Freetown received and processed thirty-eight (38) complaints. Out of the thirty-eight complaints received, twelve (12) were filed by female, twenty-five (25) by male and one (1) by a group. Thirteen (13) were filed against the Sierra Leone Police (SLP),

³ (<http://www.hrc-sl.org/PDF/Media/SoHR%20Report%202018.pdf>).



six (6) against various government institutions, two (2) against the Judiciary, eight (8) against private sector institutions, one (1) against an educational institution and eight (8) against individuals.

- In the interior, in the North the HRCSL received complaints from seven males and nine females, in the West six human rights violations and lodgements, in the South 29 violations, five and 24 lodgements, in the East complaints from six males and seven females and in the Northwest complaints from three males and one female.

Investigations

- As regards investigations, on 24 January 2021 the HRCSL investigated human rights violation in Yenga in the Kissi Teng Chiefdom in Kailahun District following an alleged Guinean troop incursion into that portion of Sierra Leonean territory, and on 5 March 2021 it also investigated and alleged human rights violation in Yegbeda village in Nimikoro Chiefdom Kono District; during a town chief election in which one person was killed, others injured and arbitrary arrests and detention effected.
- In monitoring, in the Western Area the HRCSL monitored the Freetown Male Correctional Centre, the Family Support Units at the Ross Road and Calaba Town Police Stations and the Congo Cross and Adonkia Police Stations. In the provinces, it monitored one Police Station, two correctional centres and one business/human rights establishment in the North; 10 Police Stations, five schools and four quarantine homes in the West; six Police Stations, one correctional centre, one hospital, four schools and one remand home in the South; six Police Stations, three correctional centres, one Magistrates Court, one hospital, four schools and one remand home in the East; and one correctional centre, one Magistrates Court and one one-stop centre in the Northwest.

Other activities undertaken by the Commission in the reporting period include:

- Engagement with the Honourable Chief Justice of the Judiciary on findings on monitoring correctional centres;
- Compiling and editing the 2020 Annual State of Human Rights Report;
- Fact Finding Mission over the breaking of market stalls and alleged stealing of goods of petty traders at the Kossoh Town/Jui Junction;



- Three-day consultative meeting to review and adopt the reporting strategy of the Government of Sierra Leone reporting to the International Human Rights Treaties Bodies;
- Stakeholders' meeting on the preparation of the Sierra Leone 2021 Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation;
- Simulation workshop for the presentation of the Sierra Leone Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Report to the Human Rights Council;
- Formal opening of the Commission's Northwest Regional Office in Port Loko City on 12th February 2021.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Four: Respect for rights and accountability

Outcome Six: Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Improved

STATUS OF PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

Public awareness:

Ongoing

Complaints: Ongoing; complete

Investigations: Complete; ongoing

Monitoring: Ongoing

DELIVERABLES

Public awareness: schools engaged and plans to form Human Rights Peace Club Executives in place; press statements; State of Human Rights Reports 2018 and 2019 submitted to Honourable Speaker of the House of Parliament; 150 copies of each of the reports submitted to Clerk of the House for MPs; increased awareness of the need for peace consolidation and respect for human rights.

Complaints: Reports presented to relevant authorities for action.

Investigations: Reports presented to relevant authorities for action.

Monitoring and other activities: Findings including prolonged pre-trial detention at the Family Support Units documented and trial urged; medical treatment recommended for sick detainee at the Congo Cross Police Station; facilitation of the



release of six petty offence detainees; the Chief Justice engaged on findings from correctional centres; findings from correctional centres included overcrowding, continued incarceration of two blind persons (at Mafanta Correction Centre), poor accommodation for inmates and poor conditions of service for the Correctional Service personnel; On the Kossoh Town/Jui Junction instability, report done and recommendation for a roundtable engagement involving all relevant parties done; the country's Strategy about reporting to International Human Rights Treaties Bodies reviewed and amended; development of the VNR with SDG information for reporting to the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2021; relevant training of the country's delegation to the UPR Working Group Session.

Challenges

- ❖ Regarding awareness raising in secondary schools, most senior members of the School Human Rights and Peace Clubs had left the schools and gone to other schools and some to the Universities.
- ❖ On the commemoration of the 11th year of the rebel war, the Commission could not cater for all the districts to directly benefit from these engagements due to logistical constraints.
- ❖ On press conferences, the Commission could not allow more than 15 press houses and two TV stations per press conference because of the current COVID 19 precautionary measures.
- ❖ As regards the 2018 and 2019 State of Human Rights reports, there were not enough copies to cover for all that Parliament required.

Recommendations

The HRCSL is in sore need of regular and adequate budgetary allocations and logistical supports.

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC)

Background

The Anti-Corruption, being a creature of Parliament, was established in 2000 by the Anti-Corruption Act of 2000; an Act that was amended in 2002. Owing to the



limitations posed by the 2000 Act (as amended in 2002), the said Act was repealed and replaced by the Anti-Corruption Act of 2008. The 2008 Act, inter alia, gave prosecutorial powers to the Anti-Corruption Commission. The Anti-Corruption Act of 2008 was amended in 2019 to make corruption a high risk and low return venture. As it is now, the legal framework in the fight against corruption makes corruption unfashionable/unattractive. The current Commissioner of the Anti-Corruption Commission is Francis Ben Kaifala who has been in office since June 2018.

Overall Mandate

The Commission was established as an independent institution to lead in the fight against and control of corruption through prevention, investigation, prosecution and public education. It has powers to investigate and punish corruption in addition to other related tools useful to detect, suppress, control and eradicate corruption. The Anti-Corruption Coordinating Secretariat (NACS) is responsible to coordinate the national Anti-Corruption Strategy.

PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

National Anti-Corruption Strategy Coordinating Secretariat (NACS-CS)

1. Produced Volume 2 of the NACS Bulletin and the same has been distributed.
2. Engaged the Integrity Management Committees of the Ministries of Social Welfare and Works and the Ministry of Planning and Development.
3. Developed and distributed to MDAs and Local Councils, the First Quarter Monitoring Plan.
4. Undertook nationwide Monitoring of the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy in April 2021.
5. Held two Radio Sensitization programmes to update the public on the outcome of the First Quarter Monitoring of MDAs on the implementation of the NACS.
6. Held NACS' Steering Committee meeting hosted by the Office of the Honorable Vice President-Sierra Leone, to update the Committee headed by the Hon Vice President, Dr. Juldeh Jalloh on the implementation of the NACS by MDAs and the findings of the just concluded nationwide monitoring.



7. Produce and disseminated First Steering Committee Progress Report, supporting the Coordination and Implementation of the 2019-2023 NACS.
8. Imputed into the ERP and produced NACS 1st Quarterly Report.

The Prevention Department-prevents corruption through reviews of systems and processes of MDA's

1. Developed Compliance Management and Sanctions Enforcement Procedure Handbook for Systems and Policy Review recommendations for MDAs.
2. Reviewed Practices and Procedure at the Ministry of Basic Education.
3. Reviewed practices and procedures in the ministry of social welfare and water sector.
4. Review and development of service charters and institutional anti-corruption policies.
5. Monitoring of Audit Report, 2019.
6. Monitored the implementation of Systems Review Recommendations in nine (9) MDAs (Freetown City Council, Maritimes Administration, Correctional Services, Immigration Department, Ministries of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Works, Agriculture, SLRSA, SLRTC and National Fire Force).
7. Monitored the Electronic Cash Register for the GST regime.
8. Monitored the Review of Citizens Service Delivery Charters in MDAs.
9. Commenced the Review of Systems and Processes for Milton Margai College for Science and Technology.

Public Education and Outreach Department

The Department has Four Units -Public Education Unit, Outreach Unit, Public Relations Unit and Audio-Visual Unit.

The mandate of the Department is drawn from the Anti-Corruption Act 2008, section 7 (2)(O) which states: "to educate the public on the dangers of corruption and the benefits of its eradication and to enlist and foster public support in combating corruption."



1. In essence the core functions of the Department are:

- I. To educate the public on the dangers of corruption and the benefits of its eradication and to enlist and foster public support in combating corruption. This is achieved through trainings, meetings, radio and Television panel discussion programs and other integrity related workshops that are tailor-made to meet the needs of various target groups;
 - II. To undertake and engage consultants to conduct surveys to assess the public opinion and perception on corruption as well as to disseminate to the public information on the report of the survey conducted.
2. The Department in collaboration with the Coordinator of Operations ACC, provided leadership in the organization and conduct of Town Hall sensitization meetings dubbed as “**Meet the Peoples Tour**” by the Commissioner, across the country where in most of the places, previous ACC Commissioners have never been. The meetings were essentially to update the people on the fight against corruption since Francis Ben Kaifala Esq. assumed leadership at the ACC. It was also meant to elicit feedback from the people in regard their views and thoughts on the fight against corruption in the country. The engagements were held in Moyamba, Mattru Jong, Bonthe Town (Sherbro Island), Pujehun – all in the Southern Provinces; Kambia, Kamakwie – in the North West Region; Magburaka, Kabala and Mongor Bendugu – in the North East Region; and Kono in the East. Segbwema, Daru, Pedembu, Kailahun and Koindu towns will be engaged in early June, 2021.
 3. Also, the Department in 2021 has forged partnerships with five (5) institutions namely; Freedom Radio, Business Digest, Sierra Leone Fellowship of Evangelical Students (SLEFES), United Citizens against Corruption and the Old Wharf Descendants Organization.
 4. The Department facilitated the signing of Two (2) Memoranda of Understanding with **New Salone Woman** on the 2nd February, 2021.
 5. The Department in partnership with the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) and National Democratic Initiatives (NDI) held an open forum with Political Parties, where Commissioner Francis Ben Kaifala Esq., responded to their concerns with regard to the fight against corruption.
 6. Additionally, the Department has worked with the Pan African Daily TV Sierra Leone chapter to organize Youth Crusades in **Kabala and Kono**, where the Commissioner was guest speaker and addressed young men and women and pupils on the need to support the fight against corruption.



7. The Department has also collaborated with Students Union Governments and Managements of Tertiary institutions to organize Public Lectures where the Commissioner of the ACC, Francis Ben Kaifala, has been the guest lecturer:
 - i. On the 3rd March, 2021, the Commissioner delivered a lecture at the St. Paul's Major Seminary, Regent in Freetown on the topic: **“HOW CORRUPTION UNDERMINES THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATION”**.
8. The Department has so far held 56 radio discussion programs and 10 television talk shows on the fight against corruption, covering news and current affairs and paid for programs.
9. In addition to the already existing Integrity Clubs, the Department has expanded the clubs to Fourteen (14) more schools in the Western Area.
10. Segbwema, Daru, Pendembu, Kailahun and Koindu have all been engaged by the Commissioner in his model Meet the Tour, that has now ended.
11. The ACC signed MOU with the Liberian Anti-Corruption Commission on the 30th April 2021. Due diligence has been done on two organizations who requested Partnership with Commission; Human Rights Defenders Network Sierra Leone and Patriotic Advocacy Network Sierra Leone.
12. Two partnership trainings were conducted. One on Understanding Anti-Corruption Laws and Policies and the Role of CSO's in the Fight against Corruption, for CSO's in Kailahun and Tonkolili under the People Power Project and another in Freetown to update partners on operations of the ACC in Freetown.
13. Public Lectures were held by the ACC Commissioner in Njala Bo Campus, the Canadian College, IAMTEC and Earnest Bai-Koroma Universities, Deputy Commissioner at the Benguima Military Training Facility and Director of Public Education with the Voice of Patriotic Students and Youth against Corruption in Freetown.
14. 36 radio discussion programs and 5 TV programs paid for by the ACC were aired. The Commission also had the opportunity to engage different Radio and TV Stations, to educate the public on the activities of the Commission and other emerging issues. A total number of 74 of such programs were aired nationwide.
15. 500 ACC newsletters and 500 bulletins were produced and distributed to various MDAs, partners and the Diplomatic community.



16. The Deputy Commissioner conducted a tour of the Regions to sensitize communities and beneficiaries of the Social Safety Net (SSN) project's Grievance Redress Mechanism aimed at managing complaints of corruption in the unconditional cash transfer project to beneficiaries.
17. Similar sensitizations were also carried out by the Department in Shebura-Bombali, Musaya- Falaba District, Kabala- Koinadugu and Magburaka – Tonkolili.
18. Twenty-One (21) other community meetings were held in different parts of the country by the ACC.
19. 31 engagements were held with Integrity Clubs in Secondary Schools across the Country. 5 Accountability Now Clubs in Universities were also engaged. 21 Meet the Schools Campaigns were held.

Investigations and Intelligence Department

The Department is a crucial arm of the Commission in the fight against graft in Sierra Leone. In the period under review, the Department has completed investigations into forty-seven (47) cases; executed four (5) sting operations and carried out six (8) proactive operations. The Department has made recoveries in the sum of One Billion, Two hundred and Ninety-seven Million, Four Hundred and Sixteen Thousand, Three Hundred and Twenty-two Leones (Le 1,297,416,322.00).

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Four: Respect for Rights and Accountability

Status of Projects/Activities

Ongoing

Deliverables

- A report on practices and procedures presented to the Ministry of Social Welfare.
- 80% of the monitoring of the audit recommendations completed. Update on each of the recommendation is available.
- Review of practices and procedure at Guma Valley, SALWACO, Water Regulation Commission and the Ministry of Water Resources undertaken. Validation and launching underway.



Several MDAs such as Immigration, SLRSA, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Agriculture, and Ministry of Fisheries assisted to review and develop service charters.

Sierra Leone Law School (SLLS)

Background

The Sierra Leone Law School was established by the Council of Legal Education on 23 February 1990, a year before the Council was established. The Council came into existence on 29 September 1989 under the provisions of the Council of Legal Education Act (Act No.1) 1989.

Before the establishment of the School, Sierra Leoneans had to undertake their legal studies abroad invariably either in Great Britain or in the Republic of Ireland. Admission into the legal profession in Sierra Leone was then regulated by the Legal Practitioners Cap 11 of the Laws of Sierra Leone 1960. The first significant step in the training for the legal profession locally was the establishment of a Faculty of Law at Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone. More information on the School and the Council can be found at the institution's website⁴

Overall Mandate

The overall mandate of the Law School is to offer to the public courses of professional legal training and to conduct final examinations for persons seeking to become members of the legal profession in Sierra Leone.

Under the 1989 Act, the Council of Legal Education, on the other hand, is mandated to establish and serve as the governing body of the Law School.

PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

Virtual Teaching Method

Owing to the outbreak of the Corona virus pandemic in the country, the Law School set up a Virtual Lab in March 2020 at our Special Court office. A few pieces of equipment have been purchased to run the lab and keep it functional.

⁴ <http://lawschool.edu.sl/council-of-legal-education/4560896760>



Call to the Bar

The Law School conducted its Call to the Bar ceremony on 19 March, 2021 at the Freetown International Conference Centre at Aberdeen in Freetown, where 140 students were admitted to the Sierra Leone Bar after passing their Bar final examinations.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome One: Improved Public Confidence in the Justice Sector

Status of Projects/Activities

Complete

Deliverables

140 new lawyers

Challenges

❖ Constrained to get other vital electronic devices to run the virtual lab.

Recommendations

Support to modernize legal education by improving on the virtual lab for students' interaction with it. This is crucial for open-mindedness and reception to new ideas.

Independent Police Complaints Board (IPCB)

Background

The Independent Police Complaints Board (IPCB) is an independent civilian oversight body for the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), established by the Police Council under Section 158 (2) of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991 (Act No. 6 of 1991). The mandate of the IPCB is set out in The Independent Police Complaints Board Regulations, 2013.

The IPCB was formally launched on Tuesday 20th October, 2015, at the Miatta Conference Centre in Freetown, followed by mini launches in Makeni, Bo and Kenema Cities for the Regions. These set of activities opened the agency's door to the public for business.



More information about the IPCB can be derived from the institution' website⁵.

Overall Mandate

Under Subsections 3 (1) and (2) of the Independent Police Complaints Board Regulations 2013, the Board is mandated to receive and investigate complaints of police abuses against civilians and to proffer recommendations to remedy the situation.

PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

1. Complaints

In the first quarter the Board received 11 complaints nationally. Among them it assigned seven for investigation to its investigation department, held over three because of judicial proceedings on them and it referred one to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

2. IPCB and UNDP signed Letter of Agreement

The IPCB signed a standard letter of Agreement with the United Nations Development Programme for the implementation of the project- “Improve the Rule of Law, Security and Human Rights in Sierra Leone”. The project seeks to:

- i) Supported the review of the Legislative Framework of the IPCB and enactment of a new Act.
- ii) Supported the IPCB to implement the 3rd phase of the “Guidelines on the conditions of Arrest, Police Custody and Pre-trial Detention in Africa” (The Luanda Guidelines).
- iii) Build the investigative capacity of the IPCB by hiring (2) contract investigators to facilitate speedy completion of cases.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Four: Respect for Rights and Accountability

Status of Projects/Activities

Complaints' intake and investigations are ongoing.

⁵ <http://www.ipcb.gov.sl>



Challenges

- ❖ Low staff
- ❖ Limitation on the implementation of its own conclusions
- ❖ Lack of mobility
- ❖ Low budgetary allocation

Recommendations

These challenges require immediate addressing.

Family Support Unit (FSU) of the Sierra Leone Police

Background

The FSU was established in 2001 as a designated Department under the Sierra Leone Police. The Unit partners with the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs and it has branches attached to Police Stations across the country.

Overall Mandate

The FSU is mandated to address all types of abuse against women and children in the country. Specifically, it investigates reports of child abuse and sexual and domestic violence, as well as commercial and other forms of exploitation against women and vulnerable members of society. Evidence gathering for prosecution of alleged offenders and offering advice to victims also form part of FSU's mandate.

PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

1. 100-Personnel March

This project started in 2020 and continued through the First Quarter of 2021. Sponsored by Reachout Salone and the British charity organisation, Save the Children, the project is FSU's drive to sensitise community members across the country about the ills of sexual and gender-based violence and to further raise awareness about the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2019.

2. Child Justice

Also in the First Quarter of 2021, the FSU continued to work with the Child Justice Working Group with a focus to include child justice and child protection in the Police Recruit and In-service Training Manual and to review the Family Support Unit Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in the investigation of sexual and gender-based violence.



JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Two: Justice Is Easily Accessible Locally

Status of Projects/Activities

Ongoing

Deliverables

- Review of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in the investigation of sexual and gender-based violence.

Challenges

1. MEDICAL

- ❖ Absence of forensic lab;
- ❖ Delay in medical endorsement;
- ❖ Long distance of some health facilities;
- ❖ No standby impress for the endorsement of medical examination for victims of physical abuses

2. JUDICIAL

- ❖ Procrastination of investigation caused by undue delay in giving advice by DPP's office;
- ❖ Insufficient State Counsel;
- ❖ Delay in the prosecution of cases (numerous adjournments);
- ❖ Centralization of profiling of suspects;
- ❖ Lack of cooperation of witnesses due to undue delay and compromise;
- ❖ Inadequate witness protection;
- ❖ Inadequate court sittings

3. PERSONNEL

- ❖ Insufficient personnel to investigate reports;
- ❖ Lack of induction training in the Unit;
- ❖ No incentive for personnel to accompany victims to hospitals and safe homes

4. COMMUNITY

- ❖ Compromise by victims' parents or guardians;
- ❖ Poor community road access;
- ❖ Illiteracy of community people;
- ❖ Low awareness and knowledge on SGBV issues and sex education.



5. **LOGISTICAL**

- ❖ Vehicles (vehicles for Head Office, Regional Office and divisional headquarters);
- ❖ Motor bikes;
- ❖ Cameras (cameras for Stations and Posts) for crime scene visitations;
- ❖ Internet facility (computers, printers, photocopier, cabinet, office furniture, etc. for Head Office, Regional Office and divisional headquarters);
- ❖ Office space (office space for Head Office, Regional Office, Divisional Headquarters, Stations and Posts).

Recommendations

Regular budgetary allocation and provision of the above equipment and logistics are urgently needed.

Sierra Leone Correctional Service (SLCS)

Background

The SLCS obtained its current name as a result of the enactment of the Sierra Leone Correctional Service Act 2014. Before that, it used to be the Sierra Leone Prisons Service, having been established by the Prisons Ordinance Act 1960. While the Prisons Service had a mainly punitive focus, the Correctional Service has a transformative and re-integrative agenda.

The Freetown Male Correctional Centre (known as Pademba Road Maximum Security Prison before the passage of the 2014 Act) is still the largest detention centre in the country, after its establishment in 1914.

The SLCS is headed by a Director General, the current one being Joseph Lamboi.

Overall Mandate

The SLCS has the general mandate of protecting society through the safe keeping of inmates in secure and kind conditions. Significantly, the Service also helps provide for the rehabilitation of and reintegration into society of inmates. Under the Service's Act, the Director General is responsible 'for the operational control and administration of the Service and the control and supervision of all inmates subject to the directions of the [Sierra Leone Correctional Service] Council'.



PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

1. Rice cultivation

Since January 2021, the SLCS has been engaging in rice cultivation in the inland valley swamp in Kenema District, cultivation of cassava and potatoes in Moyamba District and upland rice cultivation in Mafanta in the northern district of Tonkolili. The purpose of the project is mainly for SLCS to feed inmates in a few targeted correctional facilities.

2. UNDP Support

Since 2018, the UNDP has been providing funds to the SLCS for the opening of bank accounts for some 290 inmates. The inmates are encouraged to embark on skills training, and proceeds realised from their skill work after the training will be deposited into their accounts. The accounts will be accessible to them in their post discharge periods. This project is ongoing.

3. Contracts

The Ministry of Finance has approved contracts for the supply to the SCLS of 22 assorted vehicles, bedding sets, spare parts and office equipment. These supplies are ongoing.

4. Centre decongestion

There are ongoing efforts to decongest the correctional centres across the country. The Service has sought funds for this and in 2020 the Chief Justice convened criminal court sessions to train personnel of the SLCS on how to decongest inmate population particularly in the interior.

5. Inmate data

By the end of the first quarter of 2021, the SLCS had recorded a total of 2,858 of unsentenced population nationwide. Of that total, 1780 persons were on remand, 1062 on trial, 12 in safe custody (all from Western Area) and 4 were reserved for judgments.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Three: Justice is expedited

Outcome Four: Respect for rights accountability

Status of Projects/Activities

Ongoing



Deliverables

- Bank accounts for 290 inmates
- Skills training to inmates
- Twenty-two assorted vehicles, bedding sets (mattresses, pillows, etc.), office stationery, spare parts etc.

Challenges

- ❖ Funding
- ❖ Supply of logistics
- ❖ Overcrowding

Recommendations

Effective implementation and increase in funding by government to the correctional centres for it to match international standards.

Sierra Leone Bar Association (SLBA)

Background

The Sierra Leone Bar Association (SLBA) is a voluntary association of legal practitioners practicing law in Sierra Leone.

The SLBA is the oldest Bar Association in sub-Saharan West Africa. Its mandate also extends to organize training for lawyers, dispute resolution amongst its members, receive complaints against its members from the general public, review existing legislations and recommend necessary changes, participate in the development of laws with various stakeholders and promote access to justice.

The current President of SLBA is Ms. Michaela Eddinia Swallow and the immediate past President is Robert Kowa Esq. SLBA presidents are voted in for a term of One (1) year with an option to be re-elected for two (2) further terms. However, Ms. Michaela Eddinia Swallow is the first woman to be elected unopposed in succession to the positions of Vice President and President of SLBA.

Overall Mandate

The aims of the Association, as explained in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, include: 1) to promote the administration of justice; 2) to promote, maintain and improve the interests and standards of legal practitioners; 3) to make



recommendations with respect to legislation, law reform, rules of court and the business and procedure of courts; 4) to seek to ensure that the benefits of the administration of justice are reasonably and equally available to all members of the community; 5) to arrange and promote continuing professional development; 6) to promote fair and honourable practice amongst legal practitioners; to suppress, discourage and prevent malpractice and professional misconduct; 7) to inquire into questions as to professional conduct and etiquette of legal practitioners; 8) to encourage professional, educational, cultural and social relation amongst the member of the Bar Association.

PROJECT/ACTIVITIES

1. Debate on Abolition of the Death Penalty

On 28th January 2021, SLBA organized a virtual debate on the topic: the abolition of the death penalty. This debate was organised in collaboration with representatives from the British High Commission, Advoc aid, the Death Penalty Project, Pro Bono Network and other stakeholders. The outcome of the debate revealed that Lawyers were overwhelming in favour of the abolition of the death penalty for a multitude of reasons, spanning from the irreversible nature of the death penalty to the prevalence of human and judicial errors. This debate also culminated into the preparation and delivery of SLBA's position paper on the death penalty to the Attorney - General and Minister of Justice. This led to the subsequent approval of the Attorney General's memo for the abolition of the death penalty by Cabinet of Sierra Leone.

2. Training on the New York Convention and the Enforcement of Arbitral Awards

In executing its mandate with regards capacity building for its members, SLBA holds various training programs for lawyers and such program is the quarterly training workshop for lawyers on international treaties, their impact and how they subsequently affect the way domestic laws are interpreted, once ratified.

Therefore, further to Sierra Leone becoming the 166th member of the UN Convention on the recognition and enforcement of foreign arbitral awards on 26th



January 2021, SLBA in collaboration with Center for International Law and Policy in Africa (CILPA) on 27th February 2021, organized a virtual and in person training on the New York Convention and the Enforcement of Arbitral Awards at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Freetown. This workshop attracted a host of distinguished speakers such as the Hon. A. Y. Brewah the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Dr. Abass Bundu the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Babatunde Edwards the Chief Justice, Justice Glenna Thompson Justice of the Supreme Court, H.E. Ms. Anna Joubine-Bret, Secretary of the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), legal officers from UNCITRAL, Dr. Michael Imran Kanu Ambassador & DPR of Sierra Leone to the UN and a host of senior lawyers with vast experience in International Law.

The significance of this workshop was the review of the proposed Arbitration Act which seeks to address a number of issues that were not adequately dealt with by the current arbitration laws - CAP 25 of the Laws of Sierra Leone 1960. The recommendations from the review at this workshop were forwarded to the relevant stakeholders for input into the draft bill.

3. Efforts in Covid-19 Prevention and Vaccination

In order to promote and seek the wellbeing and best interest of its members, during the spread of COVID-19, SLBA was duty bound to ensure that its members have access to all available preventive measures during this epidemic. Veronica buckets, hand sanitizers and temperature machines were donated by SLBA to the judiciary at the onset of the epidemic to ensure the protection of its members accessing the courts.

With the Government's provision of the COVID -19 vaccine, the SLBA President and members of SLBA made an intervention to NARCOVERC to have lawyers vaccinated on 31st March, 2021 at a designation location to ease the stress of unpredictability, delay, and long waiting times at the vaccination centers.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome One: Improved Public Confidence in the Justice and Judicial System

Outcome Two: Justice is easily accessible locally



Outcome Three: Justice Is Expedited

Status of Projects/Activities

Ongoing

Deliverables

- The successful review of the current arbitration laws – CAP 25 of the Laws of Sierra Leone 1960.
- Training of lawyers on international treaties and the clear interpretation when ratified.
- Executive members of SLBA vaccinated with COVID 19 vaccine.

National Commission for Children (NCC)

Background

The NCC was established by the Child Rights Act 2007 (CRA) in the spirit of domesticating the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (CRC), its Optional Protocols 2000 and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). However, the Commission was actually established in 2014. It followed Section 4(1) of the Child Rights Act 2007 (CRA 2007) that the Government established the Commission. The NCC has functional offices in Freetown, Makeni and Bo.

The NCC is composed of a Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Administrative staff.

The Commission was first headed by Mrs Olayinka Laggah (2014-2019). Since 2019, Mrs Joyce Tejan-Kella has been heading the National Commission for Children.

Overall Mandate

In accordance with the CRA, the overall mandate of the NCC is: 'To monitor and coordinate the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the African Charter for Children and to oversee the implementation of Part 3 of the Child Rights Act; and to advise government on policies aimed at improving the condition or welfare of children in Sierra Leone, compatible with the Convention and the Charter.'

Among other things, Section 11 of the CRA mandates the NCC to particularly:



- Review legislation and customary law practices relating to children;
- Undertake progressive study and review of the principle of the best interests of the child;
- Contribute to the process of decentralization of authority;
- Seek/mobilise international support towards the implementation of the CRC and the ACRWC;
- Undertake wide dissemination of the CRC and the ACRWC.
- Engage in advocacy for a just and progressive system of juvenile justice.

PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

1. Office expansion

In the first quarter of 2021 the NCC expanded its regional offices in Bo and Makeni by recruiting six staff at the Makeni office, two at the Bo office. Additionally, the Commission procured some office furniture, equipment, stationery. Also, one vehicle was donated to the Commission by the Ministry of Transport and Aviation and three motor bikes were provided to the Commission by World Vision and World Hope International.

2. Awareness raising

The NCC also raised awareness on the child rights laws mentioned above through the NCC Bi-monthly Radio Programme – ‘Tok bot wi pikin dem’. The Commission also held constructive engagements with stakeholders and community members on Parental Rights and responsibilities.

3. Offences

During the period under review, the NCC recorded seventy-seven (77) juvenile offences at the Bo Remand Home including cases of 4 assault, 3 assault on Police, 1 Abusive language, 1 Assault OABH, 3 Conspiracy, 1 Domestic Violence, 2 Drug Abuse, 1 Escape from Police, 6 Frequenting, 1 Housebreaking/Larceny, 6 Larceny, 1 Larceny of dwelling house, 10 malicious damage, 1 parenting justice, 3 possession of cannabis, 2 unlawful possession, 23 Sexual Penetration, 1 Shop breaking/larceny, 5 wounding and 2 wounding with intent. Regarding the educational statuses of these offenders, out of 77 of those detained, 10 are primary



school going children, 21 are out of school going, 28 are at the JSS level while 18 are the SSS level.

At Kingtom Remand Home, the NCC recorded 36 offences including 1 Assault, 2 burglary, 1 child stealing, 4 conspiracy, 1 Domestic Violence, 1 fraudulent conversion, 2 Housebreaking/Larceny, 7 larceny, 1 malicious damage, 1 murder, 1 robbery, 8 sexual penetration, 1 store breaking, 4 wounding with intent and 1 unrecorded offence.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Three: Justice is expedited

Outcome Four: Respect for Rights and Accountability

Status of Projects/Activities

Ongoing

Deliverables

Quarterly report on activities of the Commission.

Challenges

- ❖ Inadequate medical supplies to child offenders in all the three holding centres/facilities;
- ❖ The facilities in most cases rely on the assistance of some child-focused NGOs to give medical support to the children;
- ❖ Inadequate staff for NCC to monitor all diverse issues surrounding juvenile justice system across the country;
- ❖ Even though there is a vehicle allocated to the Freetown Remand Home to convey children for court hearings, fuel to convey the kids has often been a challenge for the offenders to attend court sittings;
- ❖ Inadequate logistics like vehicles by the Commission to monitor Child Rights issues country-wide;
- ❖ The security personnel placed in the various juvenile holding centres lack the requisite knowledge on child rights issues and they also lack the capacity to protect children from harm;
- ❖ Bo Remand Home has no form of mobility set aside to convey juveniles to court; they have to either depend on motor bikes or seldom rely on the vehicle of the Regional Director of the Ministry of Social Welfare;
- ❖ There are poor hygiene and sanitary conditions in all juvenile holding centres in the country with child female offenders not receiving adequate sanitary materials like pads and other hygiene materials;



- ❖ Inadequate food and non-food supplies (clothing) is a huge challenge;
- ❖ There are no trained Social Workers to provide social services like providing psychosocial first aid, healing the offenders' trauma, counselling and introducing them to certain functional skills which will enable them learn skills that will benefit them after detention.

Recommendations

- The Ministry of Social Welfare to recruit more Social Workers including Probation Officers that would handle the affairs of juvenile offenders;
- To provide training to staff of the juvenile justices holding centres in data collection, analysis and management.
- Since NCC has two regional offices in Bo for the south and Makeni for the north, it is further recommended for them to establish Regional Offices in Kenema for the east and Port Loko for north-west;
- Create provision for NCC staff for international exchange trainings;
- Certain facilities like the sanitary pads' distribution by the Sierra Leone First Lady should also be benefited by girls in detention;
- Procurement of three (3) additional vehicles and three (3) motorbikes for both Head office and regional offices for monitoring children's rights issues country-wide.

Rainbo Initiative (Rainbo)

Background

The Rainbo Initiative emerged as a result of some of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2002, at the end of the civil war, to provide support to war-affected women and girls. Starting off as a project under the International Rescue Committee in 2003, Rainbo became an independent national NGO in 2014.

Rainbo was the first provider of free medical treatment and psychosocial services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in Sierra Leone. The charity currently



has a staff of 80 and it runs five centres in Western Urban and Rural, Bombali, Bo, Kenema and Kono Districts.

Rainbo receives supports from such as Irish Aid, UNFPA, Trocaire, European Union, Comic Relief and other NGOs. The Government of Sierra Leone is also supportive to the charity. It is now one of the leading local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with five centres in Western Urban and Rural, Bombali, Bo, Kenema and Kono Districts.

The humanitarian organisation receives supports from other NGOs and local authorities. In its work, Rainbo works intently with the Ministry of Health and the Family Support Unit. More information on Rainbow is available at the institution's website.⁶

Overall Mandate

Rainbo works mainly to provide free psychosocial and reproductive to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. It, additionally, raises awareness about those kinds of violence and aims to influence public policy around sexual and gender-based issues.

PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

Sexual Assaults

Between January and March of 2021, Rainbo recorded 470 sexual assault cases from its five centres in Freetown, Makeni, Bo, Kenema, and Kono.

Physical Assaults

In the first quarter of 2021, Rainbo received a total of 44 cases of assault on women and girls also from its five centres.

JSRSIP IV Outcome(s)

Outcome Two: Justice Is Easily Accessible Locally

⁶ <http://www.rainboinitiativesl.org/>



Status of Projects/Activities

Ongoing

Deliverables

Successfully treated survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

Challenges

Insufficient financial and logistical support.

Recommendations

It is crucial that Rainbo receive more financial and logistical supports to extend its operations across the country.



Justice Sector
Coordination Office
Enhancing Justice Delivery

HALF YEARLY REPORT (JAN. – JUNE) 2021



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