



[Name of Fund or Joint Programme]

GENERIC ANNUAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2011

Programme Title & Project Number

- Programme Title: Promoting human rights culture through increased compliance of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone
- Programme Number: PBF/SLE/C-3
- MPTF Office Project Reference Number:³ 00077295

Country, Locality(s), Thematic/Priority Area(s)²

Country/Region: Sierra Leone/West Africa

Thematic/Priority

PBF priority area 2: Promote coexistence & peaceful conflict resolution
PBF outcome 7: Exercising of fundamental human rights by general public improved to redress enduring practices of political and economic exclusion e.g. through support to institutional human rights mechanisms, safeguard and oversight arrangements for the promotion of fundamental human rights

Participating Organization(s)

District Human Rights Committees (DHRCs) and other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Implementing Partners

Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL)

Programme/Project Cost (US\$): \$200,000

MPTF/JP Contribution:
200,000 USD

Programme Duration

Overall Duration: 12 months

Start Date⁴ : MPTF initial transfer of money on 17/01/2011 although OHCHR grants committee did not transfer the money to the implementing partner until 04.07.2011

¹ The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

² Strategic Results, as formulated in the Performance Management Plan (PMP) for the PBF; Sector for the UNDG ITF.

³ The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to “Project ID” on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

⁴ The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

Government Contribution
400,000 USD on salaries and
other recurrent administrative
costs

TOTAL: 200,000

End Date (or Revised End Date)⁵: May 2012

Operational Closure Date⁶ 31st May 2012

Expected Financial Closure Date 31st May 2012

Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.

Assessment/Review - if applicable *please attach*

Yes No Date:

Mid-Term Evaluation Report – *if applicable please attach*

Yes No Date:

Report Submitted By

- Name: Frances P Alghali
 - Title: Executive Secretary OF HRCSL
 - Participating Organization (Lead):
- Email address: piagielaverley@yahoo.com

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⁵ As per approval by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

⁶ All activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF programme have been completed. Agencies to advise the MPTF Office.

NARRATIVE REPORT FORMAT

I. Purpose

The overall objective of this project is to support the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone in accomplishing the eight goals outlined in its Strategic Plan.

Furthermore, this project also aims to;

- a) Promote the culture of human rights by enhancing HRCSL's services to the communities as mandated by its Act.
- b) Contribute to the implementation of the recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2004.

This project has four main outcomes that are aligned to HRCSL's strategic plan: These are; to raise public awareness on human rights issues concerning "equality and non-discrimination, to regionalize HRCSL's services such that people have access to its services, to strengthen the institutional capacity of HRCSL's Commissioners and staff for greater effectiveness; and to promote the implementation of the TRC recommendations.

To this end, the project intends to achieve the following outputs;

1. Strengthened capacity of Commissioners and staff including its enhanced outreach activities.
2. Improved capacity of civil society organizations and government officials on human rights issues.
3. Enhanced human rights education and the TRC through community awareness raising programmes.
4. Nationwide human rights situation monitored and reported.
5. The promote the rights to equality and non-discrimination.

II. Resources

Financial Resources:

- Agency Contribution of Le. 162,993,500 approximately 37,470 USD Equivalent was contributed towards the dissemination of 2010 annual reports.
- Budget revision was done due to the inadequate funds provided for the printing and dissemination of the annual report with an additional funds provided by GoSL from the Commission operational costs.
- Good financial information is critical to the effective management of the project. The Commission relies on financial information to effectively oversee the activities of the projects. Such information was used by project staff for planning and program delivery. Overall control of the project finances is the responsibility of the Commissioners, Executive Secretary & DFA. This team has the fiduciary responsibility to ensure Generally Acceptable Accounting Procedures (GAAP) are utilized and mainly provide general oversight of the Commission's financial resources. Implementation of the project and financial direction is the responsibility of the management team generally, but mainly the ES and DFA. The financial status of the project is recorded in a financial statement. Cash

book and bank reconciliation statement were prepared on a monthly basis. These control tools shows a clear picture of the financial position of the project account. These documents are prepared by the Accounts Officer. However, late disbursement of funds on the part of the donor resulted in to delay in implementation of activities. Exchange rate fluctuation is one of the factors which lead to huge variances in some activity lines as this was beyond HRCSL's control. Provisions were not made also in the budget for bank charges as such deductions had to be made from other activity lines. Provision of information on good practices and constraints related to the management of the financial aspects of implementing the programme, including receipt of transfers, administrative bottlenecks and/or other issues affected financial management of the programme.

Human Resources

- National Staff: The effective implementation of this project required participation from both staff in the Head Office and Regional staff. Total staff involved in executing this project is 40 including program support staff.
- International Staff: The services of an International Institutional Capacity Advisor (ICA) were procured to strengthen the capacity of the Directorate of Complaints, Investigations and Legal Services (DCILS).

III. Implementation and Monitoring Arrangements

- In terms of training activities, standardization of all training materials and ensuring that the training curricula developed responded to the training needs of beneficiary CSOs, District Human Rights Committees (DHRCs), Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and partners in all the 14 districts was crucial. The program was implemented in all regions of the country. Participants list was gender and disability sensitive, which is why in every region, diverse groups benefited. In each of the 14 districts, the number of participants was 50, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 650. The project implementation followed a participatory approach and stakeholder such as the DHRCs were part of the implementation.
- Through the HRCSL's procurement policy and regulations, which is based on the Public Procurement Act of 2004, any procurements followed the acceptable procedures of the commission. Activity reports on every project related activity undertaken, was submitted and periodic oversight by Commissioners and Senior Management ensured that project activities were consistent with objectives, and that the GAAP and other accountability mechanisms to ensure project resources are utilized for their intended purposes. Activity Evaluation reports, participants lists and on time liquidation of all project related finances was ensured.

Results

IV. Output I: Strengthened capacity of the Commission including its enhanced outreach.

The Commission paid rent for its three regional offices in Northern -Makeni, Southern - Bo, and Eastern - Kenema districts. The full payment of the rent for three regional offices for 2 years has helped HRCSL sustain its regional presence and thus continue its outreach activities in the country. Similarly, the commission effectively relocated to its new offices built by Government and communication equipments at the former Headquarters of the Commission was effectively transferred and installed at the new HRCSL's Headquarters in Freetown. Funds were also utilized for the provision of internet connectivity for the Headquarters and Regional offices of the Commission for a period of 6 months.

The Commission contracted consultancy services of an Institutional Capacity Advisor (ICA) for a period of three months between July to September 2011. The Consultant who was attached to the Directorate of Complaints, Investigations and Legal Services (DCILS) was contracted to; (i) review existing investigation processes, (ii) deepen staff knowledge on the importance of quasi judicial functions (iii) facilitate public hearings and (iv) strengthen the complaints handling processes of the directorate stalled due to the absence of a substantive Director.

Since recruitment in July 2011, the ICD technical expertise addressed 50% of the 120 backlog cases in the directorate and improved significantly the services provided by the directorate. The ICD technically supported the mediation of a matter between Adimele Decker and 3 others against the Metropolitan Police and the Freetown City Council on a case of Inhuman and Degrading treatment meted out by the MP on the complainant contrary to section 20 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991. The consultant also finalized the directorate's long awaited complaints compendium, developed a Concept Note on public hearing based on complaints lodged against extractive industries and also developed a project proposal on strengthening the Commission's capacity to effectively execute its Quasi-Judicial functions. In order to enhance the capacity of staff in the directorate and the commission as a whole to address human rights complaints more efficiently, the Consultant developed a Complaints Handling Manual to standardize complaints handling at headquarters and in the regions. The manual, which is yet to be validated and approved, will be used by staff as well as other stakeholders who are interested in understanding and using the complaints handling system of the commission.

A Strategic Planning consultant was also recruited in November 2011 to help in review of the commission's strategic plan which was due to expire in 2011. A final draft of the strategic plan is now almost ready for approval. The following variances however exist namely; that the regional offices have not yet been properly furnished or equipped to the extent required by the project, and the purchase of motor bikes is yet pending. It is worthy to note however that these variances will be addressed during the second phase of the project with the release of the second tranche of funds and the approved PBF II Expanded project during the course of the year.

Output II: Enhancement of capacity of Civil Society and Government on Human Rights (Strategic Goal 7)

The Commission conducted 14 training workshops in the 12 districts and the Western Area on “Human rights approach to disability issues, media relations and the exercise of democratic rights, women’s political participation, HRCSL’s strategic plan 2012 – 2014, the peace museum, and the Child Rights Act 2007 (with specific focus on female genital mutilation (FGM) and the age of marriage as well HRCSL’s recommendation in the 2010 SOHR report.

In a bid to promote the Commission’s outreach activities, all training workshops were undertaken in the local communities (i.e. Blama, Fadugu, Binkolo, Daru, Zimmi, Imperi etc) in every district to target a wider audience. The training workshops which targeted Civil Society Organizations (CSO’s), District Human Rights Committees (DHRC’s), Local Unit Commanders (LUC’s) and Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA’s) were undertaken during the dissemination of the State of Human Rights report 2010 between October – November 2011. The training aimed at equipping participants with the relevant knowledge on human rights issues for further dissemination at the various community levels. Each district received a three day programme that consisted of (a) a one day engagement, and presentation on the findings and recommendations of the state of human rights report, a two days training on the human rights issues earlier mentioned. A total of about 650 participants with 50 per district were targeted at the various community levels.

Public Lectures at the Binkolo Catholic Secondary School – Bombali District

The presentation of the on the findings and recommendation of the SOHR report 2010 engendered series of discussions on pressing human rights issues affecting communities and the appropriate steps to be taken in implementing the recommendations in the report were also noted by the participants.

Furthermore, series of consultations and engagement with stake holders and public officials on the Commission’s three year Strategic Plan 2012-2014 which serves as a road map for the Commission’s human rights interventions and a tool for evaluating the Commission’s work were also undertaken. The new strategic plan is a follow up to the 2009-2011 strategic plan which had approximately 90% of its activities implemented. The presentation on the contents of the strategic plan also engendered discussions amongst participants, during which Civil society organizations intervening in the field of human rights expressed concern in ensuring that programmes to promote and protect human rights would be designed at organizational level in line with the Commission’s strategic goals.

To bolster awareness on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and its recommendations, the Commission undertook nationwide sensitizations on the recently concluded Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process in November 2010. Participants were informed about the objectives of

the review which aimed at reviewing the human rights situations in all 192 countries every four years, share best practices on human rights issues amongst member states, and the potential benefits for participating countries.

Participants were further informed about the facilitative role played by the HRCSL in the review process, which included series of regional consultations with CSO's and government stake holders in order to ensure nationwide participation and credibility before the final presentation of the reports to the HRC in Geneva. Participants were informed that during Sierra Leone's review session in May 2011, 129 recommendations were made out of which Sierra Leone accepted 44, and said 57 had either been implemented or under implementation. It was made clear to participants that the recommendations made at the UPR session are closely linked to the recommendations made by the TRC in 2004.

Participants at the various district levels informed HRCSL staff that the information provided by the Commission on the UPR gave them the opportunity to be sensitized about the UPR for the first time. Participants were also grouped into three and guided to develop strategies and contributions among others on how the recommendations of the TRC and UPR on women, children, and security could be effectively implemented. Proposals made will feed in to the overall advocacy engagements on implementation of the UPR recommendations which have already started.

Output III: Enhanced human rights education through community awareness raising programmes.

The commission produced a total of 2,000 copies of the SOHR report 2010. As a requirement of the Commission's Act 2004, a copy of the report was presented to Parliament. This process was critical to ensure that ministers and Members of Parliament are made aware of the recommendations of the report. Parliament has now committed to discuss the State of Human Rights Report in 2012. Copies of the SOHR report were extensively distributed to stakeholders, CSOs, and traditional leaders in all the 12 districts during the dissemination of the report and discussions on human rights issues affecting different communities were elicited. The United Nations Country Team, schools and colleges also received copies of the report. Participants noted that the contents of the report would serve as a justification and a credible reference point for human rights advocacy.

In furtherance of the Commission's awareness raising drive, 24 radio programmes were aired in all community radio stations between the months of October to November 2011. Out of these, 24 programmes, 12 were interactive ones which enabled listeners to send in text messages, clarify issues on human rights and also make contributions on how the human rights situation could be improved. Community radios used included 98.1 in Freetown, Kiss 104 in Bo, 101.9 Eastern Radio in Kenema and Radio Mankeh in Makeni between May to July 2010. These programmes, mainly undertaken by the Commission's staff presented the findings on the SOHR report 2010 and its recommendations, and also presented relevant topics on basic human rights of women and children, the UPR, and disability issues. The radio sensitization programmes also aimed at raising the public's awareness on how the services of the Commission could be accessed and

utilized. Public lectures were held in Fadugu Agricultural Secondary School in which emphasis was placed on the contents of the Child Rights Act and the responsibilities of children.

Series of sensitization and awareness raising programmes on women's rights, women's participation in politics, and the 30% quota on women participation in public affairs was also undertaken in all villages targeted in various districts. Issues discussed included women's understanding of political participation, the 30% quota in strategic political positions and steps towards its achievement, barriers to women's participation in politics and the gender justice laws. The various topics discussed engendered active discussions amongst participants who informed HRCSL that despite the fact that women are still lagging behind, some improvements have been made on the situation of women. Barriers to women's participation in politics which included; educational gap, the pulling Down syndrome, political violence perpetrated by men, intimidation, poverty and favoritism were noted by participants. Furthermore, steps to overcome the listed barriers which included; education, empowerment of women to know their rights and affirmative actions were highlighted by participants. Apart from production of SOHR however, Human Rights guidelines for public officials and IEC materials were not produced. This remained a variance caused by budget adjustments.

Output IV: Human rights situation throughout the country monitored and reported.

In fulfillment of Section 9 (1) of the Commission's Act a nationwide visit of places of detention in all districts visited was undertaken using the standardized prison /police cell monitoring tool developed by the Commission with support from UNIPSIL. Police cells in all communities were visited. These monitoring visits aimed at assessing conditions of places of detention, access to courts for prisoners in remand awaiting trial among others. The commission found that the delay in trial for persons held in custody remains a major contributing factor for potential overcrowding in prisons. The Commission also established that the conditions in places of detention visited especially sanitation were appalling. Onsite discussions were also held with inmates and staff of various cells to discuss findings and make recommendations on how living condition of the cells and inmates could be improved. Findings and recommendations from these visits will be addressed in detail in the 2011 SOHR report.



Toilets at the Binkolo Police cell in Bombali district

The Commission during the dissemination of the SOHR report 2010 also conducted monitoring visits in 14 health centers which included; clinics and peripheral health units in the targeted communities with the aim of ascertaining the enjoyment of the right to health of patients. These monitoring visits were jointly undertaken with CSO representatives in the various communities. Furthermore, in an effort to build the capacity of CSOs/DHRCs and other relevant stakeholders in effectively monitoring and reporting on the Free Health Care (FHC), a training module dedicated to FHC monitoring formed part of the standardized training curriculum delivered in all the 14 districts.



HRCSL staff at the Blama Health Clinic in Small Bo, Kenema District

The variance is that the Prisons monitoring Report and the Free Health Care (FHC) Monitoring reports were not published or used as IEC materials for advocacy around the FHC policy.

- Project implementation was slowed down because project funds were only disbursed on July 14th 2011; one month after the project document was signed. Also, delays in project implementation were caused by the fact that the project implementation coincided with the period when Commissioners proceeded on annual leave, creating a lack of quorum for Commission decisions critical to project implementation.

- The capacity of District Human Rights Committees was strengthened through sustained engagements and support, particularly as it relates to joint interventions and resource sharing for effective human rights promotion and protection at the district and chiefdom levels were the Commission’s presence is yet to be felt.
- The project was tailored towards mainstreaming gender and disability and throughout its implementation it ensured the participation of Persons with Disabilities and women. Issues such as the PWD Act of 2010 and the Gender Equality Bill formed highlights of training sessions.

V. Future Work Plan (if applicable)

- Projected activities include in-house training for commissioners and staff, equipping regional offices with computers and furniture, procurement of motorbikes, Production of IEC materials, Human Rights Guidelines for Public officials, monitoring, Workshops and meetings with vulnerable groups. The total will be about US\$ 82,000 some of these activities will cover the gaps left in the previous implementation.

VI. INDICATOR BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

	Performance Indicators	Indicator Baselines	Planned Indicator Targets	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance (if any)	Source of Verification	Comments (if any)
Outcome 1⁷ Strengthened Capacity of the commission including its enhanced Outreach							
Output 1.1	Indicator 1.1.1	Rent payment for regional offices for 2 years	Rent payment for 3 regional offices.	One (2) year rental for 3 regional offices was paid and now still occupied by HRCSL	No variance	Renewed Lease Agreements, Legal processing fees and registration fees	Rent is a serious sustainability issue for HRCSL regional offices
	Indicator 1.1.2	Consultancy services hired	Hire 2 consultants to support DCILs strategic planning	1 international consultant was hired to support DCILS work and one national	No variance	HRCSL Admin. Records and management	Consultants helped enormously especially in DCILS

⁷ For PBF: Either country relevant or PMP specific.

			process of the commission	consultant to work on HRCSL's strategic plan 2012-2014			
Outcome 2 Enhanced capacity of Civil society and government on human rights							
	Indicator 2.1.1	District level engagements with duty bearers and right holders	14 District level engagements targeting 800 participants	650 CSOs, and MDAs were targeted through sensitization and other engagements	150 more people could not be met because costs went high and whether challenges impeded HRCSLs work in chiefdoms.	HRCSL and its Activity reports, Participants' lists	More work still required in reaching the grassroots
	2.1.2						
Outcome 3. Enhanced Human Rights Education through community awareness raising programmes							
	Indicator 3.1.1	Number of Radio awareness Programmes	30 radio programmes	24 radio programmes aired	The radio costs went higher than planned	HRCSL Records- Radio programmes reports	The gap of high cost was addressed with use of wider coverage radio stations
		Copies of SOHR Reports Produced	To produce and disseminate 2000 Copies of the SOHR report	SOHR Report was presented to Parliament and 2000copies of 2010 SOHR reports were produced and extensively distributed to stakeholders, CSOs, MDAs and traditional leaders in the 12 districts			Parliament's commitment to discuss the SOHR is a step in the right direction in enhancement of human rights in Sierra Leone.

<i>Output 4</i>		Build the capacity of CSOs/DHRCs and other relevant stakeholders in effectively monitoring and reporting on the Free Health Care (FHC),	Assessing conditions of places of detention, access to courts for prisoners in remand awaiting trial.	Nationwide visit of places of detention in all districts visited was undertaken using the standardized prison /police cell monitoring tool.			
		Effectively monitoring and reporting on the Free Health Care (FHC),	Training module dedicated to FHC monitoring	Conducted monitoring visits in 14 health centers which included; clinics and peripheral health units in the targeted communities	Delays in project implementation were caused annual leave of Commissioners.		