



Mid-Term Evaluation Report

Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio

UNDP Sierra Leone

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September 2023

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this report are those of the consultants and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and its partners.

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Portfolio Information		
Project Outcome Title	Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio	
Department/Unit	Inclusive Democratic Governance Cluster	
Country	Sierra Leone	
Region	Africa	
Project ID	00110819	
Corporate outcome and output	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2020-2023 Outcome 2: By 2023, people in Sierra Leone benefit from more gender- and youth - responsive institutions that are innovative, accountable, and transparent at all levels and can better advance respect for human rights and the rule of law, equity, peaceful coexistence, and protection of children, girls, and persons with disability Country Programme Document (CPD) Output 2.1: Capacities of targeted oversight and accountability institutions (Parliament, HRC, NEC, ACC and IPCB) strengthened to perform their mandates CPD Output 2.3: Gender-responsive institutional frameworks strengthened for peace, citizen’s voice and participation for social cohesion CPD Output 2.4: Capacities of targeted local councils improved to deliver on devolved functions and manage resources	
Portfolio dates	Start	Planned End
	1 January 2020	31 December 2024
Funding Sources	Embassy of Ireland/Irish Aid, European Union Delegation, United Nations Legal Identity Agenda (UN LIA), UN Trust Fund for Human Security, Funding Window, UNDP Core Funding, and the Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) Funds	
Project budget	\$5,924,717 (2020-2022)	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	\$5,862,645 (2020-2022)	
Implementing Partners	National Civil Registration Authority, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, National Aids Scretariat, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Political Parties Registration and Regulation Commission, Fambul Tok, Network Movement for Justice and Development, Parliament, Electoral Commission, Campaign for Good Governance, 50-50 Group, SEND Sierra Leone, Media Reform Coordinating Group, Ernest Bai Koroma University, National Commission for Civic Education and Development	
Evaluation Information		
Evaluation Type	Project/Portfolio	
Period Under Evaluation	Start	End
	January 2020	December 2022
Evaluator	Ibrahim Bangura	
Evaluator’s email address	bangural@yahoo.co.uk	
Evaluation Dates	Start	End
	December 2022	September 2023

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I. ACRONYMS

ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AUA	African Union Agenda COVID-19 Corona Virus Disease 2019
CGG	Campaign for Good Governance
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DHRCS	District Human Rights Committees
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
DICOVERCs	District Corona Virus Emergency Centers
EMBs	Electoral Management Bodies
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FDD	Financial Decentralization Department
GAHNRI	Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
HRCSL	Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone
HRWG	Human Rights Working Group
HRH	Human Rights Hour
HUCU	Human Rights and Compliance Unit
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees
IMC	Inter-Ministerial Committee
IMC	Independent Media Commission
IPAM	Institute of Public Administration and Management
KII	Key Informant Interview
KPs	Key Populations
LGSC	Local Government Service Commission
LOCASL	Association of Local Councils in Sierra Leone
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies

MIC	Ministry of Information & Communication
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MoFAIC	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRCG	Media Reform Coordinating Group
MSC	Most Significant Change
MT-NDP	Medium-Term National Development Plan
NACOVERC	National COVID-19 Emergency Response Centre
NCRA	National Civil Registration Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NMRF	National Mechanism for Reporting and Following
NRM	National Road Map
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PACO	Parliament, Parliamentary Assistance Coordination Office
PCC	Provincial Coordination Committee
PPRC	Political Parties Registration Commission
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PwDs	People with Disabilities
QDA	Qualitative Data Analysis
RACER	Relevant, Acceptable, Credible, Easy and Robust
SEND-SL	Social Enterprise Development- Sierra Leone
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SLAJ	Sierra Leone Association of Journalist
SLBS	Sierra Leone Broadcasting Services
SSL	Civil Society Organisations and Statistics Sierra Leone

ToR	Terms of Reference
UBRAF	Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework
UN LIA	United Nations Legal Identity Agenda
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
YSC	Youth Steering Committee

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strengthening Democratic Institutions Programme (SDI) is a four-year initiative, with a start date of 1 January, 2020 and an end date of 31 December, 2024. The aim of the SDI programme is to strengthen the capacities and effectiveness of core governance institutions as the machinery that will ensure the needs and aspirations of Sierra Leoneans as articulated in the Medium Term-National Development Plan (MT-NDP 2019- 2023) are met. Its overall objective is to consolidate the gains made during previous interventions through support to initiatives aimed at strengthening capacities of democratic institutions, legal frameworks, institutional structures, and processes.

The programme's approach is to provide support to: (i) democratic institutions and semi-autonomous Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the Government of Sierra Leone that are essential building blocks of the machinery of government, i.e., the chain of decisions and actions that are needed to make policies deliver concrete results for people's lives; (ii) parliamentary processes and local government as parliament develop laws that organise a country's public sector management system and are meant to make government more responsive and accountable, with a view to increase cooperation and capacity building of local government to ensure systematic and tangible decentralisation; and (iii) inclusive and participatory spaces for civil society, media and local communities and women, youth and People with Disabilities (PwD) groups. The programme is organised into five key intervention areas for support: (1) Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs); (2) Parliament; (3) Integrated Civil Register; (4) Subnational and Local Governance; (5) Media and Civil Society, ensures that all activities, in line with principles of the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the imperative of leaving no one behind by introducing and supporting innovative, cutting-edge and effective approaches to mainstreaming gender equality and equity, conflict-sensitivity and, more broadly, to fighting vulnerabilities.

Two years after the commencement of the implementation of the programme, UNDP hired a consultant to conduct a Mid-Term Evaluation of the programme. The evaluation was conducted from January to May, 2023.

Methodology

The evaluation used a theory-based approach, leveraging the concept of "Theory of Change", which was vital in analysing the causal relationship between activities, intermediate outcomes, and long-term impacts. Thus, the portfolio's theory of change was assessed and used in the evaluation. The evaluation used a participatory and gender-focused, and responsive evaluation approach which combined secondary analyses (project documents and reports), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), The Most Significant Change (MSC), and focus group discussions (FGD) to collect data from all the stakeholders involved in the programme evaluated. A total of 43 (29 males, 14 females) respondents were engaged in the evaluation.

Findings

A strong participatory approach was applied to ensure maximum engagement of all the relevant stakeholders. The analysis was positive, with the project indicated to be relevant and timely. The findings are presented below.

Relevance

The portfolio is highly relevant and was designed to address a critical challenge, with significant implications for Sierra Leone's nascent democracy, which is the strengthening of the capacity of democratic institutions to effectively deliver on their mandates. The programme as designed, directly responds to the needs of the partners targeted by it. Specific approaches were used to comprehensively engage and support the partners to enable them to deliver on their mandate efficiently and effectively. The portfolio is aligned with government policies including the Medium-Term National Development Plan, and also with UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025. Additionally, the portfolio is aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and CEDAW.

Intervention Logic, Monitoring and Learning

The SDI portfolio brings together a wide range of actors, at both the national and local levels, who are themselves the beneficiaries. The theory of change is of very good quality and the portfolio has five outputs, each with sub-outputs that are well defined and clearly speak to what the project aims to achieve. The portfolio programme has a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan, and also has several layers of monitoring at the programme and at the project levels. For instance, at the programme level, it is monitored by the portfolio board. Monitoring by the project team, takes the form of organised visits when activities are undertaken to assess quality and the effectiveness of the services provided. The data collected helps to guide the process of decision-making related to the programme.

Coherence

The project complements the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to strengthen independence and oversight functions as articulated in the Government of Sierra Leone's MTNDP. It contributes to Cluster 4: Governance and Accountability of the Sierra Leone MT-NDP 2019–2023, SDGs 5, 16 and 17, and the priorities of the African Union Agenda (AUA) Goals 11 and 17. In addition, the Portfolio Management team ensured coordination and synergies with the UNDP and other stakeholders when and where relevant. Subsequently, minimising duplication of efforts, and ensured that all relevant actors within the UN, and others such as Irish Aid and the European Union (EU) were familiar with the activities of the portfolio and how to avoid undertaking similar activities. The project is aligned to policies of the Government of Sierra Leone, such as the Medium-Term National Development Plan, the Persons with Disabilities Act 2011 etc.

Efficiency

The SDI Portfolio was well designed and has implementation mechanisms that have so far helped to keep it on track. The financial resources provided for the portfolio is said by the UNDP team to be sufficient and was based on the initial design of the project. However, there have been challenges encountered since the commencement of the implementation of the programme. These challenges started with the COVID-19 pandemic, which had significant negative implications for the programmes of both UNDP and the Government of Sierra Leone. This resulted in some of the activities being reprogrammed, with the focus being on fighting the pandemic. Other challenges included annual delays in the development and approval of work plans, and the disbursement of funds for activities resulting in activities being implemented very late.

Effectiveness

The portfolio is on track to achieve its objectives and at the moment, significant progress has been made already in producing the expected outputs under each of the outcome areas. The gains made are divided into those made from the period 2020 to 2023. The outputs produced are of very good quality, and they are succeeding in helping the Commission and partners to carry out their duties professionally and effectively. Despite the initial delays that had to do with the COVID-19 pandemic which ultimately necessitated a reprogramming of some of the project interventions, and the bureaucracy of UNDP, the activities of the project were fully implemented and were effective in achieving its set goals and objectives.

Impact

The programme as indicated above, has succeeded in making good progress so far, which is contributing to the achievement of its goals. For instance, the increment in the awareness of the activities of district and city councils in areas such as Loko and Bonthe. The support provided by UNDP helped to strengthen democratic good governance, with institutions such as the PPRC and NCRA provided with the resources required to build their capacity and establish platforms that are critical to promoting democratic systems and practices in Sierra Leone. For instance, the performance of the NCRA is changing as a result of the support of UNDP. They documentation and availability of the data of citizens, and the synchronisation of that data with for example, the Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (ECSL), is enhancing.

Sustainability

The portfolio does not have a specific sustainability plan and an exit strategy. There are two principal conclusions arrived at, that have to do with sustainability of the activities undertaken by the SDI portfolio. Firstly, the knowledge and skills achieved from capacity building activities by the beneficiaries are sustainable, and this is vital to democratic good governance in Sierra Leone, and having an enabling environment for them to function within. The knowledge and skills are used currently, and they will be used for a very long period. Additionally, the investments in supporting the development of systems, structures, policies and strategies for institutions such as the NCRA is helping them to be able to function efficiently and effectively. Secondly, the institutions will require financial resources, to enable them to function efficiently, and contribute to Sierra Leone having a stable socio-political context.

Cross-Cutting Issues

In relation to cross-cutting issues, two areas are examined:

- i. Gender Equality, Disability Inclusion and the Rights-Based Approach: The project had a gender equality-based approach, and the set objectives are all focused on protecting and promoting the rights, welfare, and dignity of vulnerable groups in Sierra Leone.
- ii. Disability Inclusion: While the project broadly targeted vulnerable groups, much more could have been done to integrate issues related to People with Disability (PwDs).

Conclusion

The programme is relevant, and its activities are appreciated by the partners, as most of them would not have been undertaken by them, without the support of UNDP and its partners. Additionally, the

design of the programme document is good and the logframe is of high quality. The portfolio programme has several layers of monitoring at the programme and at the project levels. At the programme level, it is monitored by the portfolio board, which engages UNDP on the design and implementation of activities. The partners/beneficiaries also have their own internal monitoring systems. It was concluded that despite the challenges that affect the project, it is yielding the expected results.

Recommendations

The recommendations provided include: (i) To avoid delays in the approval of work plans, the process of developing them should begin prior to the year in which the plans should be used. (ii) UNDP should work on ensuring that workplans are approved earlier, with funds disbursed for activities, to avoid delays in programming. (iii) There is the need for UNDP to provide funds directly to the core governance institutions in order to enhance and foster local ownership, leadership and accountability in the implementation of projects. (iv) UNDP should ensure that the remaining lifespan of the Portfolio programme should have activities that directly target PwDs. (v) It is important for regular monitoring of activities in the field to be undertaken by the portfolio implementation team. (vi) Women's inclusion in elections is imperative for achieving gender equality in Sierra Leone, thus UNDP should focus on this issue as well. (vii) UNDPD should further continue the work established by the SDI portfolio in partnership with the National HIV/AIDS secretariat in creating awareness that mitigate stereotypes and stigmatisation against People Living with HIV/AIDS, gays and commercial sex workers, with the aim of promoting their rights, dignity and welfare. (viii) Continuing capacity strengthening support is needed for full implementation of the mandates of Democratic institutions such as the Parliament, judiciary and Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs).

Lessons Learned

There were several lessons learnt during the evaluation of the project that could be used in improving the implementation of the programme. They include the implementation timeline per project, with specific focus on key institutions, should be for the entire life span of the programme, rather than it being determined on an annual basis. The need for the annual work plan prior to the year of implementation, otherwise the gains made by the portfolio will be very limited at the end of its life span. There is the need to find a solution that is workable for both partners to reduce the bureaucratic red tapes.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Strengthening Democratic Institutions Programme (SDI) is a four-year initiative, with a start date of 1 January, 2020 and an end date of 31 December, 2024. The aim of the SDI programme is to strengthen the capacities and effectiveness of core governance institutions as the machinery that will ensure the needs and aspirations of Sierra Leoneans as articulated in the Medium Term-National Development Plan (MT-NDP 2019- 2023) are met. Its overall objective is to consolidate the gains made during previous interventions through support to initiatives aimed at strengthening capacities of democratic institutions, legal frameworks, institutional structures, and processes.

The programme's approach is to provide support to: (i) democratic institutions and semi-autonomous Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the Government of Sierra Leone that are essential building blocks of the machinery of government, i.e., the chain of decisions and actions that are needed to make policies deliver concrete results for people's lives; (ii) parliamentary processes and local government as parliament develop laws that organise a country's public sector management system and are meant to make government more responsive and accountable, with a view to increase cooperation and capacity building of local government to ensure systematic and tangible decentralisation; and (iii) inclusive and participatory spaces for civil society, media and local communities and women, youth and People with Disabilities (PwD) groups. The programme is organised into five key intervention areas for support: (1) Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs); (2) Parliament; (3) Integrated Civil Register; (4) Subnational and Local Governance; (5) Media and Civil Society, and ensures all activities are in line with principles of the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the imperative of leaving no one behind by introducing and supporting innovative, cutting-edge and effective approaches to mainstreaming gender equality and equity, conflict-sensitivity and, more broadly, to fighting vulnerabilities. Additionally, with the Democratic Institutions Strengthening Programme (DISP), UNDP seeks to support the full devolution and decentralization of core governance functions. The programme seeks to contribute to the following four outputs in the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD 2020-2024):

- 1) Strengthened democratic oversight, accountability and monitoring institutions
- 2) Targeted rule of law, justice and security institutions strengthened to uphold democratic principles
- 3) Institutions for peace, citizen's voice and participation strengthened for social cohesion
- 4) Devolution of functions and resources to local government increased

Two years after the commencement of the implementation of the programme, UNDP hired a consultant to conduct a Mid-Term Evaluation of the programme. The evaluation was conducted in January and May of 2023. This report is divided into six sections: the sub-sections of section one presents the purpose, scope and objectives of the evaluation, describes the project and its intervention logic and the methodological approach used by the consultant. Section two examines the context that necessitated the development of the programme, and in which it was implemented. Section three presents and analyses the findings. Sections four and five presents the conclusions, which draw on lessons learned from the project, and also provides actionable recommendations for the respective actors involved in the implementation of the programme. The report also annexes an Evaluation Matrix and a list of some of the documents reviewed.

1.1. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the UNDP's SDI Portfolio, which comprises six projects: (1) Support to Parliament; (2) Support to Integrated Civil Register; (3) Support to Media Development & Civic Education (4) Human Security, (5) Youth Empowerment, and (6) Support to Local Governance. Two projects (1) Promote Peaceful Elections and (2) Support to Elections 2023 is not the scope of the evaluation as two separate evaluations will be conducted in 2023-2024. The evaluation assessed the progress, achievements, and lessons learned, as well as challenges faced regarding capacity strengthening support to democratic institutions, and civil society organisations working to strengthen oversight, citizen's inclusion, participation and voice. The evaluation reviewed the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the programme's interventions at local, regional and national levels within the wider context of the technical and financial assistance provided by UNDP and its partners. Specifically, the evaluation assessed the impact of UNDP's support towards strengthening the capacity of oversight institutions, local governance structures, integrated civil register, and inclusion in governance processes.

The evaluation focused mainly on assessing the achievements of the various components within the SDI Portfolio document. It focused on assessing the impact of programme interventions spanning from 2020 to present. Specifically, examined the impact of UNDP's support to parliament with a focus on institutional capacities strengthening, outreach and accessibility of parliament, gender responsive law making, and civil society inclusion into the work of parliament.

The specific objectives of the evaluation include:

- ✓ Review the performance of the SDI programme interventions in achieving the outputs stated in the programme document and their contributions to CPD outcomes.
- ✓ Review of programme approach and coherence in delivering programme results.
- ✓ Assess the factors that have been influencing community and national ownership of programme results and its sustainability.
- ✓ Assess the knowledge, visibility and communication employed by both programme and government counterparts around the programme results.
- ✓ Assess the appropriateness of the project strategy, implementation approach, and programme institutional/management arrangements.
- ✓ Document best practices and lessons learned from the programme to feed into the next phase of the programme cycle.
- ✓ Proffer concrete recommendations that may be required for enhancing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of a future programme.

1.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

The SDI programme was designed to be implemented between 1 January, 2020 and 31 December, 2024. It seeks to contribute to the following five outputs:

- 1.1 EMBs capacity strengthened to conduct, manage, and oversee free, fair, transparent and inclusive electoral processes of gender, ethnic and political differences.
- 1.2 Parliament is equipped to perform oversight, representation functions and pass robust, gender responsive legislation resulting from effective policy making and legislative proposals.
- 1.3 Establish automated and integrated national civil registers that effectively record and produce vital statistics and identification related data accessible and responsive at all levels of government.
- 1.4 Local Governance institutions have skills and control of resources for demand-driven and decentralised service delivery, informed by evidence-based and inclusive planning for improved and equitable access to services, building resilience and fostering social cohesion.
- 1.5 Enabling environment for Civil Society and Media to engage with state institutions, local government and public in improving awareness raising, reporting and enhanced civic participation.

The expected outcome of the programme is: By 2024, people in Sierra Leone benefit from more gender and youth responsive institutions that are innovative, accountable, and transparent at all levels and can better advance respect for human rights and the rule of law, equity, peaceful coexistence, and protection of children, girls, and persons with disability.

The overall objective of the programme is to consolidate gains made during the previous interventions through support to initiatives aimed at strengthening capacities of democratic institutions, legal frameworks, institutional structures, and processes. The project complements the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to strengthen independence and oversight functions as articulated in GOSL Medium-Term National Development Programme. It contributes to Cluster 4: Governance and Accountability of the Sierra Leone MT-NDP 2019–2023, SDGs 5 and 16, and the priorities of the African Union Agenda (AUA) Goals 11 and 17. The programme employs two pronged approaches, with strategic level interventions crafted to support oversight at the central level, gender responsive legal frameworks and capacities, while ensuring capacities and procedures are strengthened at the community level for people centred local development.

As indicated in the programme document, the target groups of the programme are primarily good governance and legislative institutions, local governance structures and their staff (senior executive, administrative and middle management levels), as well as parliamentarians. There is a primary group of beneficiary institutions that have already been identified, including the Ministry of Local Government, the National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA), parliament and several government departments and decentralised governance structures etc. These institutions receive multi-pronged and programme-long support in terms of policy advice, staff capacity strengthening, study visits etc. A secondary group of beneficiary institutions is formed by line ministries involved in different inter-ministerial bodies that the programme has engaged with in order to deliver the intended results as well as those line ministries that play a role in the delivery of services directly supported by the programme. Institutions in this secondary group of beneficiaries receive more occasional and less multi-pronged support, also in the form of policy advice and capacity development, usually complementing more in-depth support provided by UNDP through its other projects or by other development partners, including United Nations Country Team (UNCT) agencies. While the programme puts emphasis on improving supply-side capacities for effective and responsive

governance, recognising the existing and substantial support provided by other development partners to reinforce capacities of the demand side, civil society also benefits from it. The final beneficiaries of the programme are the people of Sierra Leone, as they are targeted by the programme to enable them to live within democratic spaces, with their access to services enhanced, alongside their ability to understand their agency and demand their rights and social services.

1.3. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation used a theory-based approach, leveraging the concept of "Theory of Change", which was vital in analysing the causal relationship between activities, intermediate outcomes, and long-term impacts. Thus, the portfolio's theory of change was assessed and used in the evaluation. The evaluation used a participatory and gender focused, and responsive evaluation approach which combined secondary data analyses (project documents and reports), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), The Most Significant Change (MSC), and focus group discussions (FGD) to collect data from all the stakeholders involved in the programme evaluated. The stakeholders included the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC), Parliament, Parliamentary Assistance Coordination Office (PACO), Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), Decentralisation Secretariat, Social Enterprise Development Sierra Leone (SEND-SL), National Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD), Fambul Tok, Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs (MoGCAs), National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA), Campaign for Good Governance (CGG) and the National HIV/AIDS Secretariat (NAS).

The approach used for the evaluation supported the generation of sufficient relevant data that provided findings that were significant in achieving the objectives of the evaluation. In all phases, a strong participatory approach was applied to ensure maximum engagement of all the relevant stakeholders. Purposive and snowball techniques were used to select informants. Key informants were selected for their specialised knowledge and unique perspectives on the issues examined in the evaluation. The criteria for selection of respondents, was their involvement in the project, and their knowledge of the activities undertaken in the targeted institutions and communities. A total of 43 (29 males, 14 females) respondents were engaged in the evaluation.

The evaluation was conducted by a consultant, supported by two evaluation assistants. A one-day training was conducted for the assistants to familiarise them with the tools and prepare them for the data collection process.

The evaluation was guided by the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria including: Relevance and Design of the Project, Efficiency, Coherence, Effectiveness, Impact, Sustainability and Cross-Cutting Issues, which included gender and rights-based approach and disability inclusion). The Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) Mining was used to analyse the data collected. The Most Significant Change (MSC) tool was separately coded, collated and used to triangulate data from the other tools. It helped to strengthen and further enrich the sections on context, findings and especially recommendations.

2. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Sierra Leone's history since independence has been chequered and has been characterised by factors such as bad governance, corruption and nepotism.¹ These factors were also coupled with challenges such as the marginalisation of the country's youth and women.² State institutions were highly politicised and controlled by political elites. This approach to governance undermined the relationship between the state and its citizens, consequently resulting in an eleven-year civil war (1991-2002).³ At the end of the civil war, the state embarked on an institutional reform process that led to the establishment of entities focused on strengthening democracy, human rights and the rule of law.⁴ These entities include the PPRC, the HRCSL and the NCRA.

The institutions established have contributed immensely to strengthening democracy in Sierra Leone, with the country succeeding in holding four presidential and general elections. In addition to this, there have been changes in government in 2007 and 2018, with the country remaining stable. However, over the years, the democratic institutions have been plagued with challenges that undermine both their relevance, and the trust of the public in them. As noted in the programme document of the SDI Portfolio, "despite government efforts and progress achieved to date, challenges of none-inclusive decision-making practices, human resource and institutional capacity deficit, still impact on quality public administration and service delivery—not to mention the limited public trust in state institutions".⁵ The document further states that more generally, Sierra Leone is afflicted with inadequate implementation, enforcement and compliance mechanisms relating to processes, policies and regulations. Democratic institutions such as the Parliament, judiciary and Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) have experienced some progress in their capacities and independence, but continuing capacity strengthening is needed for the full implementation of their mandates.

To enhance the capacity and effectiveness of democratic institutions, the SDI portfolio was established by UNDP and has been supporting democratic institutions through projects and activities that are focused on strengthening their capacity, thereby enabling them to deliver efficiently and effectively on their mandates. However, as an institution, UNDP is aware of the fact that ultimately, the Government of Sierra Leone is faced with the formidable responsibility of implementing policy, legal and regulatory frameworks that will build and enhance the performances of its central and local governance architecture, while undertaking vast institutional capacity strengthening across sectors. In the absence of genuine, strategic and well-coordinated efforts to improve and enhance Sierra Leone's human capital development, including access to quality health care services, education and sustainable livelihood and employment opportunities, gains made since the end of the war risk being reversed and could subsequently lead to a multilevel implosion consisting of youth bulge, weak rule of law, pervasive instability, economic underperformance and fragmented governance architecture.⁶

¹ Koroma, Abdul Karim. 1996. *Sierra Leone: The Agony of a Nation*. Andromeda Press, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

² Bangura, Ibrahim. 2016. *We Can't Eat Peace: Youth, Sustainable Livelihood and the Peacebuilding Process in Sierra Leone*. *Journal for Peacebuilding & Development*, 11:2, 37-50.

³ TRCSL 2004, 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Reports', Volumes I, II and III, Sierra Leone.

⁴ Kabbah, Ahmad Tejan. 2010. *Coming back from the brink in Sierra Leone: A memoir*. Ghana: EPP Books Services.

⁵ See the ProDoc of the SDI Portfolio. Pg. 3.

⁶ Ibid.

This is especially crucial as Sierra Leone has in the last years become heavily divided along ethno-regional lines, with the two main political parties failing to reach consensus on national issues. Thus, the upcoming 2023 elections would be a critical test for Sierra Leone's democracy. This evaluation assesses the gains by the targeted institutions, especially in relation to how the democratic institutions are contributing to enhancing peace and stability in Sierra Leone. It also sought to identify some of the existing gaps and how they could be addressed, to ensure that the institutions supported are able to meaningfully contribute to the strengthening of democratic practices in Sierra Leone.

3. FINDINGS

This section presents findings from secondary and primary data, under the evaluation criteria, relevance, efficiency, coherence, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and cross-cutting issues.

3.1. RELEVANCE

The portfolio is highly relevant and was designed to address a critical challenge, with significant implications for Sierra Leone's nascent democracy, which is the strengthening of the capacity of democratic institutions to effectively deliver on their mandates. This results from the fact that, inasmuch as efforts were made at the end of the civil war in 2002 to rebuild the state, with one of the focuses being on the establishment or restructuring of democratic institutions, the institutions have over the years been contending with monumental challenges including the lack of financial and human resource capacity to carry out activities and implement policies, limited technical and logistical infrastructure, and limited trust and confidence on the part of the public in these institutions.

The programme as designed, directly responds to the needs of the partners targeted by it. Specific approaches were used to comprehensively engage and support the partners to enable them to deliver on their mandate efficiently and effectively. The portfolio employs two pronged approaches, with strategic level interventions crafted to support oversight at the central level, gender responsive legal frameworks and capacities while ensuring capacities and procedures are strengthened at the community level for people-centred local development. The programme utilises the DIM modality to deliver outputs in partnership with the Electoral Commission, Parliament of Sierra Leone, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, NCRA and media institutions.

The portfolio also supports CSOs to complement the work of government institutions and expand services to women, youth and people living with disabilities in rural communities to enhance capacities to participate, provide platforms for voice and understanding of rights and responsibilities. Additionally, as indicated by the portfolio's staff, the need to be responsive to the COVID-19 pandemic was critical in defining project interventions. The COVID response was targeted at People Living with HIV/AIDS, women, youth and people living in the slums. The implementation process was mainly guided by strict adherence with National COVID-19 Emergency Response Centre (NACOVERC) COVID-19 regulations to ensure the safety of staff and project beneficiaries especially in remote communities in the regions. As noted by the Senior Human Rights and Rule of Law Officer of the UNDP:

The SDI Portfolio is relevant and plays a big role in supporting government institutions to deliver on their mandates. The portfolio on a yearly basis provides support to key institutions tasked with democratising Sierra Leone, to undertake activities that they would normally have been constrained to undertake as a result of financial and logistical challenges. Important to the process of support for UNDP, is the engagements and advice we provide to these institutions, on how they could better deliver on their mandates.⁷

Similar to the views of the respondent above, the Director of Policy Development and Strategic Planning at the MoGCA had this to say:

⁷ Interview conducted in Freetown on 16 January, 2023.

The interventions of UNDP are relevant and timely, and provides the Ministry with an opportunity to undertake activities that it lacked the resources to do. It also provides the Ministry with the opportunity to popularise and engage the public on its policies and the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act (GEWE). For us, as a Ministry, the intervention is also enhancing our relevance and visibility, and as such is of great significance to us.⁸

A key component of the support provided through the portfolio is the Strengthening Human Security in the Remote Chiefdoms of Gbense, Soa, and Kamara in Kono District of Sierra Leone. The project was initially a two-year project (2021-2022), but was extended to 2023. The project is jointly supported by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), with funding from the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Bank (WB). The implementing partners included SEND SL, Fambul Tok, the NMJD, and PPRC. It had two expected outcomes which are:

Outcome 1: The community enjoys economic, political and community security, with expanded social cohesion, all of which promote and sustain peace; and

Outcome 2: Community farmers realise improved livelihoods, higher incomes, and reduced vulnerability to climate, economic, and other shocks through sustainable farming that also improves the nutrition status of all community residents.

The project uses the Human Security Approach (HSA) to address development challenges and vulnerabilities in three chiefdom areas in the Kono District. The target area of the project is three chiefdoms in the Kono District of Sierra Leone, (Kamara, Gbense, and Soa) that face multiple interconnected development challenges, in the context of a country setting with high rates of poverty, food insecurity, conflict and exclusion of certain minority groups.⁹ This project played a critical role in ensuring that the needs of these communities that are mainly remote and isolated are addressed. The lack of these needs, that are centred on livelihood, building social cohesion and enhancing the community security, have overtime undermine the dignity, welfare and peace of the targeted communities. The targeted communities were identified for support by UNDP, as a result of their vulnerability to poverty and economic hardship. Thus, the project was relevant and provided much needed support to the communities.

In enhancing the relevance of the portfolio, the approach adopted is integrated and inclusive, with a wide range of actors involved in its implementation including the MoLGRD, MoGCA, NAS, PPRC, Fambul Tok, NMJD, Parliament, ECSL, CGG, and SEND Sierra Leone. These actors are vital in the strive for the attainment of democratic good governance in Sierra Leone, and the ability of the portfolio to engage them, points to the understanding of the portfolio's team of their relevance and needs, and how they could be better supported. This enhances the portfolio's reach to ordinary Sierra Leoneans, who are the principal and final beneficiaries of the portfolio's activities.

Another component of the Portfolio that was relevant was the inclusion of the Ernest Bai Koroma University, with the aim of engaging unemployed and vulnerable, and providing them with skills

⁸ Interview conducted in Freetown on 12 January, 2023.

⁹ See the report: Momoh, Hindowa Batilo. 2022. Final Draft Report Mid-Term Review of The Human Security Project in Soa, Gbense & Kamara Chiefdoms, Kono District in Sierra Leone. Produced for UNDP and FAO, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

training, to ensure that they become unemployed, or self-employed. The approach was geared towards piloting how academic institutions could be of relevance in the provision of training and certification of vocational and technical skills to address poverty and vulnerability among young people.

The design of the programme is adapted to the institutional, human, and financial capacities of the partner government and other key stakeholders. The portfolio's implementation team indicated that activities that are included in the annual work plan are discussed and agreed on by UNDP and the targeted institutions to ensure that the activities are in line with their immediate needs and will help them to achieve their set objectives.

The programme is directly implemented by UNDP in partnership with the actors named above. UNDP is responsible for the overall management, backstopping and monitoring of the project in line with its Programme and Operational Policies and Procedures. The choice of implementing partners is appropriate and provides a good blend and diversity that is essential to achieve the goals of the portfolio. The partners bring in different skills and have specific components that they are responsible to deliver.

The fund for the programme was provided by UNDP, the Embassy of Ireland/Irish Aid, European Union Delegation in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda (UN LIA), UN Trust Fund for Human Security, Funding Window, and the Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) Funds.

The staff and facilities of the respective partners were available for use by the project and there appeared to be very high commitment on the part of all partners to support the implementation of the project. Engagements with the government partners provided evidence of the commitment of the respective government institutions involved in the project.

It was observed during the assessment that the programme was developed to complement the policies and programmes of the Government of Sierra Leone and its other development partners. For instance, it complements the government to strengthen independence and oversight functions. Specifically, it contributes to Cluster 4: Governance and Accountability of the Sierra Leone Medium-MT-NDP 2019–2023), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5 and 16, the priorities of the African Union Agenda (AUA) Goals 11 and 17, the Constitution of Sierra Leone, the UNDP Country Programme Document (2020-2024), the Embassy of Ireland Mission Strategy 2019-2023, the revised Decentralisation Policy of Sierra Leone, and the Sustainable Development Goals 5, 16 and 17. These policies speak to all the objectives of the portfolio, and the project is a response to addressing the challenges that they seek to address.

3.2. INTERVENTION LOGIC, MONITORING AND LEARNING

The SDI portfolio brings together a wide range of actors, at both the national and local levels, who are themselves the beneficiaries. Thus, engagements between the national actors and UNDP helped to provide UNDP with a good understanding of the actual needs of their institutions. Consequently, the Theory of Change that was developed is well-designed and is of very good quality. It has five outputs, each with sub-outputs that are well defined and clearly speak to what the project aims to achieve. It

has assumptions and risks and defines how the risk factors could be mitigated. The risks and their mitigation mechanisms are clear and speak to the context within which the programme is implemented. They include:

Risk	Mitigation Mechanism
Political interference into the work of core governance institutions/political tension	Continued high level engagement between senior management and government leadership to promote institutional professionalism. Strengthen capacities including institutional capacity strengthening. Through the Portfolio Board, UNDP will maintain a critical dialogue with the government to solve arising issues of a political nature and reassign activities towards less sensitive areas of work and institutions if needed.
Funding & resource mobilisation challenges	Develop concept notes jointly with GoSL IPs and engage with donors and potential private sector partners both within Sierra Leone, the sub-region and other non-traditional partners.
High staff turnover, limited institutional memory and slow pace of reforms	Maintain ongoing coordination and consultation with key local and government stakeholders on the importance of their consistent participation, to ensure that key focal points and leadership are fully aware of the project implementation and related discussions. Employ mix of NIM/DIM modality to ensure programme delivery.
Natural disasters and health epidemics	Work with the disaster network to mitigate possible impacts of disasters to the project.
Fiduciary risks	Utilise UNDP policies and regulations even where NIM modality is used. Ensure HACT and Spot check compliance of IPs. Funds transfers in tranches and release are predicated on full liquidation and justified results reported.
Adverse effect on project participants and their relations among/ between each other	Apply the “Do No Harm” principle through continuous conflict sensitive planning, monitoring and adjustment as well as conduct and utilise knowledge from the conflict analysis.

A risk matrix was developed at the project design stage with impact and probability, countermeasures and management responses included and the parties responsible for assessing and managing each risk factor included. The risk factors were monitored and assessed by the programme’s implementation team, to feed into UNDP corporate systems like Atlas and Quantum.

The indicators set during the design stage of the project were unambiguous, Relevant, Acceptable, Credible, Easy and Robust (RACER) and can be easily used to measure the progress made by the project. It has only two result areas, which are largely interlinked and shaped the approach of the project. The five result areas are:

- 1.1 EMBs capacity strengthened to conduct, manage, and oversee free, fair, transparent and inclusive electoral processes of gender, ethnic and political differences.
- 1.2 Parliament is equipped to perform oversight, representation functions and pass robust, gender responsive legislation resulting from effective policy making and legislative proposals.
- 1.3 Established automated and integrated national civil registers that effectively record and produce vital statistics and identification related data accessible and responsive at all levels of government.
- 1.4 Local Governance institutions have skills and control of resources for demand-driven and decentralised service delivery, informed by evidence-based and inclusive planning for improved and equitable access to services, building resilience and fostering social cohesion.
- 1.5 Enabling environment for Civil Society and Media to engage with state institutions, local government and public in improving awareness raising, reporting and enhanced civic participation.

Target values are set for every indicator, and they are realistic and achievable and are regularly updated. For instance, indicator 1.1. reads “# of stakeholders engaged by UNDP for transparent and participatory electoral process (disaggregated by relevant category e.g., media, CSOs, Legislature, Political Parties, Youth and Women etc)”. Indicator 2.1.1. reads “# of targeted parliamentary personnel benefiting from UNDP supported institutional capacity strengthening initiatives (disaggregated by sex, relevant category e.g., Member of Parliament, others etc).

3.2.1. MONITORING SYSTEMS

The portfolio programme has several layers of monitoring at the programme and at the project levels. The portfolio has an M&E Plan in place at portfolio level, and there is monitoring of the progress made, at different levels by program team, joint monitoring, partners, and senior management. Additionally, there is reporting done on the indicators in the annual portfolio report, and tied to this, there was a dedicated portfolio M&E staff in 2020-2021, but no dedicated M&E staff in the portfolio or in the cluster since early 2022.

Specifically, at the programme level, the project is monitored by the portfolio board, which engages UNDP on the design and implementation of activities. UNDP also reports to the board on the annual plan, during the bi-annual meetings, and when ad-hoc meetings are called. This provides the respective partners that form the board with a good understanding of how activities are implemented and the challenges that undermine the implementing process. The board provides the implementation team with recommendations on the corrective measures that should be taken, to keep the project on track.

The members of the board also directly monitor activities that are implemented by their institutions, with them also reporting to the board on those activities. This provides an extra layer of accountability to ensure that activities are fully monitored and reported on. Each institution provides reports to UNDP on all activities undertaken.

At the project level, the annual work plan is developed alongside a M&E plan, to guide the monitoring of activities undertaken by the respective partners. Monitoring by the project team, takes the form of organised visits when activities are undertaken to assess quality and the effectiveness of the services provided. Additionally, other staff of UNDP also conduct visits and monitor activities of the portfolio, when they are out in the field doing general monitoring of UNDP's funded activities outside of Freetown.

It was concluded that direct field monitoring by the project team was not undertaken in 2020 and 2021, because of the risks involved with the COVID-19 pandemic. However, emails, social media, for instance, WhatsApp and also telephones were used to constantly monitor the progress and partners, especially those who were provided with funds to support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The data that is collected is used to inform decision-making in relation to the programme.

Partner organisations indicated that they would like to see more monitoring visits by staff of the portfolio, especially while activities are being implemented. However, members of the implementation team argued that the portfolio has very limited staff, and it is difficult to monitor all activities regularly, so they end up doing it intermittently. The inability of the staff to adequately monitor field activities limits the timely nature of data that can immediately inform corrective measures, where activities are not going as planned. Thus, it is important for the portfolio team to increase, their field visits in the future.

3.3. COHERENCE

The project complements the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to strengthen independence and oversight functions as articulated in the Government of Sierra Leone's MTNDP. It contributes to Cluster 4: Governance and Accountability of the Sierra Leone Medium-Term National Development Plan (MT-NDP 2019–2023), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5 and 16, and the priorities of the African Union Agenda (AUA) Goals 11 and 17.

It is worth mentioning that the institutions supported all have other activities that they have undertaken that complemented and continue to build on the gains made by the activities financed by UNDP. These institutions receive funds from the Government of Sierra Leone and other development partners. However, UNDP ensured that there was no duplication of efforts, but rather had the different resources available used in a complementary manner. It was also noted that some of the activities undertaken, for instance, the support to parliament, were complemented by activities supported by the EU. This was also the case in some districts where both UNDP and the EU were providing support. The two institutions agreed to target different communities, to allow for more and diverse beneficiaries to access the benefits of their interventions, thus enhancing the coherence and complementarity of efforts.

The Portfolio Management team also ensured coordination and synergies with other UNDP and UN programmes and projects, including the Rule of Law and Sustaining Peace Portfolio; the Sustainability and Local Economic Development Cluster; and other UN Country Team projects when and where

relevant. This approach minimised duplication of efforts, and made sure that all relevant actors within the UN were familiar with the activities of the portfolio and how to avoid undertaking similar activities.

3.4. EFFICIENCY

The SDI Portfolio was well designed and has implementation mechanisms that have so far helped to keep it on track. The Portfolio Manager who leads the Programme Management Unit in UNDP, alongside the portfolio team are responsible for the overall implementation of the programme and ensuring that the day-to-day activities are implemented in accordance with the portfolio document resource and results framework and budget, as well as the work plans and related budgets which are developed in partnership with the implementing partners on an annual basis. Each implementing partner is accountable to the Portfolio Board and UNDP for all resources, activities and results they are respectively tasked with.¹⁰ The Portfolio Board consists of UNDP, Parliament of Sierra Leone, NEC, NCRA, MoLGRD, HIV/Aids Secretariat, Local Council Association, MoGCAs, and Media Reform Group/IMC. The board is co-chaired by UNDP and the Parliament of Sierra Leone. It will convene twice a year and on an ad hoc basis as may be required in consultation with co-chairs.

According to the Portfolio Implementation Team, the board provides strategic and functional direction and guidance to the project including making all the necessary policy-level decisions and approval of annual work plans and budgets. To practically carry out the implementation process, UNDP uses a mix of DIM and NIM based on capacities of the project partner institutions listed above.

The partners have dedicated staff that liaise with UNDP and work directly with them to ensure that their components of the activities in the work plan are fully carried out. This helps to enhance local ownership and leadership of the process, as partners indicated when interviewed that they are treated fairly and transparently by UNDP. Over the years, there has been significant trust built between the Government of Sierra Leone and UNDP. Speaking on the relationship with UNDP, the Programme Manager of CGG:

UNDP has been a key partner in the development of Sierra Leone and has been very supportive in building the capacity of both government and civil society actors. CGG is one of the institutions that have partnered with UNDP for several years, and the relationship has been consistent and reliable. The relationship between UNDP and partners also helps to bring together and encourage government and non-governmental organisations to work together in helping to strengthen democratic institutions and practices in Sierra Leone.¹¹

In terms of efficiency, it was also observed from interviews and desk reviews conducted that the relationship between the Portfolio team and partners was respectful and the liaisons and UNDP meet regularly to ensure that they are on the same page in relation to the activities they implement. In addition to this, partners indicated that UNDP also provides guidance and advice on corrective measures to be taken when institutions engage UNDP for advice or for feedback on activities they undertake.

¹⁰ See the portfolio's programme document.

¹¹ Interview conducted in Freetown on 14 December, 2023.

3.4.1 ADEQUACY IN RELATION TO THE INPUTS/RESOURCES PROVIDED BY THE VARIOUS PARTNERS

The financial resources provided for the portfolio is said by the UNDP team to be sufficient and were based on the initial design of the project. The resources to be mobilised for the portfolio, as at the time it was developed was \$ 24, 671, 000. There were specific budget lines for each output, the budget line for output one is \$ 9,050,000; for output two is \$ 2,660,000; for output three it is \$ 5,666,000; for output four it is \$ 5,590,000; for output five it is \$ 1,615,000; and for Programme Implementation, Oversight and Coordination it is \$ 140,000. What has been mobilised so far is \$546, 413 from the UNDP Funding Windows, \$550,193 from the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, \$863,621 from the UN Peacebuilding Fund, \$984,483 from Irish Aid, and \$6.08 million from UNDP. The budget and expenditure for the years under review are:

Fiscal Year	Budget (\$)	Expenses (\$)	% of expenses
2020	2,115,797	1,949,154.81	92.12
2021	2,131,012	1,624,127.27	76.21
2022	1,677,908	2,289,363.01	136.44
Total	5,924,717	5,862,645.09	98.95

Despite of several challenges faced due to Covid-19 pandemic during the project period, the portfolio has delivered 98.5 percentage of budget by 2022. This shows the portfolio was highly efficient in delivering its resources.

Budget lines are established based on the annual work plans and are disbursed in tranches, often per year, to cover the various aspects of the project within each output. UNDP uses the DIM model through which it directly provides funds to partners and their beneficiaries. This model was criticised by some partners who indicated that it is easier if they deal with the financial component of the project, and report to UNDP than UNDP seeking to micromanage the funds, for instance even at the level of paying the per diem of participants of activities through the use of Airtel Money. A respondent from the MoGCAs indicated that there was a case where the Ministry undertook an activity and UNDP had to pay the participants through Airtel Money. There was a mix in relation to the list of participants from the Northern and Southern regions, with some participants paid twice, and some did not refund the extra amounts received, even when asked to do so. The respondent indicated that this could be avoided if they are directly in charge of the payment process.

Some of the partners argued that this approach provides an indication that UNDP does not necessarily trust partners with funds, and thus prefer to directly undertake the provision of funds. However, there have been cases where the partners have been allowed to disburse funds and provide reports to UNDP.

It was concluded by the consultant based on the review of the financial reports and the budgets provided by the portfolio team that the finances of the project were well managed and used, and value for money was ensured with activities undertaken. In examining the budget, the assessments were done based on the costs in the market of the items procured and services provided during the programme, to allow the consultants to reach their conclusions on the budget.

Tied to the above, it was concluded from the evaluation conducted that the resources used catered for a wide range of beneficiaries, as could be seen in the kind of projects that were supported. It sought to promote gender equality, the rights and welfare of PwDs, and other marginalised groups such as

gays and commercial sex workers, and people living with HIV/AIDS. This approach adopted is helping to enhance the voice and agency of the targeted groups.

The facilities and the human resources of the partner organisations are made available to the portfolio. The respective partners also provide additional longer-term human resource and social capital that will promote the ideals and objectives of the programme.

3.4.2. DELAYS ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PORTFOLIO DOCUMENT

It was reported by the Portfolio management team that there have been challenges encountered since the commencement of the implementation of the programme. These challenges started with the COVID-19 pandemic, which had significant negative implications for the programmes of both UNDP and the Government of Sierra Leone. The team members stated that in fact some of the activities were reprogrammed, with the focus being on fighting the pandemic. Thus, most of the activities initially envisaged were not implemented. This changed gradually as the pandemic subsided, and the implementation process was put back on track.

As noted in the Mid-Term Review report on the Human Security project implemented in Kono, there were other factors alongside COVID-19 that contributed to delays in the implementation of activities:

Field activities were affected by the restriction of travel and gathering caused by the outbreak of the Delta variant wave of COVID-19 infections in Sierra Leone (May to July 2021). Because of this, project launch in Kono District did not occur until August 2021. While Joint Annual Work planning meant better planning, the evaluation noted that delays in the setup of the UN-to-UN agreement between UNDP and FAO, something that was required for FAO to receive Joint Project funds and start work, affected timely delivery of FAO activities. The agreement was not in place until May 2021 and further internal financial protocols were then required. The delay in the implementation of the key agricultural activities to be implemented by the FAO were further compounded by the rainy season (seasonality) that began in June 2021. The aforementioned factors affected timely execution of planned activities especially in 2021 and delayed the rolling out of FAO activities.¹²

Alongside the challenges examined above, there are other delays encountered every year with the implementation of activities, as a result of two critical factors. These factors are the development and approval of work plans, and the disbursement of funds for activities. Partners reported that they begin to implement activities very late. For instance, while they plan to begin implementation in January, they normally end up beginning after way into the second quarter of the year. Firstly, they have to deal with the development of the plans and then wait for their approval, and then have to wait for long periods for funds to be disbursed. As noted by a senior staff of a government institution:

The delays are too much, and they are normally discouraging. They also affect our confidence in terms of engaging our local partners in relation to activities to be undertaken and their timelines. We end up rushing to implement activities, which is not good for us and for UNDP. At the end, we get pressured to provide reports on

¹² Momoh, Hindowa Batilo. 2022. Final Draft Report Mid-Term Review of The Human Security Project in Soa, Gbense & Kamara Chiefdoms Kono District in Sierra Leone. Produced for UNDP and FAO, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

time, and this could all be avoided, if we begin the planning process before the beginning of a year.¹³

Similar views were expressed by most partners, as they believe that UNDP could be much more efficient in their approach to working with and supporting them. With the disbursement of funds, the partners indicated that there are too many challenges with the disbursement of funds. Programme staff of UNDP argued that they have to comply with these processes as they are accountable for the funds. They also argued that the system established by UNDP is global and cannot be avoided or bypassed. Thus, the most appropriate means of dealing with the challenges related to the implementation of activities is through early planning and development of work plans. The failure to do this, will lead to the same challenge every year. In addition to this, what is referred to as bureaucratic red tapes, especially in 2023, could result from the transition of the financial system from Atlas to Quantum. The transition contributed to delays in the disbursement of funds from UNDP to partners.

3.5. EFFECTIVENESS

Significant progress has been made already in producing the expected outputs under each of the outcome areas. The outputs produced are of very good quality, and they are succeeding in helping the Commission and partners to carry out their duties professionally and effectively. The tables of the achievements made are presented in Annex 8.1.

Because of the model of implementation of the project, which is specific to institutions, with activities identified and supported on a yearly basis, there is an even approach to the implementation of the respective components of the project. However, the year where there was the least achievement was 2020 as explained above. After that, activities picked up by mid-2021 and the expected gains were made. Tied to this, it is worth noting that there were no unintended positive or negative results identified, that resulted from the project interventions.

The MSC tool was used to capture the perception of respondents in relation to the effectiveness of the portfolio. Using the MSC tool, respondents were questioned on the most significant changes that they identified with the implementation of the project and the key changes/reforms that they would have loved to see in the design and implementation of the project. The responses provided are recorded in the tables below.

Most Significant Changes attributed to the Portfolio
With the curriculum development support of the Parliamentary Training Centre, parliament has been able to use the curriculum to guide the development of parliamentary based manuals for the delivery of certified training courses and workshops for MPs and staffers. This alongside the training exercises conducted has significantly increased the capacity of MPs and staffers.
Prior to this project, the LPPB had not received any government assistance or support from SLP headquarters to support its operations and activities such as outreach meetings, identifications of its members, movement of personnel etc., as stated by the district chairman of Tankoro Division,

¹³ Interview conducted on 26 January, 2023.

but continue to operate on a mere voluntary service to enhance intelligence-led and active community policing. However, the intervention of NMJD with funds from UNDP as the only organization to support the LPPB by rehabilitating the administrative office, providing one brand new BM Boxer Motor bike to facilitate outreach meetings, training on wide-scale monitoring for early warning signs of security and conflict issues and formation of LPPB advocacy committee to raise funds and support the work of LPPB in three Chiefdoms in Kono district has revamped the activities of LPPB and got the LPPBs in the communities motivated to do their work.

The Human Security project supported by UNDP brought together young women and PwDs under one umbrella with one executive and shared leadership. They have been working on a common action project (skills training and livelihoods enhancement through soap making) with collective decision and shared responsibility. One good thing born out of this amalgamation is unity and an end to discrimination against PwDs because 'disability is not inability'. For the first time in the history of Kono district to see young women and PwDs combined and trained in advocacy to interface with the Chiefdom Councils to bring about policy change by creating space and voice for young women and persons with disabilities to participate in community decision-making processes in Soa, Gbense and Kamara chiefdoms in Kono District. This kind of approach has triggered a change in leadership formation of local governance in Kono District especially in the Chiefdom Councils. Indeed, there are few aged women, mostly mammy queens in the chiefdoms and the youth representation that are predominantly men. It is an indisputable fact that the interest of the aged women and that of the young women are not the same. Therefore, interfacing the Chiefdom Councils with policy messages for inclusion is a huge success for the young women of Kono.

Key Persons including Commercial Sex Workers and gays, are illegal groups according to the laws of the country. Partnerships with MDAs to address their issue relating to stigma and discrimination and discussion on them accessing services provided by the state is indeed a significant change. The popularisation of the strategy developed to address human rights related barriers to accessing services presents evidence of this significant change. Additionally, the Charters developed clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of beneficiaries and service providers. The result has been improved dialogue and reduction of tensions between beneficiaries and service providers (health workers). The community-led monitoring spearheaded by Recipient of Care (Persons living with HIV/AIDS) presents a platform for engagement to improve service delivery and at the same time put the state on its toes. The results seen are improvements in uptake and availability of services at facility levels.

There is growing awareness of both the right to access information and the activities of district and city councils in places such as Port Loko and Bonthe, as a result of the project. The engagements organised between the councils and stakeholders provided a platform for the stakeholders to ask the councils and service providers questions on their performance and understand the challenges that councils were facing in terms of service delivery.

The portfolio was able to contribute to the effort of institutions supported to participate in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds provided also went a long way in keeping institutions relevant and visible during the pandemic.

The support by UNDP is helping to strengthen democratic good governance, with institutions such as the PPRC and NCRA provided with the resources required to build their capacity, and establish platforms that are critical to promoting democratic systems and practices in Sierra Leone.

Key changes/reforms related to the portfolio that respondents would have loved to see in the design and implementation of activities related to the portfolio

Support for a reform process that would have led to a more functional Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) that is able to support MPs and committees in holding the executive into account, especially in the area of oversight.

Financial and logistical support to the LPPB in the form of stipend to volunteer LPPBs who are deployed alongside the state security apparatus (SLP & RSLAF) at all the border crossings between the Republic of Guinea and the Republic of Sierra Leone and those others that are in the far to reach areas; Provision of motorbike to chiefdom coordinators to facilitate their movement particularly to outreach meetings and monitoring of their membership; Stationeries for administrative purposes; Rehabilitation of the chiefdom LPPB Secretariat which are currently in a very bad shape.

Repeal of discriminatory laws against Key Persons and capacity building of Magistrates and Judges in adjudication of HIV and KP cases that might be brought to court. Coupled with this, the replication of piloted interventions in other districts and regions should have been done, alongside the establishment of KP Advocacy Group composed of different KPs.

The funds provided directly to government institutions for them to undertake the implementation of activities and at the end provide technical and financial reports to UNDP at the end of the implementation of activities. This would have promoted local ownership and leadership.

More than a year of support for projects rather than projects tied to an annual basis, which limits the gains that could be made.

The provision of specific activities that should have been directly implemented by People with Disability led organisations. They could have been in a better position to undertake activities that speak to their needs and aspirations.

3.6. IMPACT

The programme as indicated above, has succeeded in making good progress so far, which is contributing to the achievement of its goals. Below are reasons provided under each result area for the conclusions arrived at:

- The support to the MoGCA has helped to popularise the GEWE Policy, which is critical to the roll-out of the policy and the ability of the Ministry to support gender mainstreaming in MDAs and local government. The sessions held across the country helped to provide participants, which included, a wide range of actors from different sectors, with the required knowledge on the details of the policy and how it can be effectively used by them in the administration of their respective institutions. This was said by respondents in the Ministry to be of immense significance to the work of the Ministry, as participants are using the policy and making a positive difference in their institutions with it. Tied to the impact above, the development of an action plan and a communication strategy for the implementation of the GEWE, with the support of the programme, makes the policy much more relevant, and its implementation effective, thereby achieving the expected objectives.
- The support provided to CGG focusing on mentoring young women and bridging the inter-generational gap in Pujehun and Kailahun, is succeeding in positioning the beneficiaries as leaders in their communities. They appeared to be much more confident in advocating for themselves on issues affecting their rights, safety and security. They now better understand their agency and the power of collective will and action. This was said by a respondent to not have been the case prior to the support provided by UNDP and CGG.
- The assessment done by CGG of the government's COVID-19 policies and regulations and how citizens complied with them or not, and the challenges that existed during that period, were said to be impactful. This is because CGG engaged the District Corona Virus Emergency Centers (DICOVERCs) on the data collected, which helped the DICOVERCs to understand why some people are compliant and what could be done to increase the level of awareness on the pandemic, with the DICOVERCs working with local communities to get them understand the relevance of the regulations and the need for compliance. CGG recruited community animators who supported the public awareness activities that filled the gaps in awareness that previously existed in some communities, thereby encouraging more people to be compliant.
- The human security-based activities of the programme in Soa, Gbense and Kamara Chiefdoms in Kono district is helping to restore the dignity of the people in those areas. Those are deprived communities, affected by the civil war and the mining that has over the years destroyed the environment and any potential for agricultural activities. Multiple approaches are used by UNDP and FAO to promote skills building, peace and social cohesion, entrepreneurship and agriculture in them. The beneficiaries are gradually shifting from a sense of being abandoned and trapped in acute poverty, to becoming productive as they are involved in business and agricultural activities, which is helping to stimulate their local economies and restoring their livelihoods and dignity. The project targets vulnerable people including PwDs and women, and seeks to positively transform their lives.
- There is increased knowledge across the country on the decentralisation policy and the need for accountable governance in local councils. While the EU supported the development of the policy, it was not effectively popularised, and as such people were not very familiar with it. The Decentralisation Secretariat with the support of the programme embarked on popularisation efforts that is said by respondents in the regions targeted to have made immense difference

in creating awareness and providing them with the understanding of their roles in enhancing accountable governance in local councils. The knowledge is gained by actors including those in local councils, civil society and community stakeholders.

- The NCRA is in a better place to deliver on its mandate because of the programme, as it is getting the technical and logistical support that it requires. The NCRA is an important chain in the democratisation process in Sierra Leone, and its ability to function as it should, helps to increase the level of confidence of the public in it. Thus, despite the astronomical challenges that the NCRA has faced for instance during civil registration, it has succeeded in delivering the required services, partly as a result of the support provided by the programme. Tied to this, being registered in the NCRA system makes it easier for one to access birth, marriage and other certificates. Also, it is easier to access National Identity Card and voter ID. These documents are critical to accessing basic services, such as jobs, accessing financial institutions, traveling. The voter ID is required for the exercising of the right to vote and be voted for, which is a human right.
- The popularisation of the Human Rights Strategy and the Stigma Index Report of 2019 has increased awareness among groups such as female sex workers, People Living with HIV/AIDs, Men having Sex with Men, and drug users in Moyamba, Kono, Bombali, Port Loko, Koinadugu and Bo. These districts are the ones targeted by the project as indicated earlier. In addition to this, the engagements and awareness raising activities undertaken with motorcycle (referred to as Okada) and tricycle (referred to as Kekeh) riders has enabled them to understand their agency and ability to raise red flags in their respective districts in relation to gaps in the provision of services to People Living with HIV/AIDS.
- The support to the establishment of a CSO desk in parliament and the session held with 51 CSOs from across the country on 17 and 18 August 2021 at the Brookfields Hotel in Freetown, is said by the Director General of the Sierra Leone Parliament to have gotten CSOs to better understand how they can best collaborate with parliament on governance and other issues. This support creates a platform for the expansion of the civic space, as it enhances constructive engagements between parliamentarians and CSOs.

The impact created is going a long way in achieving the changes that were expected during the design of the project. However, it was observed that the short period (12 months), with the exception of the human security project, within which the project is implemented limits the kind of impact that they could have achieved if they were done for longer periods. A project that could have made some impact but did not yield the expect result is the youth project undertaken by the Ernest Bai Koroma University in Makeni. While 60 (36 females and 24 males) were trained on vocational and technical skills, to build their capacity, and reduce their vulnerability, the project which was to be a pilot, did not gain the expected traction. The University appeared to have struggled with programming skills, and also could not provide the link with private sector actors that could have further supported the youth. Thus, it could not continue after the first set of beneficiaries graduated, and were certified, alongside being provided with start-up support kits.

3.7. SUSTAINABILITY

To some extent sustainability issues were taken in to consideration during the design of the portfolio activities. For instance, the activities that support the NCRA were tailored to build their capacity, so that they can efficiently and effectively deliver on their mandate. However, most activities are tailored to provide short-term immediate support that would help to address the immediate needs of the

targeted institutions or actors. The activities are designed to be implemented in the short-term, within a year, and they cannot necessarily enhance sustainability. Additionally, there is no clearly defined sustainability plan, or exit strategy that will guide the sustainability component of the portfolio. There needs to be a clearly defined plan, that is rolled-out alongside the M&E strategy. The development of such a plan should involve the respective partners, who are implementing the respective components of the portfolio document. Additionally, other partners for instance the media, CSOs and other stakeholders should be involved in it.

Based on the paragraph above, there are two principal conclusions arrived at, that have to do with sustainability of the activities undertaken by the SDI portfolio. Firstly, the knowledge and skills achieved from capacity building activities by the beneficiaries are sustainable. The knowledge and skills are used currently, and they will be used for a very long period. This is helping the institutions carry out their mandates. Additionally, the investments in supporting the development of systems, structures, policies and strategies for institutions such as the NCRA is helping them to be able to function efficiently and effectively. Thus, this also helps to ensure sustainability. As noted by a staff of the Portfolio Management Team:¹⁴

One of the aims of our support to institutions in Sierra Leone, is to have them have systems and practices in place that will help to have remained functional for a very long period. Thus, we are helping to build capacity, and at the same time providing support that will help the institutions function as they should.

What is important in relation to sustainability, is that essentially, the activities of the portfolio mainly complement the normal daily work of the institutions supported. Their work will continue after the end of the programme. Thus, what the portfolio does is to enhance their ability to deliver services, as they lack the resources to carry out some of the activities that are critical to the delivery of their mandates. These are the activities that are identified and supported. Through supporting those activities, democracy is strengthened in the country. For instance, the popularisation of the GEWE Act, the revision of the Standing Orders in Parliament and the establishment of policies and systems that have to do with the NCRA, are critical to democratic good governance in Sierra Leone. As such, their development and continued use demonstrates sustainability.

Another element in relation to capacity building and sustainability, has to do with the training of young women to advocate for their rights and demand services. This support has established awareness and an understanding of the steps to take and the actors to engage when services are needed. This also has to do with PwDs in the targeted communities.

While the capacity building and institution strengthening elements are ongoing, with the potential of being sustainable, it was observed that some of the activities are not sustainable, and will require additional resources overtime to keep them going. This includes, for instance, the support provided through NMJD to LPPBs. LPPBs need continued logistical support which is unavailable, and thus, they are usually left constrained to carry out their expected roles in their communities. As noted by a CSO partner:

While we may have the knowledge and skills to carry out our work, we need the resources and logistics to be able to work in communities. Finances have always been a challenge that we have not been able to tackle. We will need to get resources from UNDP and other partners, and we also need to be

¹⁴ Interview conducted on 12 January, 2023.

trained on how to raise funds to be in a better position to carry out our activities. We have technical skills and we know the issues, but the financial challenge is what has been limiting our work over time. We need to address this gap as soon as possible.¹⁵

The financial challenges expressed above are not limited to CSOs but also significantly undermine the work of MDAs. It was observed during the evaluation, that the budgetary support provided by the Government of Sierra Leone to most of the partner institutions of the SDI portfolio is very limited, and leaves them mostly unable to undertake key activities. These institutions will require financial support to be able to function accordingly, and they should also explore other avenues for support, other than UNDP.

In addition to the above, the support from UNDP should be much more targeted, with few institutions engaged, but a good balance between government institutions and civil society, to enhance sustainability. This will also allow for better monitoring of activities and the provision of technical support by UNDP to the targeted institutions.

3.8. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

In relation to cross-cutting issues, two areas are examined: i) Gender Equality and the Rights Based Approach, and ii) Disability Inclusion.

i. Gender Equality and the Rights-Based Approach: Out of six project outputs result, four are GEN 2 and two are GEN 1 in the UNDP corporate system meaning gender equality is adequately integrated into the programme. The GEN 2 outputs contribute significantly to gender equality and women empowerment whereas GEN 1, contribute in a limited way. However, the fact that there are no GEN 3 outputs, under this portfolio show the need to mobilise the resources for GEN 3. However, gender equality is adequately integrated into the programme as a cross-cutting issue. The portfolio document was designed to promote gender equality. Each of the projects developed so far have strong gender components and benefit both genders. However, some of the projects specifically target young women, for instance those undertaken by CGG, which is seeking to enhance the agency of women and their ability to demand their rights and engage social service providers in their communities. Additionally, activities undertaken by the National HIV/AIDS secretariat aims at promoting the rights, dignity and welfare of People Living with HIV/AIDS, gay and commercial sex workers. These activities are going a long way in creating awareness that mitigate stereotypes and stigmatisation against the groups listed above. It was also observed that the activities and their implementation is done with the use of the Rights Based Approach, through encouraging and working with partners to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of its citizens.

ii. Disability Inclusion: There were some activities undertaken by the portfolio that were tailored towards ensuring the inclusion of PwDs in its activities. These activities included promoting the inclusion of PwDs in election activities, including female PwDs through the work of SEND-SL, and also having them benefit from the human security project. While there are activities undertaken under the portfolio, it was observed that there was the need to strengthen the capacity of the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, and associations of PwDs to effectively participate at the policy levels in the country. Strengthening the capacity of the Commission, and CSOs that are led by

¹⁵ Interview conducted in Freetown on 1 February, 2023.

PwDs, would have been much more effective in providing essential services and improving on the voice and participation of PwDs in governance issues in Sierra Leone. This is a fundamental gap that UNDP should seek to address within the remaining lifespan of the portfolio. There are significant challenges related to PwDs in Sierra Leone, and the development and implementation of activities that have to do with them, will go a long way in protecting and promoting their rights and welfare. There is limited awareness on the rights of PwDs in communities and they contend with daily challenges that undermine their rights, voice, livelihood and dignity, and UNDP could contribute to change this in Sierra Leone.

4. CONCLUSION

Since 2020, UNDP has been implementing the SDI Portfolio programme document, which consists of activities included in a work plan on an annual basis to achieve UNSDCF and CPD outcome 2, that are tailored to the needs and aspirations of partner institutions. The aim of this support is to enhance their ability to function efficiently and effectively in strengthening democratic good governance in Sierra Leone. Its overall objective is to consolidate gains made during previous interventions and to further strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of core governance institutions. Additionally, the programme seeks to support the full devolution and decentralisation of core governance functions, with a view to create inclusive and participatory spaces for civil society, media and local communities and women, youth, and PwD groups.

It was concluded that the programme is relevant, and its activities are appreciated by the partners, as most of them would not have been undertaken by them, without the support of UNDP and its partners. Additionally, the design of the programme document is good and the result framework is of high quality. It has five outputs, each with sub-outputs that are well defined and clearly speak to what the programme aims to achieve. It has assumptions and risks and also defines how the risk factors could be mitigated. Furthermore, there are monitoring systems implemented at the programme and project levels to keep the respective projects on track. The portfolio programme has several layers of monitoring at the programme and at the project levels. At the programme level, it is monitored by the portfolio board, which engages UNDP on the design and implementation of activities. The partners/beneficiaries also have their own internal monitoring systems.

The implementation of the programme is to a large extent efficient, with the expected resources provided by the partners. However, there have been delays experienced with the implementation of activities resulting from factors including the COVID-19 pandemic, the bureaucratic bottlenecks in UNDP, and delays in developing and approving the workplan. However, despite this, the implementation of activities is on track and there is progress made in delivering the expected outputs. Furthermore, resources are expended as expected, however, some partners are not comfortable with having UNDP using the DIM model of project support, as they indicated that it undermines local ownership and leadership. The portfolio staff takes into consideration accountability factors and challenges in reporting the use of funds, as factors that limit their willingness to provide funds directly to some partners.

The programme enhances coherence with other similar activities and in addition complements the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to strengthen democratic good governance in the country. Alongside this, significant progress has been made already in producing the expected outputs under each of the outcome areas. Subsequently the impact of the project has resulted in various achievements for instance popularisation of the GEWE policy, enhancing agency of young women and PwDs in Kono and other parts of the country, strengthened capacity of the NCRA, increased knowledge on decentralisation policy and the need for accountable governance.

There are two principal conclusions arrived at, that have to do with sustainability of the activities undertaken by the SDI portfolio. Firstly, the knowledge and skills achieved from capacity building activities by the beneficiaries are sustainable. The knowledge and skills are used currently, and they will be used for a very long period. Secondly, the partners will require funds to further build on the gains made. The portfolio should develop and effectively roll-out an exit/sustainability plan that will ensure that the benefits of the programme, are available to the beneficiaries in the long-term.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations listed below build on the findings and suggestions provided by the stakeholders consulted on what could be done by specific actors to improve on future interventions and their programming.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

To avoid delays in the approval of work plans, the process of developing them should begin prior to the year in which the plans should be used. This means that at the close of a financial and administrative year, UNDP should engage their partners on activities for the succeeding years, and agree on them, with the plan developed. Thus, by the time the year begins in January, the plan would be approved, and finances provided for it. The current approach of developing the plans within the year in which they are to be implemented, eats significantly into the implementation timelines, and compromises the quality of outputs to be delivered.

Recommendation 2

The delays in providing funds for activities is leading to delays in their implementation. Thus, UNDP should address such delays, and they should ensure that funds for activities are provided immediately workplans are approved. Failing to do this, will continue to undermine the progress in implementation of activities, and the rush to undertake multiple activities at the same time, will undermine the quality of outputs provided, and in essence compromise the ability of the portfolio to achieve its set objectives.

Recommendation 3

The direct implementation of the portfolio activities by UNDP presents a perception of lack of trust, with them being micromanaged, on the part of the beneficiaries. While there is the fear of the mismanagement of funds on the part of UNDP, they should consider allowing some institutions with the capacity to manage funds, based on UNDP's assessment, to directly implement their activities. This will enhance and foster local ownership, leadership and accountability in the implementation of the projects, with regular technical and financial reports provided to UNDP. This will as well as demonstrate mutual trust and respect on the part of UNDP instead of being perceived as micromanaging activities of partners.

Recommendation 4

There are significant challenges related to PwDs in Sierra Leone, and the development and implementation of activities that have to do with them, will go a long way in protecting and promoting their rights and welfare. UNDP should ensure that the remaining lifespan of the Portfolio programme should have activities that directly targeting PwDs.

Recommendation 5

Staff implementing the SDI programme should undertake regular visits to the field to ensure that the activities undertaken are on track and are properly implemented to achieve the results.

Recommendation 6

The portfolio is succeeding in investing in the active participation of women in politics, and there have been significant gains made as indicated in this report. However, there is the need to build on this, as it is

difficult to fully address the historical legacies of gender inequality, especially in leadership and decision-making processes. As such, UNDP should continue to support activities that are focused on promoting gender equality and enhancing the voice and place of women in such processes.

Recommendation 7

UNDPD should further continue the work in partnership with the National HIV/AIDS secretariat in creating awareness that mitigate stereotypes and stigmatisation against People Living with HIV/AIDS, Men having Sex with Men and sex-workers with the aim of promoting their rights, dignity and welfare.

Recommendation 8

Sierra Leone is afflicted with inadequate implementation, enforcement and compliance mechanisms relating to processes, policies and regulations. Democratic institutions such as the Parliament, judiciary and Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) have experienced some progress in their capacities and independence, but continuing capacity strengthening is needed for full implementation of their mandates.

6. LESSONS LEARNED

There are key lessons learnt during the evaluation that are examined in this section. They are:

- The inclusion of, and engagements with different partners by UNDP has been helpful in identifying the needs and aspirations of institutions that are instrumental to democracy and good governance in Sierra Leone and provide them with support that they require to carry out critical activities. This approach has helped UNDP to contribute significantly to the quest for democratic good governance in Sierra Leone, through strengthening the capacity of institutions to carry out their mandates. It provides an indication that the use of an inclusive and integrated approach to programming, helps to have a clear understanding of the issues to be addressed, and how they can be approached.
- To enhance sustainability, the provision of support on a 12-month basis per project, should be changed. This approach does not work, and it creates minimal impact, which is also not sustainable. The support provided should be designed to be for at least two years. The implementation timeline per project, with specific focus on key institutions, should have been for the entire life span of the programme, rather than it being determined on an annual basis. They should be tailored to make much more impact and difference on the targeted institutions, and the final beneficiaries. The current approach leaves some activities not fully implemented, or the expected gains made, prior to the support for them coming to an end.
- The process of developing work plans at the start of the year of implementing projects, significantly undermines the ability of partners to be able to use the full length of the implementation timeline to undertake activities. The process is mired with delays as UNDP takes time to develop and approve implementation plans and budget, with this having negative consequences for the projects eventually implemented. There is the need for implementation plans prior to the year of implementation, otherwise the gains made by the portfolio will be very limited at the end of its life span.
- The model of implementation, especially the DIM undermines the working relationship between UNDP and national partners. While UNDP is concerned with mismanagement of funds, partners perceive this to be UNDP micromanaging them, and also a demonstration of lack of respect and trust in them. Thus, there is the need to find a solution that is workable for both partners.
- Given the capacity of SDI portfolio team, in terms of the limited number of staff it has, UNDP should have consider increasing its staff capacity to be able to provide direct technical support to partners. A hands-on approach, with direct technical support will make a lot of difference for the partners. UNDP also needs to be closely monitoring the activities of partners, to be in a position to provide them with better feedback on what they do.
- The use of the Portfolio Steering Committee is a good approach, as it provides the partners with the platform to directly engage UNDP and together discuss issues related to activities undertaken. The Committee provides an extra layer of complementarity and accountability, with partners becoming familiar with the activities of their sister institutions, and how best they could complement each other.

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8. ANNEXES

The annex section presents the Indicators Based Performance Assessment, evaluation matrix, the documents reviewed during the evaluation and the list of some of the key actors interviewed.

8.1. INDICATORS BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The section below presents the Indicators Based Performance Assessment for 2020, 2021 and 2022. The table for 2020 is less detailed as there was no report provided for 2020, and it was the COVID-19 period. Thus, most of the activities were redirected to the fight against the pandemic. The results for 2021 and reports for 2021 and 2022 are much more detailed.

a. 2020 Indicators Based Performance Assessment

2020		
No.	Output	Achievements
1.	EMBs capacity strengthened to independently conduct, manage and oversee free, fair and transparent electoral processes inclusive of gender, ethnic and political differences	-Activities repurposed to support the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic
2.	Parliament is equipped to perform oversight, representation functions and pass robust, gender responsive legislation resulting from effective policy-making and legislative proposals	<p>-Some of the activities were repurposed to support the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p>-Services of a national consultant contracted to support the Female Caucus with the Safe Seats Bill. Consultations/discussions were held with the parliamentary Female Caucus and with some male gender champions.</p> <p>-Under the Women, Peace and Security project, the parliamentary Female Caucus was supported to engage in nationwide awareness raising through radio, television and town hall meetings on WPS issues in the midst of COVID-19. A more gender sensitive approach to preventive and response measures were recommended</p> <p>-In relation to minimising gender-based violence among young people in view of COVID-19, school pupils (378), teacher (42) and community stakeholders (120) benefitted from awareness materials and dialogues on gender-based and school-related violence in 6 local councils.</p>

3.	Established automated and integrated national civil register that effectively record and produce vital statistics and identification related data accessible and responsive at all levels of government	<p>-International consultant recruited conducted the review of the NCRA Act 2016. Report produced by the consultant proposed recommended provisions and clauses in the act to be improved/revised in the new bill to be drafted by the Law Officers Department. Data Protection Policy and bill development commenced with the first round of consultations held in Freetown. A draft bill was shared with UNDP HQ Data specialist; input from HQ required further consultations at regional level. This was delayed till 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p> <p>-1 audit conducted -2800 kits upgraded -SS Drive & Sonic Firewall wall installed in NCRA for security - VPN established with six months subscription paid</p> <p>- Community radios in 16 districts used to communicate and educate communities on CRVS processes and policies.</p> <p>- Strategic partnerships formed with a coalition of CSOs & Independent Radio Network for sharing CRVS information</p> <p>- information was developed in Krio, Limba, Mende and Temne. Additionally, 16 townhall meetings that reached 441 women & 451 men in 446 wards with increased knowledge in process and benefits of CRVS and link to elections functions.</p> <p>-Two engagements held with political parties on the activities of NCRA, alongside this, 17 billboards were put up in 17 district headquarter towns nationwide. This was modified from the activity line for undertaking perception surveys.</p> <p>-Four country coordination meetings were held to create an enabling environment for the implementation of the CRVS reforms and the National Strategic Plan</p>
4.	Targeted MDAs have improved capacities to devolve functions and resources to local government	<p>-Community-Led M&E training conducted for participants from five regions (North-West, North, South, East and Western Area) to monitor HIV programmes, and stigma and discrimination of those affected in communities. The aim was to improve on advocacy actions.</p> <p>-180 (M:90; F:90) community members benefited from training in stigma & discrimination.</p> <p>-All other activities repurposed to support the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
5.	Strengthening Youth meaningful participation in Decision making structures in Sierra Leone	<p>- All other activities repurposed to support the containment of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>

2021 Indicators Based Performance Assessment

Indicators	Baseline	Target	Achieved Target (current Status)	Reasons for Variance	Source of Verification
Project Results: Output 1: EMBs capacity strengthened to independently conduct, manage and oversee free, fair and transparent electoral processes inclusive of gender, ethnic and political differences (Output ID: 00099474).					
Output 1.1: NEC & PPRC capacitated to administer free, fair, credible and inclusive elections/referendum.					
PPRC equipped with tools in regional offices	PPRC established and functional in Freetown and district head quarter towns	4 computers procured for Regional Offices	PPRC decentralised office equipped with 4 computers for enhanced regionalised operations	No variance	PPRC Annual Report
Project Results: Output 2: Parliament is equipped to perform oversight, representation functions and pass robust, gender responsive legislation resulting from effective policy-making and legislative proposals (Output ID: 00110059).					
Output 2.1: Streamlining role & functions of the Office of the Clerk & the law-making process in Parliament.					
- Number of standings orders amended;	- Standing Orders not amended since 2006;	- Standing order amended	-Commenced review of the SO through a consultative process including all Political parties in parliament	-Rising political tensions between opposition & ruling party and tight Parliamentary schedule hindered completion of the SO Review	Parliament Annual report 2021
Legal counsel provided to PoSL & Speaker;	No office legal counsel established	1 Legal Counsel office established and functional		This was not funded	
Output 2.2: Parliament has improved capacity to undertake oversight and representative functions.					
- # of Oversight activities by Local Government & Gender Committees conducted	- Parliamentary Committee on LG & Gender set up	2 oversight activity of the LG & Gender committees conducted	Parliamentary Outreach via radio & training of Parliamentary Press Gallery held in 4 district headquarter towns using community radio	Covid restrictions required use of community radio and not physical meetings	Parliament Annual Report 2021
Curriculum of Centre for Parliamentary Studies validated	Centre for Parliamentary Studies conceptualized and setup	Centre for Parliamentary studies curriculum endorsed	CRPS curriculum validated – inhouse capacity training now possible	No variance	Annual Report

Output 2.3: Parliament supported to push through Gender-Responsive Legislation					
# of draft bills on affirmative action developed;	There is no affirmative action to protect & promote women in decision making positions;	1 gender Bill for assured seats for women laid in Parliament by Women Caucus	Bill yet to be tabled in Parliament as lobbying and awareness raising on bill intensify before the pre-legislative meet	Extensive consultations were required to ensure ownership and easy buy in.	Annual report
- # of girls mentored for girls' inclusion in leadership	At least 3 outreach missions conducted to 3 schools in 2018	50 girls in 6 districts mentored for girls' inclusion in leadership	Rollout of Mentoring Guide in rural communities/ 8 Districts targeted 80 girls for mentorship into leadership. 10 school clubs established for	Mentorship program was focused in 4 of FW project districts	End of project and annual reports
-# of open day event held	1 Open Day held in 2019	Annual Parliament Open day hosted.	None	Not funded	
Project Results: Output 3: Established automated and integrated national civil register that effectively record and produce vital statistics and identification related data accessible and responsive at all levels of government (Output ID: 00116490).					
Output 3.1: The 2012 Public Elections Act and the 2016 National Civil Registration Acts reviewed and harmonised to facilitate seamless link between the CR and the VR databases.					
- # of laws reviewed and harmonized	- Public elections act (2012) & Civil Registration Act (2016) in place	Public Elections Act & Civil Registration Act reviewed & harmonized;	Support the completion of Civil Registration Act (2016) and validation held on the CRVS legal framework	No variance	Print media reports; annual NCRA Report
# of consultations held;	2 consultations on data protection bill;	At least five (5) regional consultations held with draft Bill finalized;	Completion of the Data Protection Bill, Policy and Regulations with 5 regional consultations held and validation held of all outputs	No variance	Print media reports; annual NCRA Report
Draft Data protection bill validated;	No data protection bill printed	1 data protection bill in place	consultations held and validation to be held of all outputs	Validation was put on hold till earlier Jan. 2022	Annual report
- # of sensitisation events conducted	Sensitisation done on CRVS Day in 2018 & 2019;	1 national CRVS commemoration event held	CRVS commemoration held	No variance	Annual report
Output 3.2: NCRA has software environment for data exchange with NEC					
ETL application established	CRVS population data established in 2017;	ETL layer established in CRVS Data	Designed and Developed an ETL Application	No variance	Annual NCRA report

- # data recovery site established	- Data recovery site for NCRA not established;	1 national Data recovery site established	1 recovery site established	No variance	Annual NCRA report
- # of NCRA staff with capacities for geo-mapping	NCRA capacities for geo-mapping minimal.	4 staff have capacities for geo-mapping (M:2; F:2)	4 staff capacitated	No variance	Annual NCRA report
Output 3.4: Public awareness of the importance of CRVS and its links to election voter registration process improved through an effective and decentralised information, education and communication campaign.					
- # of additional community radios engaged for awareness raising;	6 community radio engaged for CRVS awareness;	10 materials in 6 ethnic languages reproduced; -	Community awareness (CRVS Day, community radio and education activities); including joint NCRA/NEC education efforts conducted in 16 districts Community radios in 16 districts used to communicate and educate communities on CRVS processes and policies.	No variance	NCRA annual report; community radio recordings;
- # of townhall meetings held;	CRVS commemoration materials and information in 6 local dialects developed	17 Town Hall meetings;	17 town hall meetings were held in all electoral districts	No variance	NCRA annual report; community radio recordings
Output 3.5: Create enabling environment for implementation of the CRVS reforms and the National Strategic Plan by strengthening government-led coordination and establishment of the Country Coordination Team					
#decisions actioned from coordination meetings	- Ad-hoc coordination meetings held across several platforms	4 key coordination meeting decisions actioned	4 coordination meetings held	No variance	Meeting minutes
Output 3.6: Staff of NCRA, local registrars trained and empowered to deliver professional and efficient CRVS services.					
- # regional registrars capacitated (F:15; M:15)	- No trainings conducted	- 5 regional trainings conducted	5 Regional trainings held	No variance	Training report
Project Results Output 4: Targeted MDAs have improved capacities to devolve functions and resources to local government (Output ID: 00115236).					
Output 4.1: Efficiency and sustainability of national AIDS response					
- # of communities with community-led M&E structures established	- Limited community level monitoring of HIV programs, stigma and	eHealth standards and platforms developed for	Community-Led M&E training conducted for participants from 5 regions (North-West, North, South, East and	Could not set up the eHealth platform as procuremen	Report from "Consortium for the Advancement of the Rights of

	discrimination to inform advocacy action.	effective monitoring	Western Area / eHealth platform not set up	it is yet to complete the procurement of the pieces of equipment	Key Affected Populations” or “CARKAP”
# of regional trainings conducted on UHC, stigma and discrimination	High rate of stigma and discrimination against PLHIV and KPs	180 (M:90; F:90) Community members benefit from trainings in stigma & discrimination	180 (M:90; F:90) trained in HIV related stigma and discrimination in 5 regions (North-West, North, South, East &, Western Area) / UHC was not done	UHC was not done-did not get approval since it was in December 2021	
- # of survey report on drivers of SGBV completed	Study of drivers of SGBV conducted in 2003 (outdated) -Ineffective SGBV prevention strategies that are not evidence informed D26	-2 surveys (1 SGBV and 1 stigma/discrimination of PLHIV) conducted -1 survey report on drivers of SGBV completed and endorsed	Quantitative and qualitative surveys on drivers of SGBV not completed/ongoing/ Stigma and Discrimination survey completed	IC hiring for the SGBV survey was done late in the year.	IC’s reports on stigma and discrimination study
Output 4.2: Targeted democratic, oversight, accountability and monitoring institutions have strengthened technical and functional capacities for improved governance.					
-# of capacity assessment strategy endorsed	- Capacity assessment report and capacity building strategy completed in 2020;	- 3 PCC coordination meetings held by MLG (with Participation of Anti-Corruption Commission, CSOs)	1 PCC established in the North-West in Port Loko district by the MLGRD and first meeting held with stakeholders	Funds provided only to establish 1 PCC in the new region - North-Western Region	
-# of PCC coordination meetings held by MLG (with Presentation1Participation of Anti-Corruption Commission, CSOs)	-PCC not established in North-western region	e-governance environment mapped	e-governance environment mapping was not done	This was due to lack of funding	2021 AWP budget line
-# of locals using e-governance system Target: - 3 PCC	no e-governance system established in councils.	- e-governance environment mapped	Not funded	This was not funded	
-1 Capacity building strategy endorsed.	No strategy	1 Capacity building strategy endorsed	The capacity building strategy for Local Councils was finalised and endorsed by the MLGRD	No variance	Capacity building strategy report

Output 4.3: Capacities of Local Councils and Community Development Committees in the 8-district strengthened for participatory and inclusive development					
- # of CDCs with capacities for participatory and inclusive project development;	- Limited capacity of CDCs to actively participate in local development	- 4 CDCs with capacities for participatory and inclusive project development	10 CDCs in 8 area-based districts were involved and participated in the review of their district development plans which is completed	This exceeded the target set initially as funds provided was enough to work with the CDCs in the jurisdiction of all the ten local councils	The reviewed district development plans
Output 4.4: Media & CSOs enhance community engagement with MDAs & LCs					
- # CSOs & Journalists reporting on LCs work;	- CSOs consulted on Review of the local government policy;	12 journalists & 12 CSO reps capacitated in LG policies, procedures	12 journalists and 12 CSO representatives were trained on LG policies and procedures	Activity was implemented as planned	Activity completion reports, media reportage
- # of Engagement forums held with CSOs, Communities & LCs/MDAs	GoSL has held 1 CSO engagement forum in 2020;	- 1 Engagement forums held with CSOs, Communities & LCs/MDAs	Engagement forums/Community outreach sessions were held in localised communities within 6 pilot districts	No variance	Activity report/media coverage
- # of young men and women with civic capacities	- Civic education curriculum established in 2017	- 60 youths have civic capacities for peaceful cohesion	60 District Youth Leaders were sensitized and trained on civic education and women's rights	No variance	Activity report, audio visual
Project Output 5: Strengthening Youth meaningful participation in Decision making structures in Sierra Leone (Output ID: 00124148).					
Output 5:1: Youths and policy makers in 6 districts have increased capacity to develop, review, approve, publicise youth friendly policies					
# of youth policies reviewed / developed and approved	2006 Youth Policy	1	- 50 youths actively engaged in policy dissemination and peer education	No variance	Copy of reviewed document
- # of youth engaged in policies disseminated	Youth policy approved	- 50 youths actively engaged in policy dissemination and peer education	150 Youth disseminated and educated their peers on the national youth policy	Had a rippling effect as regional executive engaged district executives	Print and electronic media, annual reports

-# of persons participating in roundtable dialogues conducted between Youth and policy makers (disaggregated by gender, age, geographical locations, relevant category e.g., youths);	- No round table conducted with youth, lawmakers & leaders	250 youths engage with law makers and stakeholders on decision making strategies	1 regional round table dialogue held in Kabala with 150 youth (M:90 F: 60) engaged with traditional leaders & 1 national dialogue held at Bintumani Hotel with 500 youth (300 F: 200) engaged with Policy Makers	National dialogue with policy makers was jointly supported by UNDP SLED Unit and other UN agencies so number was increased	Print and electronic media, annual report
-# youth capacitated with life skills and tools	Youth capacity building occurring in ad-hoc basis	60 youths benefit from life skills and tools in 6 districts (M:20; F:40)	Supported life skills training and provision of tools to 60 youth (M:40, F:20) through the EBK University	Training was centralised so some females opted out due to unwillingness of their spouses to let them go so ended up having more men on board	Project Annual report
Output 5: 2. Coordination between Youth Actors and mechanisms are strengthened.					
# of persons participating in the newly reactivated Youth Steering Committee (YSC) meetings	Youth Steering Committee dysfunctional	1 committee established	2 Committees were established 1 Steering and 1 technical committee	Popular request from youth who expressed the need for a technical committee	Project annual report
# of YouthConnekt hub established and operationalised in four regions.	2	4 Youth Connekt hubs to be established	2 Youth Connekt hubs were established. 1 in Kabala and 1 in Kenema	Limited funds to procure equipment for 4 hubs	Project annual report
# of youth engaged in outreach programmes	Ad-hoc meeting held		150 youth (M:90 F:60)		Project annual report Partner Facebook page
Project Result: Output 6: Strengthening Human Security in in the remote Chiefdoms of Gbense, Soa, and Kamara in Kono District of Sierra Leone. (Output ID: 00125906).					
Output 6.1: The community enjoys economic, political and community security, with expanded social cohesion and improved living conditions					

- # of Local Councils that are able to increase the domestic revenue collection through UNDP support	-3 Local Councils received support with systems for increased domestic revenue collection	1 Local Councils that is able to increase the domestic revenue collection through UNDP support	Not funded	Not funded	
# of grievances settled through multi-stakeholders' platform in each Chiefdom disaggregated by gender, Youth group, and PWDs	Grievance's mechanisms established through multi-stakeholders' platform in Moyamba & Pujehun	-10 grievances settled through multi-stakeholders' platform in each Chiefdom disaggregated by gender, Youth group, and PWDs	4 serious (50 participants/chiefdom) grievances were settled through the intervention of the Grievance Committee	The project just started and is finding a foothold in the chiefdoms. Also, the grievance committee is still mapping out grievances in the communities that need to be settled	Project annual report
C37# of person capacitated on participation and inclusion in decision-making processes, disaggregated by gender and PWDs.	No consistent participation and inclusion of youth in decision-making processes	150 of person capacitated on participation and inclusion in decision-making processes (M:75, F:75)	150 youth and women (F:75, M:75) were supported through support for capacity strengthening for increased civic knowledge, engagement and dissemination to other youth	No variance	Project annual report

2022 Indicators Based Performance Assessment

Indicators	Baseline	Target	Achieved Target (current Status)	Reasons for Variance	Source of Verification
Project Results: Output 1: Support to Integrated National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA) (Project ID: 00116490)					
Output 1.1: NCRA has/established and operationalized a gender-sensitive software environment for data exchange with NEC					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extraction, Transformation and Loading (ETL) application system established. - A Data Protection Law enacted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CRVS population data established in 2017 - Limited NCRA capacities for geo mapping. - No Data Protection Law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ETL layer established in CRVS Data base. - 4 staff have capacities for geo-mapping built (M:2; F:2) - One (1) Data Protection Law enacted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Target not achieved due to pending delivery of NCRA network, procured to allow installation of applications and successful roll out. - Draft data protection Bill tabled in Parliament. 	No Variance	ETL Application project status report. Data Protection Bill.
Output 1.3: Staff of NCRA and local registrars have the capacities to deliver an inclusive CRVS services					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 30 regional registrars capacitated (F:15; M:15) - 10 Staff of NCRA capacitated - 40 (30 registrars +10) NCRA staff and registrars with appreciable knowledge on NCRA policies and guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No trainings conducted for neither staff of NCRA nor local registrars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 Regional trainings conducted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No result achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NOT Implemented as fund were reallocated for the procurement of ITC equipment and maintenance of IDMS systems. 	
Project Results: Output 2: Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) process strengthened (Project ID: 00113213)					
Output 2.1. A functional coordination mechanism to implement the CRVS reforms and the National Strategic Plan					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # of Coordination meeting with outcomes that address gender interests and needs held. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimal coordination meetings held across several platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 key coordination meetings involving key stakeholders held. 	CRVS Coordination and Resource Mobilisation workshop held, in addition to several monthly coordination meetings.	No Variance	Reports of Coordination meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # of coordination tools developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ad-hoc engagement with development partners and inadequate communication or information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed a framework to guide Coordination and inform resource mobilization efforts. - Develop Stakeholder Engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One (1) three (3) day CRVS Coordination workshop held using "Futures Thinking Methodology", to identify challenges in CRVS Coordination and recommendations on achieving a well-Coordinated CRVS operation in Sierra Leone. 	No Variance	CRVS Partners Coordination Workshop Report with recommendations.

- # of knowledge products developed	- A draft newsletter was developed, but never published.	- 4 coordination newsletters published	- 4 monthly coordination Newsletters published through an online platform and printed quarterly.	No Variance	Combined NCRA newsletter (May-October, 2022)
Project Results: Output 3: Support to Local Governance (Project ID: 00115236)					
Output 3.1: Targeted local government institutions have accountability mechanisms in place for improved service delivery					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # of accountability mechanism reactivated. - # of accountability sessions held - # of CLoGPAS reviewed and validated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No accountability session held - Existence of 2014 CLoGPAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 citizens engagement forums and accountability sessions held. - 2014 CLoGPAS reviewed and validated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 citizens engagement forums and accountability sessions held. - CLoGPAS not implemented due to the unavailability of the Consultant that initiated the review exercise. 	Variance as CLoGPAS was not implemented.	Reports on the 1 st & 2 nd Phase of citizens engagement forums and accountability sessions held on June and Sept, 2022.
Output 3.2: Decentralization Policy (DP) and legal framework popularized					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o # of policies reviewed or elaborated, disseminated and popularized o # of PCs orientated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Relevant decentralization and local government Policies and Acts available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o MLGRD; 4 Local Councils; 100 Communities in the 4 districts, 20 CSOs, 4 traditional authorities are aware of the decentralisation policies and legal frameworks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 8 dissemination and popularization sessions on the revised 2010 Decentralization Policy and 2004 Local Government Act held in Kambia, Port Loko, Falaba, Moyamba, Pujehun, Bonthe, Kailahun and Western Area Rural District. 	Variance, as result of exceeding target by 50%. 8 sessions were rolled out instead of the 4 targeted districts.	Copies of revised 2010 Decentralisation Policy and the 2004 Local Government Act
Output 3.3: Capacity of Government Ministries/ Local Councils on gender sensitive strategic planning and gender mainstreaming enhanced.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o # of women trained in Leadership recognized for promotion. o # of senior MDA staff trained on the GEWE taking responsibility to mainstream GEWE o # of Dev. planning report per council (on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Minimal understanding of the GEWE policy and strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 80 women trained in leadership in 4 districts o 10 MDA's Senior management staff trained on the GEWE policy. o 4 development planning reports on gender (1 by each Local Council). 	Not Implemented		

Gender) reflecting the impact the project					
Output 3.4: Improved Coordination of the implementation of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment policy					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of development reports produced on SDGs implementation # of coord meetings held. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Coord. reports. No Coord meetings held 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Coord reports on the implementation of GEWE policy 1 Coord meeting held 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target achieved as 1 regional Coordination workshop held on the implementation of the GEWE policy with 60 participants (28F/ 32M) 	No Variance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Gender consolidated report on the GEWE policy.
Output 3.5: Journalist's and media houses capacities strengthened for gender sensitive reporting					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of media houses/journalists trained on GEWE Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2018 capacity-building training report for media & journalist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 (5 Print and 10 electronic) Media houses trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target exceeded, as 72 journalists across the regions, drawn from 52 (i.e., 40 electronic and 12 print) media houses) were trained balance reporting on the 2022 GEWE policy, instead of 15 (5 Print and 10 electronic) Media houses. 	No Variance	Activity Report
Output 3.6: Increased participation and representation of women in local governance					
# of dialogue session held for the three districts	No dialogue session.	6 dialogue sessions held in 3 districts	6 dialogue sessions held 3 districts targeted at 163 men and women expected to vie for the 2023 local council elections	No Variance	Activity Report
# of women trained to aspire for the 2023 local Government elections.	13 current elected female councillors (in the 4 Districts out of 97 female councillors nationally) trained in leadership skills, advocacy, lobbying and campaign messages.	40 women awarded political party symbols in the 4 of districts Falaba, Port Loko and Pujehun.	45 women aspirants trained in leadership, advocacy, lobbying and communication skills and campaign messages.	Variance as a result of exceeding target by 5 (i.e., 45 instead of 40 women aspirants were trained on leadership skills.	Activity Report

# of coaching sessions held	8 women aspirants and 7 current councilors as mentees, had basic knowledge on aspiring for local elections.	○ 9 mentors and 40 mentees involved.	45 aspiring women benefited as mentees on the coaching and mentorship sessions	No Variance	Activity Report
Output 3.7: HIV Response effective and meeting the needs of the key population					
# of Community led response framework & patient right charter developed and launched.	No Community-led response framework and patients-rights charter in place	Developed, validate and launched community-led response framework and patients-rights charter	Community-led response framework and patients-rights charter developed, validated and launched -June, 2022	No Variance	Progress Report
# of Community charter and Patients right charter pull up banners displayed.	No display of evidence of community charter and patients right charter pull up banners	Print and distribute 30 pull up banners of each (i.e., 15 Community and 15 Patients' right Charters).	Print and distributed 15 Community charters and 15 Patients' right charter pull up banners.	No Variance	Progress Report
Support evidence gathering by community Monitors in 2 districts through CLM.	No platform available for data collection and reporting	Collect and validate CLM data from 2 districts	Exceeded target, as CLM data was collected, and reports validated in 3 instead of 2 districts.	No Variance	Project Progress Activity Report
Project Results Output 4: Support to Human Security through enhanced economic, political and community security, with expanded social cohesion and improved conditions of living. (Project ID: 00125906)					
# of existing markets ground renovated	Existing dilapidated markets in Manjama, and Hill Station communities	2 existing markets renovated	Target achieved with 100% existing markets Hill Station and Manjama markets at Gbense and Soa Chiefdoms, Kono District renovated and completed.	No Variance	SEND Quarterly Progress Report.
# of beneficiaries (Disaggregated by gender/disability) trained in processing agricultural products.	30 beneficiaries (20 female and 10 male) trained in processing agricultural products	200 beneficiaries (100 female and 100 male) trained in processing of agricultural and non-timber forest products	200 VSLA members in each chiefdom (Soa, Gbense and Kamara) were trained on value addition food processes and environmental impact	No Variance	SEND Quarterly Progress Report.
# of persons (Disaggregated by gender/disability) trained on management of	7 beneficiaries (4 female and 3 male) trained on management of operation of rice milling machine	28 (14 female and 14 male) beneficiaries trained on management of operation of rice milling machine	Exceeded target with the training 600 (164 M/ 545 F) VSLA members were trained in operational management of rice milling machines	No Variance	SEND Quarterly Progress Report.

operation of rice milling machine					
# of functional community Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRC) for sustained conflict mediation and resolution operational.	No functional GRC exist in the 3 Chiefdoms	- 3 Chiefdom GRCs in the established - 4 chiefdom GRC meetings held - 6 Sectional level GRCs established	GRC in 3 chiefdoms rejuvenated and operational Eight sectional GRC's were established in Bayakor, Moindekor, Bafinfeh, Bayafeh, Moindefeh, Gbondu, Dangbaidu and Kokofinya sections	No Variance	Progress report.
# of young women and PWDs involvement in decision-making process as a result of their increased capacities.	No platform exists for the involvement of young women and PWDs in decision-making processes.	The existence of 3 platforms to amplify the voice and advocate for the participation of young women and PWDs in the development and governance processes	A functional woman and PWDs coalition of 150 young women and PWDs established and has amplify their voice and participation in development and governance processes	No variance	Activity Progress Report.
Code of Conduct (CoC) for Multi-Party forum (MPF) developed	Absence of MPF CoC.	MPF CoC developed in 3 Chiefdoms.	Only one (1) District MPF needs assessment was not conducted in Kono	Variance because only one (1) District MPF needs assessment was conducted in Kono district, but no CoC was developed	Activity Report.
Project Result: Output 5: Parliament is equipped to perform legislative, oversight, representation functions and enact robust, gender responsive legislation resulting from effective policy making and legislative proposals (Project ID: 00110059)					
Output 5.1: Streamlining role and functions of the office of the Clerk and law-making process in Parliament					
Revised Standing Orders (SO) printed and distributed to Members of Parliament (MP's).	Reviewing the of SO of Parliament commenced in 2021	Revised Standing Order received approval by the Committee of the Whole House. 100 copies of the SO printed and distributed to MP's.	SO revised with the approval of the Committee of the Whole House. 100 copies of the SO printed and distributed to MP's.	No Variance	Revised SO of Parliament.

8.2. EVALUATION MATRIX

This matrix provides the broad set of questions that guided the evaluation process. The questions were developed using the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee's (OECD/DAC) evaluation criteria including: Relevance and Design of the Project, Coherence, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, Sustainability and Cross-Cutting Issues.

Criteria	Guiding Questions	Specific Tool Used Per Category
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To what extent does the UNDP Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio respond to the priorities of the Government of Sierra Leone National Development Plan (2019-2023) and similar strategies, the UNDP Country Programme Document (2020-2023), Embassy of Ireland Mission Strategy 2019-2023 and the Sustainable Development Goals? ✓ How does the support for project interventions contribute to the longer-term development results in terms of approaches, capacities, policies and strategies? ✓ How relevant have project interventions been in leveraging support sustainable development? ✓ Do the interventions meet the practical and strategic needs of all genders, persons with disability, and other disadvantaged and marginalised groups? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Interviews and MSC Tool
Design of the Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Did the design of the portfolio document take into consideration contextual issues, actors and potential challenges? ✓ What are the thematic areas that the portfolio programme document sought to address? ✓ Were the target groups involved in the design of the portfolio's programme document? If yes, to what level were they involved? ✓ Is there a logframe designed for the portfolio? ✓ Is the logframe used as a management tool? ✓ Were the indicators in the logframe assessed and revised to keep them relevant and updated? ✓ Were partners involved in the design of the portfolio's programme document? If yes, which partners? ✓ Is the design realistic when compared to the resources available for the implementation of the portfolio's programme document? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Desk Review and Interviews

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are potential risks that may undermine the portfolio's programme identified, with mitigation factors established at the design stage? ✓ To what extent was gender addressed in the design of the portfolio's programme document? ✓ Was the private sector involved in the design of the portfolio's programme document? 	
Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To what extent the UNDP Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio is coherent with Government's policies? ✓ To what extent does the intervention support national legislation and initiatives that aim to improve gender equality and human rights? What lessons can be learned? ✓ To what extent the UNDP Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio addressed the synergies and interlinkages with other interventions carried out by UN and other development partners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Desk Review and Interviews
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Has the programme been implemented within its stated timeframe and cost estimates? ✓ Did the programme interventions focus on the set of activities that were expected to produce significant results? ✓ Were there sufficient (human and financial) resources allocated towards achievement of the programme objectives? ✓ Were different resources allocated in ways that considered gender equality, and inclusion of person with disability and youth? If so, how were they allocated? Was differential resource allocation appropriate? ✓ Was there any identified synergy between UNDP-funded interventions and other similar interventions that contributed to reducing costs while supporting results? ✓ Has there been over expenditure or under expenditure in programme interventions? ✓ Were there any unanticipated events, opportunities or constraints? What could be done differently in the future? ✓ What measures were taken to assure the quality of development results and management practices, both in relation to process and products, and to partnership strategies? ✓ What monitoring and evaluation procedures were applied by UNDP and partners to ensure greater accountability? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Desk Review and Interviews

Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have the expected programme (quantitative and qualitative) results been achieved and what were the supporting or impeding factors? ✓ Were the approaches, resources and conceptual frameworks relevant to achieve intended outputs? ✓ What are the main lessons learned from the partnership strategies and what are the possibilities of replication? ✓ To what extent have interventions' objectives and results contributed to gender equality, women and youth empowerment and human rights in governance processes? ✓ Which aspects of the interventions had the greatest achievements? What have been the supporting factors? How can UNDP build upon or replicate these achievements? ✓ In which areas does the programme component have the least achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can they be overcome? ✓ Were the approaches, resources and conceptual frameworks used relevant to the achievement of planned outcomes/outputs? ✓ What were the unintended results (positive/negative) of project interventions? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Desk Review, Interviews and MSC tool
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are the portfolio interventions causing a significant change in the lives of the intended beneficiaries? ✓ How did the portfolio interventions cause higher-level effects (such as changes in social norms or systems)? To what extent have impacts contributed to equal power relations between people of different genders? ✓ Are all the intended target groups, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, benefiting equally from the portfolio interventions? ✓ Are the portfolio interventions transformative – does it create enduring changes in norms – including gender norms – and systems, whether intended or not? ✓ Are the interventions leading to other changes, including “scalable” or “replicable” results? How will the interventions contribute to changing society for the better? ✓ What are the social and environmental impacts (positive or negative)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ MSC Tool, Interviews and Observation

Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To what extent were sustainability considerations taken into account in the design and implementation of interventions? How was this concern reflected in the design of the programme component and in the implementation of activities at different levels? ✓ Were exit strategies programme interventions appropriately defined and implemented, and what steps have been taken to ensure sustainability of results? ✓ How did the development of partnerships at local and national level contribute to sustainability of the results? ✓ How were different stakeholders engaged in the design and implementation? Have interventions been implemented with appropriate and effective partnership strategies? What has been the nature and added value of these partnerships? ✓ To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights, and human development by primary stakeholders? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Interviews and Desk Review
Cross-Cutting Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To what extent have poor, indigenous and persons with disability, women, men and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the project? ✓ To what extent has the portfolio integrated Human Rights Based Approach in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project? ✓ Have the resources been used in an efficient way to address Human Rights in the implementation? ✓ Is the gender marker assigned to this project representative of reality? ✓ To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the promoting the rights of women and persons with disability? ✓ Did any unintended effects emerge for women, men or vulnerable groups? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Desk Review and Interviews
Lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What went well? What factors contributed the most to make it successful? And, how? ✓ What could have been done better/differently considering social and environmental principle and standards? Why? ✓ What would you recommend for improving future programming or for similar projects elsewhere? What mistake should be avoided if 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Interviews, Observations and Desk Reviews

	the initiative were to be scaled-up or replicated? And why?	
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8.3. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Two sets of documents have been provided in the table below: (i) Documents that are directly related to the design and implementation of the programme under review, and (ii) policies and other documents that are produced by the Government of Sierra Leone and other actors. The documents provide a good contextual and programmatic background, which were essential for the development of the tools and the context section of the main report.

Programme Documents Reviewed

Project documents reviewed include:

- ✓ SDI Programme Document
- ✓ Reports produced by the respective partners
- ✓ MTR Report of the Human Security Project
- ✓ Annual Report on the SDI Portfolio by UNDP
- ✓ Independent Country Evaluation Report – Sierra Leone

Policies and other relevant documents reviewed

Relevant policies and other documents that were reviewed and during the assignment include:

- ✓ The 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone
- ✓ UNDP Country Programme Document (2020-2024)
- ✓ United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Sierra Leone - 2020-2024
- ✓ Embassy of Ireland Mission Strategy 2019-2023
- ✓ Sierra Leone Medium-Term National Development Plan (2019-2023)
- ✓ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5, 16 and 17
- ✓ Priorities of the African Union Agenda (AUA) Goals 11 and 17
- ✓ Academic Literature

8.4. LIST OF SOME OF THE KEY ACTORS ENGAGED DURING THE EVALUATION

The table below provides details of some of the key actors that were engaged during the evaluation.

Name	Sex	Position	Institution
Kadi Jumu-Peters	Female	Team Lead Inclusive Democratic Governance Cluster	UNDP
Kadiatu Bachalle-Taylor	Female	Gender Analyst	UNDP
Alie B. Sesay	Male	Snr. Rule of Law and Human Rights Officer Inclusive Democratic Governance Cluster	UNDP
Birendra Dash	Male	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	UNDP
Mahmoud Conteh	Male	Programme Associate	UNDP
Colina Macauley	Female	Monitoring and Evaluation Manager	Decentralisation Secretariat
Alex A. Bonapha	Male	Director	Decentralisation Secretariat
Finda Fraser	Female	Director General	Parliament of Sierra Leone
Joseph Ansumana	Male	Programme Manager	NMJD
Zainab Buya Kamara	Female	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs
Joseph Johnson	Male	Admin-Finance Officer	Decentralisation Commission
Melrose Karminti	Female	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
Sahr Kendema	Male	Programme Manager	CGG
Umu Nabieu	Female	Executive Secretary	NAS
Josephine Scott-Manga	Female	Former Deputy Team Leader - Governance	UNDP SL
Allieu Kallon	Male	Acting Director - ICT	NCRA
Grace Harman	Female	Director of Births and Death	NCRA

8.5. EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

United Nations Development Programme
Terms of Reference for Mid-term Evaluation of
UNDP Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio



1. Basic evaluation information

Evaluation Title	Mid-term Evaluation of the Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio
Department/Unit	Inclusive Democratic Governance Cluster
Country	Sierra Leone
Duration	30 working days
Type of Contract	National Consultants
Location	Freetown with travel to the regions
Application deadline	25 September 2022

2. Background

The Strengthening Democratic Institutions Programme (SDI) is a 3-year initiative that aims to strengthen the capacities and effectiveness of core governance institutions as the machinery that will ensure the needs and aspirations of Sierra Leoneans as articulated in the National Development Plan (NDP 2019-2023) are met. The centerpiece of the Project's approach is to provide dovetailed support to: (i) democratic institutions and semi-autonomous MDAs that are essential building blocks of the machinery of government, i.e. the chain of decisions and actions that are needed to make policies deliver concrete results for people's lives; (ii) parliamentary processes and local government as Parliaments define laws that organize a country's public sector management system and are meant to make government more responsive and accountable, with a view to increase cooperation and capacity building of local government to ensure systematic and tangible decentralization; and (iii) inclusive and participatory spaces for civil society, media and local communities and women, youth and PWD groups.

The Programme is organized into 5 key intervention areas for support: (1) Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs); (2) Parliament; (3) Integrated Civil Register; (4) Subnational and Local Governance; (5) Media and Civil Society, and will ensure throughout all activities, in line with principles of the Agenda 2030 and SDGs, the imperative of leaving-no-one-behind by introducing and supporting innovative, cutting-edge and effective approaches to mainstreaming gender equality and equity, conflict-sensitivity and, more broadly, to fighting vulnerabilities. Also, with DISP, UNDP seeks to support the full devolution and decentralization of core governance functions.

The programme seeks to contribute to the following four outputs in the UNDP Country programme document (2020-2023):

- 1) Strengthened democratic oversight, accountability and monitoring institutions.
- 2) Targeted rule of law, justice and security institutions strengthened to uphold democratic principles
- 3) Institutions for peace, citizen's voice and participation strengthened for social cohesion.
- 4) Devolution of functions and resources to local government increased

Basic portfolio information		
Portfolio Title	Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio	
Department/Unit	Inclusive Democratic Governance Cluster	
Country	Sierra Leone	
Region	Africa	
Project ID	00110819	
Contributing outcome and output	<p>United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2020-2023 Outcome 2: By 2023, people in Sierra Leone benefit from more gender- and youth-responsive institutions that are innovative, accountable, and transparent at all levels and can better advance respect for human rights and the rule of law, equity, peaceful coexistence, and protection of children, girls, and persons with disability</p> <p>Country Programme Document (CPD) Output 2.1: Capacities of targeted oversight and accountability institutions (Parliament, HRC, NEC, ACC and IPCB) strengthened to perform their mandates</p> <p>CPD Output 2.3: Gender-responsive institutional frameworks strengthened for peace, citizen's voice and participation for social cohesion</p> <p>CPD Output 2.4: Capacities of targeted local councils improved to deliver on devolved functions and manage resources</p>	
Portfolio dates	Start	Planned end
	1 January 2020	31 December 2024
Portfolio Budget	\$ 10,000,000	
Funding sources	Embassy of Ireland/Irish Aid, European Union Delegation, United Nations Legal Identity Agenda (UN LIA), UN Trust Fund for Human Security	
Implementing Partners	National Civil Registration Authority, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, National Aids Secretariat, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Political Parties Registration and Regulation Commission, Fambul Tok, Network Movement for Justice and Development, Parliament, Electoral Commission, Campaign for Good Governance, 50-50 Group, SEND Sierra Leone, Media Reform Coordinating Group	
Supervisor	Governance Team Leader	

The overall objective of the programme is to consolidate gains made during the previous interventions through support to initiatives aimed at strengthening capacities of democratic institutions, legal frameworks, institutional structures, and processes. The project complements the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to strengthen independence and oversight functions as articulated

in GOSL Medium Term National Development Program¹⁶. It contributes to Cluster 4: Governance and Accountability of the Sierra Leone Medium-Term National Development Plan (MT-NDP 2019–2023), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5 and 16, and the priorities of the African Union Agenda (AUA) Goals 11 and 17. The programme employs two pronged approaches, with strategic level interventions crafted to support oversight at the central level, gender responsive legal frameworks and capacities while ensuring capacities and procedures are strengthened at the community level for people centred local development.

The Programme utilizes a combination of National and Direct Implementation (NIM/DIM) modalities to deliver outputs in partnership with the Electoral Commission, Parliament of Sierra Leone, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, National Civil Registration Authority, and media institutions. The project also supports civil society organisations (CSOs) to complement the work of government institutions and expand services to women, youth and people living with disabilities in rural communities to enhance capacities to participate, provide platforms for voice and understanding rights and responsibilities.

The need to be responsive to the COVID-19 pandemic was critical in defining project interventions. The project's priorities in this context did not only strive to meet the capacity needs of relevant institutions to respond to COVID-19, but emphasis was also placed on ensuring specific interventions address the immediate needs of local governments to support their communities respond to the pandemic and adhere to legal frameworks for the prevention of Covid-19. The implementation process was mainly guided by strict adherence with NaCOVERC COVID-19 regulations to ensure the safety of staff and project beneficiaries especially in remote communities in the regions.

3. Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the UNDP Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio which comprises of four projects: (1) Support to Parliament, (2) Support to Integrated Civil Register, (3) Support to Media Development & Civic education; and Support to Local Governance. It will assess the progress, achievements and lessons learned, as well as challenges faced regarding capacity strengthening support to democratic institutions, and civil society organizations working to strengthen oversight, citizen's inclusion, participation and voice. The evaluation will review the impact of project interventions at local, regional and national levels within the wider context of the technical and financial assistance provided by UNDP and its partners. Specifically, the evaluation will assess the impact of UNDP's support towards strengthening capacity of oversight institutional, local governance structures, integrated civil register, and inclusion in governance processes.

4. Scope and objectives of evaluation

The evaluation will focus mainly on assessing the achievements of the various components within the SDI Portfolio document. It will focus on assessing the impact of programme interventions spanning from 2020 to present. Specifically, it will examine the impact of UNDP's support to the Parliament with a focus on institutional capacities strengthening, outreach and accessibility of Parliament, Gender responsive lawmaking, civil society inclusion into the work of Parliament.

Focus will as well be placed on efforts towards promoting decentralisation legal framework, capacities for effective inclusive decentralisation and capacities for communities to input into community-level

¹⁶ Government of Sierra Leone, Medium Term National Development Program 2019-2023, Vol. 1, P. 125

planning and development interventions. The Assessment will also examine the innovative approach of partnership between private sector, government and civil society in community-led development. The consultancy will further explore the impact of programme support aimed at strengthening wholistic local development in Kono.

The evaluation of the support to the Integrated Civil register relating to institutional capacity (technical, policy and legal) strengthening, technologies deployed in support of generating data on citizens and residents, and the communication/education of communities on vital events.

Specific objectives of the evaluation include:

- Review the performance of the SDI programme interventions in achieving the outputs stated in the programme document and their contributions to CPD outcomes.
- Review of programme approach and coherence in delivering programme results.
- Assess the factors that have been influenced community and national ownership of programme results and its sustainability.
- Assess the knowledge, visibility and communication employed by both programme and government counterparts around the programme results.
- Assess the appropriateness of the project strategy, implementation approach, and programme institutional/management arrangements.
- Document best practices and lessons learned from the programme to feed into the next phase of the programme cycle.
- Proffer concrete recommendations that may be required for enhancing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of a future programme.

5. Evaluation criteria and key questions

The evaluation will follow the Organization of Economic Cooperation Development (OECD), Development Assistance Committee (DAC)'s evaluation criteria – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact

and sustainability. Partnership, Gender Empowerment and Social Inclusion (GESI) and human rights will

be added as cross cutting criteria. The guiding questions outlined below should be further refined by the

consultant and agreed with UNDP prior to the commencement of the evaluation: The assessment on the contribution of the projects to development results through its activities will be made in accordance with the following evaluation criteria:

- Relevance of projects outputs.
- Effectiveness of project interventions in terms of achieving stated goals.
- Efficiency of project interventions in terms of use of human and financial resources.
- Sustainability of the results to which the project contributes.

Relevance

- To what extent does UNDP Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio respond to the priorities of the Government of Sierra Leone National Development Plan (2019-2023) and similar strategies, the UNDP Country Programme Document (2020-2023), Embassy of Ireland Mission Strategy 2019-2023 and the Sustainable Development Goals?
- How does the support for project interventions contribute to the longer-term

development results in terms of approaches, capacities, policies and strategies?

- How relevant have project interventions been in leveraging support sustainable development?
- Do the interventions meet the practical and strategic needs of all genders, persons with disability, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups?

Coherence

- To what extent the UNDP Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio is coherent with Government's policies?
- To what extent does the intervention support national legislation and initiatives that aim to improve gender equality and human rights? What lessons can be learned?
- To what extent the UNDP Strengthening Democratic Institutions Portfolio addressed the synergies and interlinkages with other interventions carried out by UN and other development partners?

Efficiency

- Has the programme been implemented within its stated timeframe and cost estimates?
- Did the programme interventions focus on the set of activities that were expected to produce significant results?
- Were there sufficient (human and financial) resources allocated towards achievement of the programme objectives?
- Were different resources allocated in ways that considered gender equality, and inclusion of person with disability and youth? If so, how were they allocated? Was differential resource allocation appropriate?
- Was there any identified synergy between UNDP-funded interventions and other similar interventions that contributed to reducing costs while supporting results?
- Has there been over expenditure or under expenditure in programme interventions?
- Were there any unanticipated events, opportunities or constraints? What could be done differently in the future?
- What measures were taken to assure the quality of development results and management practices, both in relation to process and products, and to partnership strategies?
- What monitoring and evaluation procedures were applied by UNDP and partners to ensure greater accountability?

Effectiveness

- Have the expected programme (quantitative and qualitative) results been achieved and what were the supporting or impeding factors?
- Were the approaches, resources and conceptual frameworks relevant to achieve intended outputs?
- What are the main lessons learned from the partnership strategies and what are the possibilities of replication?
- To what extent have interventions' objectives and results contributed to gender equality, women and youth empowerment and human rights in governance processes?
- Which aspects of the interventions had the greatest achievements? What have been the supporting factors? How can UNDP build upon or replicate these achievements?

- In which areas does the programme component have the least achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can they be overcome?
- Were the approaches, resources and conceptual frameworks used relevant to the achievement of planned outcomes/outputs?
- What were the unintended results (positive/negative) of project interventions?

Impact

- Are the portfolio interventions causing a significant change in the lives of the intended beneficiaries?
- How did the portfolio interventions cause higher-level effects (such as changes in social norms or systems)? To what extent have impacts contributed to equal power relations between people of different genders?
- Are all the intended target groups, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, benefiting equally from the portfolio interventions?
- Are the portfolio interventions transformative – does it create enduring changes in norms – including gender norms – and systems, whether intended or not?
Are the interventions leading to other changes, including “scalable” or “replicable” results?
How will the interventions contribute to changing society for the better?

Sustainability

- To what extent were sustainability considerations taken into account in the design and implementation of interventions? How was this concern reflected in the design of the programme component and in the implementation of activities at different levels?
- Were exit strategies programme interventions appropriately defined and implemented, and what steps have been taken to ensure sustainability of results?
- How did the development of partnerships at local and national level contribute to sustainability of the results?
- How were different stakeholders engaged in the design and implementation? Have interventions been implemented with appropriate and effective partnership strategies? What has been the nature and added value of these partnerships?
- To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights, and human development by primary stakeholders?

Human right, Gender equality and disability inclusion

- To what extent have poor, indigenous and persons with disability, women, men and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the project?
- To what extent has the portfolio integrated Human Rights Based Approach in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project? Have the resources been used in an efficient way to address Human Rights in the implementation?
- Is the gender marker assigned to this project representative of reality?
- To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the promoting the rights of women and persons with disability? Did any unintended effects emerge for women, men or vulnerable groups?

6. Evaluation methodology

The methodology mentioned in this section is indicative. The evaluator should propose a final detail methodological framework in the inception report based on the systematic review of the portfolio documents. Evaluator should adopt both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The qualitative data assessment should include the secondary project data to be collected and developed for more insight into the project's accomplishments and lessons learned. The evaluation stages include (i) desk review, (ii) prepare inception report, (iii) field visits to project's provinces and districts, (iv) data analysis and interpretation, and (v) evaluation report writing and finalization.

The consultant/evaluator will be responsible for designing appropriate theory-based evaluation methodology including designing tools, developing questionnaire and other instruments for data collection and analysis based on programme theory of change. A kick-off meeting should be organized with UNDP and evaluation partners to discuss on data collection plan, expectations, and tools and techniques to be adhered for collection of primary information. The consultant should use, but not limited, the following methods for data collection:

Desk review

The evaluator should review portfolio documents which includes portfolio notes, project proposals, progress reports, consolidated quarterly and annual reports, minutes of project board meetings, project modification document, knowledge products, research, monitoring reports and legal review reports, communication and visibility reports, case stories, IEC Materials etc. Please see annex -1 for relevant portfolio documents. In addition, the evaluator will review literatures, relevant research, and donors' and government's reports.

Interview/Consultation

The consultant will conduct in-depth key informant interviews (online or virtual) to gather primary data from key stakeholders. For this, evaluator should develop checklist and evaluation questions. This includes interviewing representatives from donors and partners. The evaluator also conducts group interview, Focus Group discussion, with portfolio stakeholders and beneficiaries. Interview should also include relevant UN agencies and other implementing partners. While organizing interviews and consultations with beneficiaries, the evaluator should ensure the participation of women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

Field observation

Evaluator is expected to directly observe portfolio interventions in provinces and districts. This also includes observing the functioning of the project supported community and stakeholder's groups, platform and infrastructures. The evaluator will follow the COVID-19 protocols during the mission. If field mission is not possible due to COVID-19 crisis, it should be discussed and mutually agreed with UNDP.

Case story

Using thematic case studies, evaluator may assess the impact of the project on the beneficiaries, particularly the benefits they accrued from the project and the visible changes in their lives, and overall well-being. The gender and social inclusion should be well considered while capturing and documenting the stories in the report.

7. Evaluation management and institutional arrangement

Role (Who)	Responsibilities (What)
Evaluation Advisory Group	<p>The senior management will provide advisory role throughout the evaluation implantation. This group includes Resident Representative as Evaluation Commissioner, Deputy Resident Representative, Team Lead of Programme Support Unit and Cluster Team Leads. The key roles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure the timely implementation of the evaluation plan through monitoring and advising the process ▪ Safeguard the independence of the evaluation exercise and ensure quality of evaluations ▪ Ensure that all steps in the evaluation process are applied as defined in the UNDP evaluation guidelines ▪ Ensure that gender equality and woman's empowerment and other cross-cutting issues are considered in all steps of the evaluation process ▪ Ensure management responses are prepared for evaluation with time-bound key actions for their implementation ▪ Approval of final terms of reference (TORs), final evaluation reports and management responses before final submission to the Evaluation Resource Centre (ERC)
Evaluation Manager	<p>The principal responsibility for managing this evaluation resides with the UNDP CO in Sierra Leone. The UNDP CO will contract the consultant and ensure the timely implementation of the evaluation. The evaluator will directly report to the Evaluation Manager i.e., M&E Specialist in this case. The Evaluation Manager will assure smooth, quality and independent implementation of the evaluation with needful guidance from UNDP's Senior Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review ToR ensuring that they meet UNDP guidance requirements ▪ Assure smooth, quality, and independent implementation of the evaluation with needful guidance from UNDP's Senior Management.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in hiring consultant by reviewing proposals and complete the recruitment process. ▪ Organize a kick-off meeting/briefing with evaluation team. ▪ Provide UNDP evaluation policies and guidelines to the evaluation team. ▪ Ensure that the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation standards are adhered to, including safeguarding of transparency and independence. ▪ Supervise, guide, and provide feedback and comments to the evaluation consultants. ▪ Ensure quality of the evaluation. ▪ Review the evaluation inception report, ensuring that it meets UNDP requirements. ▪ Review management response and action plan. ▪ Report to the senior management on compliance with the evaluation plan, completion of management responses and key actions and results of the quality assessment. ▪ Upload the ToR, report and management response and action plan to ERC. ▪ Monitor implementation of evaluation action plan and update the progress at ERC.
Portfolio Team	<p>The portfolio team led by SDI Programme Specialist consists of programme and support staff. Their key roles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide required portfolio documents. ▪ Provide preliminary partner, stakeholder and beneficiary information. ▪ Arrange all the field visits, stakeholder consultations and interviews as needed. ▪ With evaluation manager, the portfolio team will further provide briefing to evaluation team ▪ Provide comments and clarification on the ToR, inception report and draft evaluation reports. ▪ Assist in circulating and getting the feedback on ToR, inception and evaluation report from stakeholders. ▪ Respond to evaluation recommendations by providing management responses and key

	<p>actions to all recommendations addressed to UNDP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure dissemination of the evaluation report to all the stakeholders including the project board. ▪ Implement relevant key actions on evaluation recommendations. ▪ Contact regional focal points to seek advice when dispute arises.
Evaluation Reference Group	<p>Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) includes key partners and stakeholder including representatives from project management board. The primary roles of reference group are to support the evaluation process, provide feedback and direction in key stages. The key roles of ERG include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perform advisory role throughout the evaluation process providing inputs into and review of ToR, inception reports and draft evaluation reports. ▪ Ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment and other cross-cutting issues are considered in all steps of the evaluation process. ▪ Ensure that the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) evaluation standards are adhered to, including safeguarding of transparency and independence. ▪ Provide advice on the evaluation relevance, the appropriateness of evaluation questions and methodology, and the extent to which conclusions are credible, considering the evidence presented, and recommendations action oriented. ▪ Support and provide input to the development of the management responses and key actions.

8. Deliverables and timelines

Under the direct supervision of the Evaluation Manager and in coordination with the UNDP Program Support Unit (PSU), portfolio team and collaboration with relevant partners, the Consultant will accomplish the following deliverables in accordance with the stipulated timelines covering a total period of Thirty (30) working days.

S/N	Deliverable	Timelines	Payments
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1	Inception report: An inception report detailing the evaluator's understanding of the assignment and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of proposed methods, proposed sources of data and data collection procedures. These should be included in an evaluation matrix, a proposed schedule of tasks with activities and deliverables. Inception report should be prepared before going into full-fledged evaluation exercise.	5 Days	30%
2	Draft report: The draft report should include desk review and data collection methodology used, analysis and interpretation with discussion in the prescribed report outline. The consultant should also present the draft report in debriefing session to discuss on initial findings and recommendations.	21 Days	50%
3	Second draft report: A revised report based on the comments from the stakeholder or validation workshop. A PowerPoint Presentation for evaluation dissemination Final MTE report: A final report in prescribed format with annexes including the response in the evaluation audit trail form. The evaluation audit trail form can be sent separately to show that comments from the UNDP and its stakeholders are addressed properly.	4 Days	20%
Total		30 Days	100%

9. Evaluator competencies

This Mid-term evaluation will be conducted by an external consultant who will work closely with the Country Office M&E Specialist, the SDI Team and government counterpart in the conduct and direction of the evaluation.

Corporate Competencies

- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality, and age sensitivity and adaptability.
- Demonstrates diplomacy and tact in dealing with sensitive and complex situations.
- Strong communication, team building, interpersonal, analysis, and planning skills.

Professionalism

- Effective communication.
- Problem solving skills.
- Demonstrated ability to negotiate and apply good judgment.
- Shows pride in work and in achievements.
- Is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results.
- Superior leadership and strategic management skills with an excellent understanding of international development issues and knowledge of the UN system.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, in a multi-cultural setting; ability to conduct results-based management and reporting, objectivity and ability to analyze large multi-country data sets in short period.

- Good understanding of gender and human right based approach, and skills, experience and commitment to gender issues including experience of conducting inclusive evaluation.

Planning & Organizing

- Organizes and accurately completes multiple tasks by establishing priorities while taking into consideration special assignments, frequent interruptions, deadlines, available resources and multiple reporting relationships.
- Plan, coordinate and organize workload while remaining aware of changing priorities and competing deadlines.
- Establish, build and maintain effective working relationships with staff, partners and beneficiaries to achieve the planned results.
- Experience working collaboratively in small teams with tight deadlines.

10. Required qualification and experience

Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advanced university degree in Development Studies, Monitoring and Evaluation, Human Rights, Law, or Political Science.
Experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At least 7 years of international development experience or at least 5 years of experience in project/programme design and implementation. ▪ Relevant professional experience in evaluation of governance, parliamentary, or human rights programmes or other relevant programmes at all levels. ▪ Strong monitoring and evaluation background, sound methodological skills and knowledge of evaluation methods and techniques. ▪ Extensive experience in working with the UN/multilateral development agencies and UNDP country offices. ▪ Demonstrate experience in working with a variety of stakeholders. ▪ Technical knowledge and experience of inclusive evaluation and other cross-cutting areas such gender equality, disability issues, rights-based approach, and capacity development
Language Requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to communicate clearly in written and spoken English.

11. Ethical considerations

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. The contractor must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The contractor must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

The contractor will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct upon acceptance of the assignment.

12. Submission of application

Qualified applicants are required to submit both technical and financial proposals through the link provided.

Technical proposal comprising of the following:

- **Personal CV or P11**, indicating all experience from similar consultancy, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the candidate and three (3) professional references.
- **Brief description** (max. 1 page) of why you consider yourself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a methodology (max. 1 page) for how you will approach and complete the assignment.
- **Proposal** containing a summary description of proposed strategy and how the strategy will ensure the achievement of the required tasks, proposed methodology, draft agenda for half-day session on discussing the findings of the evaluation (max 2-3 pages).
- **Example of works** demonstrating the individual past experiences working on evaluations for the UN system (document's links)

Financial proposal: Financial proposals are expected to be realistic indicating the all-inclusive, fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs. No adjustment thereafter would be allowed.

For any further clarification, you may contact the Head of Procurement (procurement.sl@undp.org).

13. Evaluation criteria

Offers received will be evaluated using a combined scoring method, where the qualifications and proposed methodology will be weighted 70%, and combined with the price offer, which will be weighted 30%.

Criteria to be used for rating the qualifications and methodology

Technical evaluation criteria (total 70 points)

- Proposed methodology of approach to the consultancy [25 marks].
- Demonstrated experience in similar consultancy work especially in evaluation of core governance or parliamentary programmes in developing countries especially working within the UN system. [25 marks].
- Demonstrated/evidence of relevant education and experience in M&E, Development Studies, Human Rights and Law. [20 marks].

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 49 points in the Technical Evaluation will be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Financial evaluation (total 30 points)

All technically qualified proposals will be rated out of 30 points. The maximum points (30) will be assigned to the lowest financial proposal.

UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

14. Annexes

Relevant documents and annexes will be shared with the evaluator after selection process is completed and the evaluator is on board. The relevant annexes include the following:

Annex 1: Documents to be reviewed and consulted

- UNSDCF 2020-2023
- UNDP Sierra Leone CPD (2020-2023)
- Government of Sierra Leone National Development Plan (2019-2023)
- Portfolio documents
- Theory of change and Result Framework
- Portfolio and project reports
- Annual workplans
- Activity designs
- Consolidated quarterly, annual and donor reports
- Results-oriented monitoring reports and Back to Office Report (BTOR)
- Portfolio meetings minutes
- Project board meetings minutes
- Technical/Financial monitoring reports
- Other relevant communication materials and knowledge products such as research studies, policy brief, blogs, etc.

Annex 2: List of key agencies, stakeholders and partners for evaluation

UN Agencies:

- UNDP
- FAO
- UN WOMEN
- UNICEF
- IOM

Stakeholders:

- Irish Aid, Irish Embassy
- European Union Delegation
- National Civil Registration Authority
- Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
- Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs
- National Aids Secretariat, Ministry of Youth Affairs
- Political Parties Registration and Regulation Commission

- Network Movement for Justice and Development
- Parliament
- Electoral Commission
- Fambul Tok
- Ministry of Youth Affairs
- National Council for Civic Education & Development
- Media Reform Coordinating Group
- National Youth Commission
- Campaign for Good Governance
- 50-50 Group

Annex 3: Inception report template

Annex 4: Evaluation matrix template

Annex 5: IEO's guidance on structure and content of report

Annex 6: UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation-Pledge

Annex 7: Evaluation Audit Trial Form