



POST PROJECT EVALUATION
FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND

UNDEF Funded Project / UDF-14-595-SIL
Enhancing Women's Land Ownership Rights in Eastern Sierra Leone

31 July 2018

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I. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Over a period of 24 months between 1st

For all the successes of the project, and simply getting the discussion about women's land rights on the table given how much of a taboo subject it was, let alone having women successfully acquire land, should be seen as major step forward, the project could have been improved. The overall development goal

land for food production to sustain a living for themselves and their dependents. These issues prevail over a decade later.

Women's access to, and control of, land, particularly in relation to inheritance and ownership rights, is another area where gender imbalances constrain women. The land tenure system, closely linked to a male dominated customary system, continues to exclude them from decision-making processes on land. Only among the Mende ethnic group, dominant in the eastern and southern districts of the country, do female Paramount Chiefs exist, but women's rights generally remain on the periphery.

The Government of Sierra Leone has committed to gender equality and women's empowerment, signing a range of policy declarations and enacting legislation including the Devolution of Estates Act 2007. This criminalizes the act of depriving a woman from inheriting her husband's property after his death and outlines how the inheritance should be shared among surviving family, with 35% going to the spouse, 35% to the surviving children, 15% to parents and 15% in line with any customary laws. Yet translating these laws from policy into practice has been difficult. The act only recognizes an individual's right to land, not a family's, and the vast majority of Sierra Leonean women live under traditional land tenure structures that do not recognize a woman's right to own property. Prevailing cultural norms, which see women as the property of their husband's family once married, and therefore not entitled to inherit land from their father persist. Many women, and men, are not even aware of the provisions within the

(ii) Project Objective and Intervention Rationale

cultural beliefs and practices, which allowed men to retain such rights, prevailed. Almost all of the women who benefited from the project spoke of not previously knowing that they were entitled to land under law - Devolution of Estates Act 2007 - until the project trainings started. They stressed that prior to the start of the project the discussion of wowo

Training that enhanced women's knowledge about their rights with regards to land was one effective

v. *Sustainability*

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V. CONCLUSIONS

	audio messaging materials could have been uploaded onto Meg-Sticks to allow for their use beyond the life-cycle of the project.
Significant strides were made during the project in Small Bo Chiefdom with regards to women's land rights, establishing by-laws and bringing women into the decision-making structures at chiefdom level.	Document the successes achieved in individual chiefdoms in a case study to understand how, in their own words, attitudes changes and to draw out lessons learned which could be applied to future interventions in the region and the country.
HUWASAL continues to hear from women who believe they have been denied access to land. A residual barrier to women accessing their land rights where mediated solutions are not possible is access to justice mechanisms for redress.	Strengthen partnerships with organizations such as the Legal Aid Board to develop clear referral pathways guidelines for women seeking legal redress on land issues.
Much of the focus was on Devolution of Estates Act 2007, but more could have been done to raise awareness of the draft National Land Policy, particularly at the level of chieftaincy and local council engagement.	Better connect the higher-level advocacy component of the project to the national land policy drafting and implementation process.
The project has created the space and environment for growing cooperation between key stakeholders to ensure that women's land rights are jointly addressed	Formalize this cooperation with the establishment of a technical working group that continues to hold discussions aimed at improving women's land rights on a quarterly basis. This would help avoid any possible duplication of efforts.

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VII. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Evaluation Questions and Detailed Findings

In addition to using the broader questions for evaluation set out in the UNDEF evaluation manual further questions, specifically related to the project in Eastern Sierra Leone will be asked. Below are some examples that will be used. Different questions will be posed depending on who is being interviewed. This is not an exhaustive list.

Relevance

How did you select the districts, the chiefdoms and finally the communities for the project?
How was the training manual that was produced for Output 2.1 tailored to the local community dynamics?
One of the major obstacles to the achievement of women's land right were men (particularly family members) was enough attention given to men in the design and implementation of the project? What more could have been done and what you some of the risks have been?
What impact did the decisions of chiefs/government officials to send deputies have on the projects overall impact?
How many MPs who attended the parliamentary workshop are still in elected office? What mechanisms were put in place to try and establish some continuity between elections given the high turnover rates?
How much was this training needed in your community? How much of an obstacle is the lack of access to land to your livelihood? Did you hear the radio messages produced by this project?

Effectiveness

What did you learn from attending the trainings/workshops and how have you used that new knowledge in your everyday actions in the community? What barriers persist?
How easy was it to set up to the women-to-women networks? How did you do it? And how effective was the approach of using women to empower other women? What were the added benefits?
If you are aware of the radio-phone in debates and discussions tell me about the discussions you heard.
How were the numerous partnerships developed during the project sustained? Between grantee and partner, women groups and communities, chiefs and communities etc.

Efficiency

How was the partnership between HUWASAL and WOCERP? Were there any challenges and if so how were they resolved?
Did the women to women networks run without being too much of an administration burden?
Did the lack of an implementing partner in Kono have any impact of the projects efficiency? If so how and what was done to mitigate against this?

Impact

How have you used the knowledge acquired to advance women's land rights in your community/district/chiefdom? Have you observed a marked change in attitudes? If so what? And what, in particular, has driven this change in attitude?

How do you see the mid/long term benefits of the project working out now that it has officially drawn to a close?

How do you plan on sharing the knowledge you have acquired on the issue in the future with others?

In the design of the project there seems to be a lack of activities relating to how this new knowledge will actually improve livelihoods and socioeconomic status of wome

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

Project documents UDF-SIL-14-595:

Project Document

Mid-Term Project Report

Annex 3: Persons Interviewed

11 June 2018	
Christopher Caulker	Outreach Officer, Legal Aid Board

Annex 4: Acronyms

HUWASAL	Humanist Watch Salone
UNDEF	UN Democracy Fund
WOCERP	Women's Centre for Human Rights and Progress