

NON-STATE ACTORS PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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by UNIPSIL NSA Project Implementation Unit

The Non State Actor project provides an innovative approach of support to electoral processes and consolidation of peace in Sierra Leone. It aims to create an atmosphere of political tolerance by investing in the influence that political parties and other non-state actors have on Sierra Leone's political process. It also seeks to promote greater political participation in particular by women. It is funded by a 5 million US\$ from the UN Peace building Fund

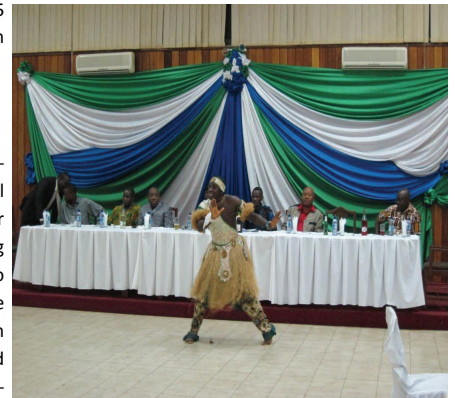
SLPP holds intraparty retreat in Bo

On 7 February, 2012, members of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) held a one day intra party retreat in Bo Town Hall. Stakeholders used the opportunity to take a critical assessment of their party and to dialogue with party members. In his keynote address, the party leader Mr. John Benjamin insisted that as the party prepares for the 2012 elections, it is imperative that Councillors, MPs, party executives at all level remain united and work together. The party agreed to address key challenges including ineffective membership drive, lack of funds, non-respect of the party structure, little recognition for Councillors, a poor reward system, and non-enforcement of the party disciplinary code .

The retreat is the third such event after retreats PMDC and the NDA. The APC have scheduled their retreat for 24-25 February. As part of the NSA project, each benefiting party shall have the opportunity to hold one retreat in each region to strategize, reach out to members, and improve internal processes and strengthen unity and cohesion.

Political Parties Pledge Support at APPYA Fund Raising Dinner

On 14th February 2012 approximately 60 people responded to the invitation by the All Political Parties Youth Association (APPYA) for a fundraising dinner at the Kingtom Bank Complex. The get together, which also included cultural performances, was aimed at popularizing APPYA and to raise funds for the organization. Representatives at the dinner commended APPYA for the achievements registered so far and highlighted APPYA's exemplary role in spearheading the collaboration of different political parties. During the dinner both APC and SLPP renewed their commitments to free and fair elections and emphasized the importance of articulating differences of opinion. As a show of confidence and encouragement, the APC, SLPP and PMDC representative together also pledged more than 11 million Leones in support for the Association. In addition, individual contributions were also made. Concluding the event, APPYA handed over "Certificates of Merit" to Partners including Media Houses, PPRC, the former APPYA Secretary General and Chairman, UNIPSIL, and others.



Female traditional leaders meet for National Conference in Kenema & reject meddling by politicians

The first national conference for female traditional leaders (Soweis) was held in Kenema on Wednesday Feb 8, 2012. This historic event, funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund, was attended by more than 200 Sowies and chiefs from across the country, representing some of the oldest female organisations in the country. Paramount Representatives from the Ministry of Social Welfare, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Human Rights Commission in Sierra Leone and UNIPSIL addressed the participants. Together, the participants looked at ways to encourage women participation in politics and to stand in the elections. Also, participants strategized to reduce election-related, gender

based violence. Following the conference, additional trainings were held in Bo and Makeni, with a further training later to take place in Freetown. Following the trainings, in a continuous process of engagement with grassroots community women, the Soweis and paramount chiefs will take these messages to their communities. The activity is organised by African Foundation for Development, Sierra Leone (AFFORD).

"Before the training , I had never stood up and spoken in public because I was discouraged by my husband to do so. But, with the support of the other women I have met, I now feel empowered to speak"

Upcoming Events	Dates	Location	UN Focal point
APPWA bi-annual Meeting	19 -20 th Feb 2012	Port Loko	Nabeela Tunis (033321321)
Soweis Conference and training	21-22 nd Feb 2012	Freetown YMCA	Robert Moikowa (076679246)
Communique Screening Video 2	20-23 rd Feb 2012	Bo	Abu Sessay (076800030)
	24-25 th Feb 2012	Pujehun	
	26-27 th Feb 2012	Moyamba	
Civil Society Retreat	23-24 th Feb 2012	Makeni	Abu Sesay
APC intraparty dialogue	24-25 th Feb 2012	Makeni	Moses Orogade (076632410)