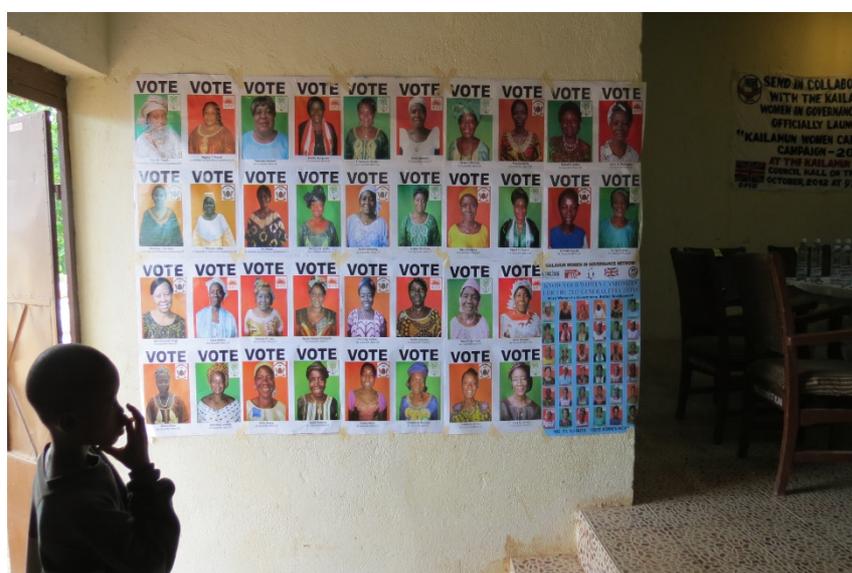


STAND STRONG: Women and politics, Kailahun, Sierra Leone

Part of Christian Aid's 2015 impact assessment on governance programming



Photograph by SEND taken during the 2012 elections.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The project: Christian Aid's support for women in governance programming

The participatory governance assessment in Sierra Leone focused on Christian Aid's partner SEND¹ and its Women in Governance Project in Kailahun district. Christian Aid has supported SEND's Women and Governance work since 2008, initially as part of the DFID-funded Global Transparency Fund (GTF) project. Between 2008 and 2012 SEND developed the Kailahun Women in Governance Network (KWIGN), a network of women's groups linked to micro-finance opportunities. SEND supported women in the network to aspire for political and electable positions in the 2012 elections, including providing financial assistance for their campaigns and collaboration with Radio Moa to increase public awareness of the women standing for election. As a result, between the 2008 and 2012 elections the number of women councillors in Kailahun increased from three to 12, out of a total of 29 councillors (41%), making it the only district to meet (and exceed) the national target of 30% women councillors. Alice Foyah was also re-elected as Kailahun's Member of Parliament (MP) in 2012, one of only 14 female MPs out of 112. Sadly, she passed away in 2013. The GTF funding, which ended in 2012 was followed by further extension funding through ENCIS².

A new two-year project, Power to Women, funded by In Their Life Time Appeal³ got underway in late 2015. The project provides further secure funding for SEND's Women in Governance work until 2017. The project aims to strengthen the Women in Governance network, and work with the network and women councillors to focus on ways to reduce gender based violence (GBV)⁴, working particularly with young people in schools. This focus builds on clear learning which has emerged through SEND's work to date, of the needs to develop the capacity of the network and to engage with gender-based violence as an endemic problem for women in Sierra Leone.

1.2 The assessment

SEND's Women in Governance project was evaluated several times during the GTF funding phase. It was recognised as being a successful initiative and replicable in other districts. The purpose of this assessment was to look beyond the numbers of women councillors elected towards understanding the meaning and significance of women's increased involvement in politics - for the councillors, network members and other stakeholders. In addition, through collaboration with project participants, the assessment aimed to explore and document women's experiences, challenges, sources of support, and any changes in their lives - and in their communities - resulting from their involvement in politics.

The following three research questions framed the assessment:

- How do women who have been involved in the project experience and describe their participation in politics?
- How do others within the community perceive and experience women's increased involvement in politics?
- What are the development impacts and changes (for men, women and children) resulting from women's increased involvement in politics (actual, perceived, and/or anticipated)?

¹ SEND Sierra Leone (<http://sendwestafrica.org/sl/>) was established in 2008 and is based in Kailahun.

² The ENCIS Programme, managed by Christian Aid, is an initiative of UK aid and the EU aimed at improving accountability and strengthening citizens' voice, participation in decision-making and access to information.

³ The Power to Women Project is one of 17 projects to receive funding through Christian Aid's *In Their Lifetime Appeal* <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/give/in-their-lifetime/invest-development-projects.aspx>

⁴<http://www.sendwestafrica.org/sl/index.php/news1/item/92-sierra-leone-news-with-funds-from-the-hamilton-family-send-launches-power-to-women-campaign-in-kailahun>

This report is based on the consultants' experience of carrying out the assessment in Kailahun, Sierra Leone over five and a half days in September 2015. A list of documents consulted as part of the assessment is included in Appendix 1.

Politics and place

Sierra Leone became independent in 1961. The Sierra Leone People's party (SLPP) held power from 1961 to 1967 when the All People's Congress (APC) won the elections. In 1991 there was an attempt to overthrow the long-standing APC government which led to 11 years of civil war, resulting in the deaths of 50,000 people. SLPP won the 2002 elections, APC the 2007 and 2012. The next elections are in 2017. APC supporters are traditionally from the north of Sierra Leone and the SLPP in the south and east. Parliament consists of 112 elected MPs in parliament, 14 of whom are women. Twelve appointed Paramount Chiefs representing each of Sierra Leone's districts (aside from the two Freetown districts) also sit in parliament. This reflects the co-existence of two governance systems, the 'modern' system of government with MPs, district councils and councillors representing wards; and the traditional system of Chiefdoms.

Kailahun district is in the far east of Sierra Leone and borders Guinea and Liberia. As of 2010 the district had a population of around 400,000. It is subdivided into 14 Chiefdoms and 29 Wards. The majority of the population is from the Mende tribe, with a large number of Kissi. Most people speak Krio and either Mende or Kissi. English is the language of instruction in schools and a requirement for becoming a councillor, although literacy is not. Most people living outside the main town do not speak English. The majority of the population support the SLPP and Kailahun is considered to have a politically active population. Each of Kailahun's 14 Chiefdoms is led by a Paramount Chief (one of whom represents the district in Parliament). The Paramount Chiefs are elected, but for life, and are almost always men.

Kailahun was the district with the first case of **Ebola** in Sierra Leone in May 2014. By December 2014 there had been 645 cases of Ebola reported in Kailahun district and 228 deaths. During the crisis social and economic activities came to a standstill.

Sierra Leone is one of the poorest countries in the world and one of the most unequal for women and men. It is ranked 183 out of 187 in the 2014 UNDP World Development Report.
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SLE>

1.2.1 The approach

A qualitative participatory research approach was adopted for this assessment. Participatory research is characterised by a commitment to 'democratising' processes of knowledge generation - redressing normative power dynamics inherent to research. It does this, in part, by seeking to support those who are the 'subjects' of research to play a more active role in the process. In this assessment this meant supporting participants: to inform the research agenda; to generate, analyse and manage data using a range of visual, discursive and collaborative techniques; and to determine how they and their communities are represented (both visually and in writing) to the wider audiences for the assessment.

The decision to adopt participatory approaches and share control of data collection and analysis with participants and co-researchers has a number of advantages. These include the potential to develop more sensitive and appropriate methods and questions, enabling inclusive and reflective dialogue, higher levels of engagement in the research, and the development of participants' skills, ownership and confidence. Potential challenges and limitations include the need for additional (or

specialist) resources and time, risks to the quality, consistency and relevance posed by sharing control of data collection, and challenges for the lead researchers/writers in understanding, organising and making sense of rich and ‘messy’ data generated through mixed methods and by multiple individuals.

1.2.2 Key elements and principles of our approach

- **Capacity-building** – the process integrates both training and support for co-researchers, who are drawn from NGO/CBO staff and the programme participants.
- **Safe and ethical practice** – the design of research activities prioritises the creation of a safe, sensitive and accessible research environment (both physical and non-physical) which engenders participation and is based on informed consent.
- **Transparency** – the process is designed to support participants to maintain control and understanding of any knowledge that is generated. Data is not understood as being ‘extracted’ from participants but rather developed and analysed by and with them.
- **Enabling participants to inform and steer the research agenda** – the participatory and inclusive nature of research methods supports participants to prioritise discussions according to their own experiences and perspectives, as opposed to those of the researchers;
- **Adopting a contextual perspective** – the consultants strive to understand participants’ lives including and beyond a particular project. While the ‘project’ may determine the thematic framework for the research (in this case women and politics), discussion avoids taking a project-centric perspective in order to understand the wider context of participants’ lives.
- **Prioritising first-hand accounts** – the assessment is underpinned by a belief in the importance, value and power of first-hand accounts. This recognises the validity of personal, subjective and verbal accounts of those with first-hand experience of development issues as an important form of evidence rather than solely prioritising written analyses of outside ‘experts’.
- **A commitment to self-representation** – a recognition of the risks of misrepresentation by others; wherever possible, the tools of representation (cameras, audio recorders, pens and the task of transcription) are handed over to participants.

Through careful design, participatory research can enable learning, capacity building and communication to occur simultaneously. In the context of this assessment the first-hand accounts, photographs, and other visual material generated by co-researchers and participants provides material for learning as well as communication outputs for national and international audiences.

1.2.4 Research Participants

A total of 45 women and men participated in the research in Sierra Leone: 33 women and 12 men. This included a core group of nine women councillors and nine members of the Kailahun Women’s Governance Network, additional stakeholders including two political party representatives (male and female), two radio journalists (male and female), two SEND staff members, two staff members of CA, two male Town Chiefs⁵ and 17 men and women from Kailahun town and Nyandehun village⁶.

1.2.3 The methods

This assessment engaged a small group of staff and project participants throughout the process as co-researchers: a woman councillor, a woman network member, two members of SEND staff and a staff member from Christian Aid Sierra Leone. These five co-researchers were provided with a training session at the beginning of the assessment and mentoring throughout by the consultant.

⁵ Extracts from interviews with the two male Town Chiefs are referenced as Town Chief (01) or Town Chief (02)

⁶ Nyandehun village is located one and half hours’ drive from Kailahun town

The assessment design centred on participatory workshops with the core group of research participants (the women councillors and network members). Visual, theatre and video tools were used in each workshop, including the Jo Blagg activity and Life Mapping. The Jo Blagg activity involves the creation and then discussion about a fictional character similar to the research participants. This method enables participants to talk about a range of issues which they may not want to associate with personally. Life Mapping involves participants developing a visual representation of their life (usually drawn on paper) and then presenting these to one another, making sure each person has equal fixed amounts of time for both creating and sharing their story. The assessment also involved individual and small group interviews with a range of other stakeholders. (There is an accompanying guidance document that provides further detail on the key methods and also outlines issues for consideration when working with participatory methods.)

While the women co-researchers were also research participants the two male co-researchers were not. The timetable for the assessment therefore ensured the workshop sessions would be women-only, by arranging for the male co-researchers to carry out interviews with other stakeholders while the workshops were taking place. A schedule for the 5.5 days spent in Kailahun is included in Appendix 2.

The language used in workshops was English. Interviews were in English, Kissi, Mende or Krio. Both interviews and workshop sessions were audio-recorded to provide first-hand accounts for use in both analysis and communication outputs. Video and photography were also used for a range of tasks: video vox pops with women research participants; portraits of the women; to capture aspects of the physical environment; and to document processes, notes, flip charts and visual representations produced during workshops. Copies of all data and photographs were left with SEND and a draft version of this report was reviewed by SEND staff and the co-researchers.

The commitment to listening to individual perceptions and experience and recording them generated a large number of transcripts of interviews and workshop sessions. A selection of extracts from these transcripts has been included throughout this report. These first-hand accounts, most of which were spoken in participants second language, have been slightly edited to make them easier to read. There are plans to share more of these first-hand accounts online and within discussion packs for supporter groups.

2. How do women experience and describe their involvement in politics?

*We are now part of decision-making in our communities.
We are recognised. We are role models in our communities.*
Women Councillors, workshop session

This section focuses on how women councillors and network members described themselves and their experience of politics, in particular, their sources of support and the key challenges faced in entering into and staying involved in politics, and in being effective in their roles. The majority of findings in this section draw from various research activities with the core group of research participants. Material from interviews with other stakeholders is also included where it reinforces what women themselves said. Also included in this section is a text box on gender-based violence (GBV). GBV was mentioned by almost all research participants as the biggest challenge facing all women generally, not just in relation to their involvement in politics.

2.1 The women

The core group of research participants were nine of the 12 women councillors in Kailahun District, and nine women members of the Kailahun Women in Governance Network (KWIGN), including the secretary general and president of the network. Most of this core group of women research participants were in their 40s and 50s, with a small number in their late 30s. Many had gone to school from a young age and between them they had a wide range of experience in terms of jobs and means of income, including teaching, farming, tailoring and typing. Because of their age, most had lived through a decade of civil war as an adult, and often as a single parent of young children, living as refugees in Guinea or Liberia.

During the research the councillors and network members presented themselves as proud of their positions as network members or councillors. They are confident, ambitious, articulate, committed to their public role and development of their communities, and highly supportive of one another. The political affiliations of the women network members who participated in the research is unknown as none of the women spoke about this during the workshops. All 12 elected women councillors represent the SLPP⁷ and this group come together as a female caucus. One of the councillors runs a weekly radio show and two of the women councillors are intending to stand as an MP in the 2017 national elections. Women councillors shared their empowerment song⁸ during one of the workshop sessions. It ends with the words: *'For development, for environment and peace - power to the women... No ifs, no buts, give rights to women now.'*

2.1.1 Resilient individuals

The commitment to 'not giving up' and a need to 'stand strong' was expressed by several women during the workshop sessions or presentations of their life maps, demonstrating their resilience as individuals. For example, Cllr Lucy Jibrila was elected in 2004 but lost the elections in 2007, yet she continued with her work to represent women and was re-elected in 2012. She intends to stand for MP in the 2017 elections. Network member Alice H Ngevaeo talked about her experience of not being elected as councillor: *'It was not easy [vying for position as a councillor]. It was very difficult. Women were supporting me, but men were not supporting me. That is why I was out (not elected). But I didn't feel bad and I didn't give up. I still remained to be a network member, and I was elected to be an executive member... Later on... I was elected to be assistant secretary general for the district executive.'*

⁷ There are 29 councillors in total: 12 women (all SLPP), 17 men (three APC, 14 SLPP).

⁸ There is a recording of this song but the lyrics are quite hard to make out – SEND should be able to provide these.

2.1.2 Power to empower others

The women directly involved in the research are all confident and capable individuals. Some entered politics independently of SEND - for example, Cllr Lucy Jibrila, who was first elected in 2004. For others SEND played a more significant role in their journey into politics.

SEND works with women who are already established in leadership positions, or who have the confidence to inspire and support other women in the network who are less experienced or require additional support to get involved in politics. Cllr Theresa Satta Garba's story below demonstrates her experience of what Robert Chambers refers to as the 5th type of power – Power to Empower⁹.

'I never had an intention to be a politician because I was afraid. But SEND said they have some women who look at other women and they see some signs of potential and then they asked me to come forward. And this woman called me and she said 'I know you can do it'... She even introduced me to the 'party chairperson'...and she advocated [for me], so that my name would be among the candidates and that is how I went into politics. And fortunately for me I went into the elections and I won the position. And I became a councillor.'

2.1.3 Importance of groups

Women (councillors, network members and women at the community level) all talked about the importance of being in a group and how this, and knowledge gained through discussion with others, gave them confidence to speak out.

'You know the reason why, at first, women formed groups? It is to encourage ourselves. Because when you are together, you share ideas, when you explain your own ideas, your friends will explain their own, then you put them together and you will know what to do, you will know the next step.' Network member Alice H Ngevaio, presenting her life map

2.2. Sources of support

A recent briefing paper from the Overseas Development Institute emphasises the importance of both financial and moral support for women entering politics, given that women generally have access to fewer resources than men who choose to enter into politics.¹⁰ Research participants in Kailahun described the support that women in politics or women who are trying to get into politics can access: support from **family**, support from **other women** (including the *Bondo* – secret society for women), support from **SEND**, support from the **media**, support from their **political parties**, and support from **men**. There are also several brief references to the **Gender Acts** (national legislation) as serving to support women to demand their rights.

Family support: For some councillors, family support, alongside their own hard-won good reputation, is a critical factor in their decision to move forward to stand for councillor. For research participant Cllr Lucy Jibrila it was a combination of encouragement from her relative - the Paramount Chief - and her own reputation as hardworking through her community development work with an NGO: *'My first cousin was the Paramount Chief, and he was a parliamentarian. He was representing Kailahun district in 2004. And I was recommended by him to Chieftdom people and the people know what I did during the implementation of the projects with GTZ (German Agency for Technical Cooperation), that's what encouraged them to vote for me as a councillor in 2004. They knew I was a hard[working] woman; I did a lot for them.'*

⁹ Power: The Elephant in the Room <http://bit.ly/1QHX32W> and Provocations for Development, Robert Chambers, 2012, Practical Action

¹⁰ <http://www.odi.org/publications/9910-women-decision-making-gender-equality>

The Bondo: While the *Poró* – secret society for men – was cited as a challenge for women, the *Bondo* – the secret society for women – was cited by women councillors as having a potentially supportive role. They explained: *‘We settle everything in the bush... So sometimes when we vie for position... [say] we have two or more women contesting... So we go into the bush, we go and make decisions to give [the position] to a person, and we settle there to present [one] candidate... [The Bondo also] helps to mobilise the women to vote for women.’* (Woman councillors, workshop session, Kailahun.) Later discussions with women councillors revealed that the *Bondo* will choose the female candidate most likely to win locally.

SEND: Research participants recognised and appreciated SEND’s strategic and financial support to increase the number of women councillors; develop the KWIGN as a platform for women at community and district level; and increase awareness of women’s rights. Cllr Lucy Jibrila describes the essential financial support from SEND for women to stand for election: *‘SEND provided postcards for us, t-shirts, even paid our candidacy fees; they did great work for us.’*

‘In the network, SEND were advocating on behalf of women... [as] women we are voiceless in the community. They were empowering women to become leaders because in our district, women we are considered less... men were overruling us. So when SEND foundation came with that initiative, they were calling women to talk on the radio so that they should be recognised. From that time, most women started coming to vote, and even to vie for leadership positions in the community.’ Network member Alice H Ngevaio, presenting her life map

‘SEND is the only one that helps women... they have made women to enter politics. When you do not have anything they will help you by providing you all the facilities in order to help you. In Kailahun district there many women politicians and this is all because of SEND. So we say thank you to SEND.’ Mammy Queen, ‘street’ interview

Local radio: SEND’s collaboration with local radio, and the local radio station’s support for raising public debate on women’s issues were also acknowledged. During the GTF project SEND partnered with Radio Moa and believes that radio played a critical role in supporting the election of women councillors. In the Jo Blagg session with women councillors the fictional woman councillor character they established had become involved in politics after listening to the radio and hearing discussions about women’s rights and freedoms.

‘Once you get to Kailahun the first thing you will hear is the radio... most women are listening to the radio. We speak their languages, the kind of words that they want to hear, we speak out, so they feel very close to the media... We do our own daily programmes for women, and talk about rape, about education, about teenage pregnancies, about their survival, all the things you can think of.’ Radio journalist (male)

Support from men: Joseph Ayamga of SEND recognises the importance and significance of support from men; working closely with male traditional leaders (town/Paramount Chiefs) has been a key aspect of SEND’s Women and Governance Project. This was reinforced by Christian Aid Sierra Leone: *‘A number of men do support women to move up the ladder, some secretly, some openly, and that’s the type of thing we really want to spread... if a man decides to support a female candidate the chances are all the family members will follow.’* Steven Kaindaneh

This focus on changing male attitudes and behaviours continues to be a core aspect of the Power to Women Project. The following extract from an interview with a Town Chief (01) illustrates the support from men and the changing attitudes of men towards women in politics: *‘...We the traditional leaders will give our support... We encourage them always to come forward and aspire for some of these positions, even when they are not educated, because that has been the problem*

that always that makes them shy away from politics... If you are educated or not, we have been telling them to come forward - as long as you can deliver and as long as people want you to lead them, you can do so for us to have development in the community.'

2.3 Challenges

*'In our country ...when women decide to go into politics...there are so many challenges they face – intimidation, financial constraints... If we don't **stand strong** against these challenges, we [would] give up.'* Woman councillors, workshop session

Women councillors and network members described the challenges they experience in relation to entering politics, as well as those faced in fulfilling their potential once elected. The key challenges mentioned were the **Ebola crisis; money; prejudice and discrimination; community expectations; and social norms and hidden power**. These challenges were also identified by some of the other stakeholders interviewed.

Ebola: Women talked about the difficulties during the worst of the Ebola crisis, when there was a curfew and aid agencies were dropping off food for people. The Ebola crisis has affected all councillors' ability to fulfil their potential and meet community expectations. There were no council meetings between May 2014 and July 2015, and all aid and development efforts during this time were directed towards dealing with the crisis.

'The only problem facing councillors is that throughout this year, they have not been getting anything from the council, they are really discouraged in the council since the outbreak of Ebola they not getting a penny, they really [face a] strain in term of finance.'

Political party representative (female)

Money

'[Money is a] very big problem [for councillors]. We are not paid. We are not on the payroll. No pay. But you have to visit your communities. You are not mobile. We are not able to visit our wards. We don't have vehicles. No motor bikes.' Woman councillors, workshop session

Lack of finance is a challenge for women in terms of standing for election, and post-election in relation to their role as councillors. Individuals (male and female) need a certain amount of economic power to become and remain involved in politics. Women councillors explain how money is needed to get involved in politics – payment to join a party to be electable and then the fees to maintain party membership. Christian Aid recognises this need, as Steven Kaindaneh explains: *'Money is really an important factor for these women politicians... Some of these women really have nothing, some are supported by family members, some used their savings at great risk... One of the ways we are trying to address [this] is with alternative means of income, credit union....'*

SEND's financial support during the 2012 elections for women candidates is noted by several research participants. The microfinance opportunities for members of the women's network are also evidently highly relevant to the aim of involving more women in politics.

A related resourcing issue is **mobility**. Women councillors, like some other councillors, don't have their own transport and villages are spread out. Motorbikes are expensive (rentals with driver) and so being able to visit and consult their constituencies, to truly represent them, is difficult.¹¹

Gender-based prejudice and intimidation: Other challenges facing women as they aspire to be elected as councillors are prejudice and intimidation. Women councillors described the physical and verbal violence and abuse they experienced as a result of standing for election.

¹¹ ENCIS is currently trialling an SMS-based initiative in Koinadugu and Bo Districts to improve communication between citizens and local councillors - See: http://www.enciss-sl.org/sms_voices

'Men intimidate us, our opponents, they use abusive language, insults, they sometimes call you prostitutes, they call you all kinds of names... false names... And even they attack you... they raid your house, they throw stones. They sing songs against you... they use abusive words... just to discourage you from going forward with your political career. They try to damage your character so your supporters will move away from you and not give you support.' Women councillors, workshop session

'You know they (male candidates) always humiliate women, especially when they compete with men because when they realise that the female aspirants have support. Sometimes the male aspirant will go through the tradition involving the secret societies that will make the female aspirant feel threatened and withdraw from the race.' Town Chief 01 (male)

'In 2004... During the campaign time, I was the only woman [standing for councillor]... nine men, and me. They used to call me all kinds of names, false names. Because I was working with NGOs, they used to call me a thief... But some of them dropped out and four of us did the election...three men and myself. I won the election in 2004 as the first councillor in my Chiefdom, first in history.' Cllr Lucy Jibrila, individual interview

Gender-based violence

'Violence is a problem. Number one problem. A very big problem. Domestic violence against women. Rape, marital rape, early marriage, beating of women, beating of women to death, teenage pregnancy, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation. Gang rape in the communities is too much. It's now rampant. It is now rampant all over the country, it's rampant, everywhere. Rape generally. [What do the police do?] They just run away. The police themselves are constrained: they don't have vehicles, they don't have motorbikes.' Women councillors, workshop session

Gender-based violence was mentioned by most research participants (including men) and is seen to be the main problem facing women in Kailahun both in terms of its severity and its prevalence. Women also face problems in seeking justice for GBV inflicted on them; difficulties travelling to courts and being able to afford related fees and expenses. There is no resident magistrate court in Kailahun district and so those affected by GBV are required to attend court in Kenema. Most will therefore give up court actions due to lack of resources for travel, accommodation and living expenses involved in attending court in another district.

The sexual exploitation of teenage girls and the related high incidence of teenage pregnancy were mentioned across the different groups of research participants. Girls who go to stay in the town to access secondary education are at risk of sexual exploitation, exchanging sex for money or provisions they require to sustain their lives and education away from home.

Sierra Leone has one of the highest rates of female genital cutting (FGC) in the world (over 80% of women and girls aged 15-49 according to UNICEF in 2014). Most women do not recognise it as a form of gender-based violence, rather an important rite of passage when girls become women. The Soweis, leaders of the *Bondo* (women's secret society) are paid to perform female circumcision. The Soweis can issue decrees for all women in their community and wield enormous political power – parties that speak out against FGC risk losing votes. It is very difficult for anyone to talk publicly about FGC and unsurprisingly it was not discussed at all during workshops and interviews carried out as part of this assessment.

Community Expectations

'And our community demand from us, their expectations are too high for councillors. They expect that you do things that you are not able to do for them... They want you to pay school

fees... When they are hospitalised they expect you to pay the fee for them. [They think] when you hold positions in politics the government of the day gives you huge sums of money.'

Women councillors, workshop session

Another challenge facing women councillors is their community's expectations of them. As the quote above demonstrates, these expectations are often inappropriate and unrealistic. The recent Ebola crisis has compounded councillors' inability to deliver to their communities.

While the challenge of high expectations is one that all councillors face, it is argued that this challenge is greater for women councillors who report having less decision-making power than their male counterparts due to hidden forms of power restricting their access to finance, contracts and decisions within the council. This is explored further below.

Hidden power and discrimination: Once elected, women councillors face on-going challenges relating to traditional societal norms and expectations for men and women. Even if a woman has power as a councillor, decisions can continue to be made by men behind closed doors – real power still lies with men. Although 41% of elected councillors in Kailahun district are women, hidden and invisible¹² power limits their political ability to make decisions and take action for the benefit of the communities they represent.

Discrimination includes the appointment of women councillors to positions on 'soft' committees without financial power, and tokenism by political parties who fulfil their quotas by awarding 'symbols'¹³ to women candidates where the party is not expecting to win anyway. Research participants described how women are excluded or sidelined in community decision-making and it would seem the gender norms governing traditional community decision-making structures replicate themselves within the council.

'Women are given less power in committees which they do not control. [They are put] on committees as ordinary members while men are the head. The men are always leading with women deputising so men can be seen to be doing better, [helping them] to be re-elected.'

Women network members, workshop session

'Women are not part of the [traditional community] decision-making body. We are not even allowed to participate in decision-making. Decisions are only taken by men in this community. Even issues that affect women - women are not even given the chance to make their own input. Chiefs don't call women to meetings at all. They will take a unilateral decision.' Older women, group interview, Nyandehun village

Councillor Theresa Satta Garba raised the issue of women councillors facing discrimination within the council at SEND's Power to Women project launch in 2015¹⁴. She acknowledged the success of the increased number of women councillors but explained: *'there are still challenges that limit us as women leaders and that deny other women from seeking similar positions in the future. For example, six of us are heads of committees in the district council, but these committees mean nothing to them (ie are not important)'*. She went on to state that women councillors' names are only on paper on the notice board, while decisions and activities are being carried out by a small number of the council's male administration: *'We are not informed about projects of the council and as a result, contractors of service provision in our wards do not regard us as stakeholders of the communities.'* According to Christian Aid Sierra Leone's country director, Theresa Satta Garba had also raised this challenge at a recent meeting with a national cabinet member.

¹² Gaventa (2006) Power Cube which distinguishes visible, hidden and invisible power www.powercube.net

¹³ 'Having a symbol' means being allowed to stand for an electable position

¹⁴ <http://www.sendwestafrica.org/sl/index.php/latest-news/item/93-power-to-women-project-launched-in-kailahun>

Women councillors also referred to experiencing **sexual harassment** from male councillors¹⁵: *“If women councillors say no [to sexual advances] they won’t be given projects/support for projects.”*
Women network members, workshop session

¹⁵ Additional note from Steven Kaindaneh: women councillors possibly also experience sexual harassment from MPs and other senior government officials, especially those involved in the allocation of resources.

3. How do others experience and perceive women's greater involvement in politics?

The experience of women involved in politics is partly defined by the perceptions and attitudes of others, as demonstrated by the previous section of the report. While attitudes towards women in politics in Kailahun are most certainly mixed, this research found the majority of other people's views to be largely positive.

It is important to acknowledge that a relatively small number of people were interviewed for this assessment and most were connected to SEND in some way, apart from those involved in the short 'street' interviews with members of the public conducted by co-researchers around Kailahun town. As such this research cannot claim to provide any authoritative knowledge on public perceptions of women in politics in Kailahun. However, the extent, scope and depth of positive discussions and comments on women in politics is significant. (Positive comments about women in politics represent the largest number of comments within the data from this research.) These comments came not only from those who work closely with the women councillors (radio journalists, political party representatives etc) but even from the men interviewed as part of the 'street' interviews who had no connection to SEND, yet shared positive and detailed accounts of the benefits of women being involved in politics. It would seem there is a set of established positive viewpoints about women's involvement in politics. Across the different groups of research participants, women are seen as being **more focused on development** for their people, more concerned about and **committed to those they represent**, more **transparent**, more **accountable**, and **less corrupt**.

In addition to this positive narrative around women and politics, it is also worth noting the volume of what people have to say about women in politics, suggesting significant engagement with and discourse on the issue. The participants in this research are evidently used to and comfortable talking about women in politics and the value they can bring to society as leaders.

When women themselves talked about the views others had of them, they frequently shared negative experiences, while the views shared by others during the research were generally positive. How do we understand this contradiction? Firstly, community attitudes and behaviour are not absolute: supportive and unsupportive attitudes towards women in politics can co-exist within the same communities, even within the same households. Secondly, for those women involved in politics their experiences of others are cumulative and shaped over time; negative experiences from several years ago can continue to be felt keenly in the present. And related to this, women councillors were sharing their *actual* experiences whereas others are sharing their more abstract perceptions.

During several of the interviews and workshop sessions, research participants shared one of the following traditional sayings to illustrate their views (or the views of others) on women in politics. The use of these two phrases reflects the existence of different views of women generally and in politics, and the co-existence of the support and challenges they face.

*'There is a local saying: **Men are shovels, they dig and bring out. Women are hoes, they dig and bring in.** So you can see the difference.... the women councillors try more...'*

Radio journalist (female)

*'Well, the women during leadership would want to come up, but we the men don't help them and especially when our tradition will say that **women are hens that do not crow so how can a hen crow when it is the cock that crows.** This is where the problem is - so*

women relax behind and do not come forward and don't achieve what they want to achieve.'¹⁶

Male, 'street' interview

People living in Kailahun have direct experience of being represented in national parliament by a female politician - the late Alice Foyah, MP for Kailahun - and research participants feel she represented and served her people well. This experience has no doubt contributed to the positive narrative on women in politics encountered during this research.

3.1 Positive views of others

Many research participants expressed their own positive views, and those of others, about women's involvement in politics, at times contrasting these with less favourable views on men in politics. A selection of those are presented below. It is worth considering how some of these views of women being more development-focused contrast with women councillors' own experiences of the challenges faced in trying to deliver for their communities as presented in the previous section.

*'Women councillors keep to their manifestos. We need lot of women councillors. If women are elected, **there will be development...** Women councillors are **trustworthy**, they keep to their promises, but men councillors are deceptive.'*

Older women, group interview, Nyandehun village

'It will be better for us, the women, if there are more women in politics because women are really suffering. We the women will be happy to see our kind in leadership positions. We can easily go to our women leaders for support and they can reduce the load on our heads.'

Mammy Queen¹⁷, 'street' interview

*'Well the difference is that the female councillors are **always with their people** and how I see them [is that] they can hold meetings more often than the male councillors you see, and you know they will always mix with the community people, whether you are man or woman... We want even more than 70% to be female councillors. If it were only for me, I would have love the Kailahun District council to be dominated by female councillors.'*

Town Chief 01 (male)

*'Actually when women have power in the area we will get help from them... We men when we have something we do not think to help anybody... When women enter [politics] **they actually think about their people** that is why we should empower women because they will be bold enough to empower their kind. But most of our brothers who are out here they hardly come back to help. So I want the government to really empower women in the Kissi areas, **let the place develop**. They should put women in more positions, this will help all of us.'* 01Man, 'street' interview

*'We are aware of the fact that when women are in politics, **they can really do the politics clearer than the men**, they are not afraid to tell the truth. The result will be development... Women tolerate even their opponent in politics and respect the views of everyone, but this is not so for the men. You can't go into politics and begin to provoke others; that is not politics.'*

¹⁶ Additional info from Christian Aid Sierra Leone: Traditionally, when a hen crows, it is considered a bad omen and the hen is slaughtered for food. What the adage really means is that since women who crow these days cannot be killed, their efforts for public office can nonetheless be stifled or frustrated.

¹⁷ The title Mammy Queen refers to a woman selected by the community who excels in something (for example, charitable work for others, a good mother) and who serves as a role model for others and also mentors and mobilises women in the community.

Politics is tolerance. We will be happy and we are praying for such, for a woman to become the president of this country.' Political party representative (female)

*'One thing about women, **they cannot embezzle public funds...** the women share more than any man in this world. But men - whatever they get they will put it in their pockets. But whatever happens the backbone of any good family is the woman, and the backbone of any good government is the women. Even the president, we have his wife [who] goes all out to bring development. Even the civil war we had in this country, it was the women who went all out to ensure that the war come to an end.'* Political party representative (male)

'...when you talk of a woman you are talking of the entire family, the community and the nation. So when a woman is in a position wherein she has access to the information, she has access to make an input or contribute to national development, she knows the issues to bring up, she knows the concerns, she will be able to bring out the voice of the less-privileged and the woman who is the least in the community. She herself is a woman - she knows the needs of the home, the people, the community and the nation.'
Radio journalist (female)

3.2 Negative attitudes towards women in politics

The data relating to negative attitudes of others towards women in politics mainly came from women themselves. Women councillors and women network members shared some of their views and experiences of negative attitudes towards them: these related to men feeling threatened and to discriminatory views of women who do not conform to traditional ideals

'In our culture before this time it is the men who have been in politics, so as soon as a woman tries to vie for that position they will start to say she is not educated...to hold onto that position. The men will have to use that against the women. So the other women... they will just follow the men and say that woman is not capable to have that position. Sometimes they say that ... she is not married. If you are not married, if you have lost your husband, you are not for that position.' Women councillors, workshop session

'Paramount Chiefs mostly feel good about the network but some are afraid the women will take power from them. Some male chiefs, councillors and MPs like women getting involved in politics, whereas some think women are taking their roles and will stand against them.'
Women network members, workshop sessions

*'Also the **men are afraid of the women**. They think that what they have been doing with corruption will be [exposed]. They are afraid if they (women) go there, there will be a change... Men are more corrupt than women, because they have so many girlfriends.'*
Women councillors, workshop session

*'I think it is something that really cuts across Sierra Leone, in some parts of this country, that once a woman begins to aspire, she is given all type of names. Even women who are ministers in this country – people sometimes spread very bad rumours... **as long as a woman is single she is classed as a bad woman**, and if in that singleness she attempts to aspire in education, business or politics, then that is the time that all the kind of name-calling comes in. It is sometimes very difficult. But some of these women have risen above these perceptions, [saying] 'call me what you want but I'm moving on'. Steven Kaindaneh*

4. Changes resulting from women's greater involvement in politics?

This research supports the notion of social change as a complex and non-linear process. Research participants have differing experiences and perceptions of changes in attitudes and behaviour towards women and gender norms. Women, those in leadership positions and others, may experience more power and respect in one sphere of their lives, or in one context, and less in another and this is reflected in the accounts shared within the previous sections of the report. This section presents perceptions and experiences of anticipated and actual positive change resulting from women's greater involvement in politics.

The changes cited by research participants can be understood as:

- Changes in **women's own lives** (self-confidence, respect, self-esteem, ambition/aspiration)
- Changes in **the lives of other women and girls** (role models, awareness of rights, a platform to be heard, a role in decision-making)
- Changes **for communities** (infrastructure, access to services, mobilising women)
- Changes in **the way politics is done** (less corrupt, more transparent, more inclusive, more accountable)

These changes in part reflect the commonly accepted four sorts of power: Power WITHIN, WITH, TO, OVER¹⁸. And as noted in an earlier section, the research data clearly demonstrates that the women councillors and the women networkers clearly have the POWER to EMPOWER.

4.1 Changes in women's own lives and in the lives of other women and girls

Many of the responses about change from women councillors and networkers related to their own **self-esteem** and to **societal attitudes** towards women resulting from their election. For example, they mentioned more respect for women; women serving as **role models** for other women and girls; inspiring others to come forward to leadership positions; greater **awareness of women's rights**; and women having a **voice and role in decisions** at the community level by being represented by women councillors.

In the closing session of the research co-researcher Cllr Theresa Satta Garba highlighted the ambition and experience of women councillors as well as the support they receive from SEND, stating: *'We want to grow more, we want to see ourselves in higher positions. We don't only want to see ourselves as councillors we want to go higher, so please take our message to Christian Aid... many thanks to SEND, they are our backbone, they are making us proud...they are making our name to be in the archives of Sierra Leone, that Theresa was once a councillor...'*

A network member also shared her feelings of 'success' as an active member of the network: *'Well, when I'm working with the network women in the community... I have become popular in the community. Because anytime they call me I come over there. If I talk [about] anything, when I go back, people will admire me, congratulate me, the popularity is now there...the network has made me visible, made my life visible.'* Alice H Hgevaio, presenting her life map

The extracts below relate to the changes for women and girls generally as a result of women's greater involvement in local politics.

'I've seen other women, other women, they are motivated. They want to take the challenge also. They want to become councillors. They want to hold positions...'

Woman councillors, workshop session, Kailahun

¹⁸ VeneKlasen and Miller (2002:45)

'We want our daughters to grow up and become lawyers and doctors and councillors.'

Younger women, group interview, Nyandehun village, Kailahun district

'We want our girls to be MPs, councillors and even the president in the future.'

Older women, group interview, Nyandehun village, Kailahun district

'The network has provided trainings on leadership etc for women and this has made the women step forward for decision-making positions as happened in 2012, when Nyandehun was able to add one female councillor to represent their community.'

Young women, group interview, Nyandehun village

These changes cited by women themselves certainly support a comment made by the male radio journalist about women's empowerment: *'Women will not sit by now; they have opened their eyes... As much as they have sympathisers, like men who support their interests, and some organisation, I want to believe that they themselves have been empowered to call up the things that are good for them.'*

'Before now it was difficult for women to stand openly in the Barrie (meeting place) where so many men are, but now they [don't] mind to talk in public, in workshops to conduct training, and be in a meeting where both men and women are... before, such things were not happening. At that time, they stayed in the back yard.'

Town Chief 01 (male), individual interview, Kailahun

During the research there were several references made to a recent protest organised by KWIGN with support from SEND and Radio Moa, following the tragic death of a ten-year old girl after she was raped by several men¹⁹. This demonstrates women using their collective power to press for change. Young women interviewed in the Nyandehun village explained: *'Women can stand against rape as they did in Kailahun Town recently. During the rape protest they called for a sitting magistrate, for resources for the family support unit (FSU). The district is vast as it has 14 districts. The process of adjudication for gender-based violence is expensive. Evidence gathering is money-intensive and characterised by absence of key personnel like medical doctors etc. IRC²⁰ have been helping but their support is limited and cannot service the 14 chiefdoms.'* Young women, group interview, Nyandehun village

4.2 Changes for communities

Since their election in 2012 the current women councillors have faced many challenges, including the Ebola crisis. Between May 2014 and July 2015 there were no council meetings, complete restrictions on movement (people couldn't access farms and markets), and school closures. Unsurprisingly, no development efforts by any councillor or agency were taking place beyond managing the Ebola crisis. However, SEND and the KWIGN played a key role in the Ebola crisis demonstrating the positive change that a group of women, mobilised by other women, could make to a crisis affecting their communities, as illustrated by the extracts below:

'During that time of Ebola, SEND Foundation wrote a proposal, that women should sensitise their communities for the prevention of Ebola. So I was fortunate, I was one of the members

¹⁹ <http://www.salonetoday.com/headlines/37-rape-cases-kailahun-women-protest-trumpet-newspaper/>

²⁰ International Rescue Committee have a safe house for women in Kailahun as part of their work to protect women from sexual violence

who was going around in my community to sensitise people about the prevention of Ebola... I was sensitising other people, not only women, about the prevention of Ebola. Sensitisation is still on-going because we still have Ebola around²¹. Even the Ebola village watch committee I am part of it, I am monitoring it as a women's network member.'
Network Member, presenting her life map

'During the Ebola crisis, SEND and the women councillors played a big role. Everyone was scared, there were dead bodies in the street but on the radio, came the voice of networker Lucy Gonder, "This is women in Kailahun". They were on the radio, national radio, they were first to talk about secondary infections... it was women who noticed that.' Jeanne Kamara

Across both men and women interviewed there was agreement that women in politics (as compared to men) had a focus on **priority issues for community development** (education, health, water and sanitation, roads, and agriculture).²² Women network members contrasted women's community development agenda with male politician's self-interested focus on their own leadership: *'Women councillors mobilise women to discuss women's issues: sensitisation on Ebola, education, agriculture, health, micro-business, leadership mentoring of children/girls. These are not socially addressed and recognised in society. [They are] under addressed issues. Priority issues for men are leadership positions. They want to lead in governance, chieftdom, property rights...'*

Some councillors referred to specific development activities they had achieved in their current and previous terms, although one of the women councillors injected a note of realism into the workshop discussion, in terms of the scale of development efforts: *'There are more communities that need more development. A single councillor controls about 75 communities in our ward. So it means if we construct a well in two communities we have not done anything.'*

There were also references to specific progress made in increased accountability in provision of free services for pregnant and lactating women. Others referred to women working together to campaign for the implementation of the law and increased prosecutions for rape cases, and for rape victims to be entitled to free hospital examination.

Support to deliver: The radio journalists and political party representatives both emphasised the importance of supporting women councillors to deliver for their communities, both in terms of capacity development and of resources necessary to fulfil their potential. Both political representatives stressed the need for Christian Aid, through SEND, to support women's ability to initiate development in their community if they want women to stay in power. Women need support to be able to make changes and keep their power, as the extracts below illustrate:

'We have to tell Christian Aid through SEND to support more women... not just immediate support but we want to see the[long-term] impact on the communities they are coming from, let the output [of their work] be positive.' Political party representative (male)

*'Our interaction with the women councillors is very great, and we in fact also go to their communities to bring out (broadcast) to the public the developments they are undertaking. Because **we didn't just support them so they would win, we want to see them performing...** When it comes to the time of reading out their report cards we want them to have 95, 98 so they won't be left behind. Because you know, Sierra Leone, no matter what*

²¹ Officially, the government was stating that there had been no Ebola in Kailahun for 200 days at that point.

²²In some workshop discussions the women themselves referred to their focus on 'women's issues' and when asked to provide details on these, they listed aspects of development that most would consider general community development issues: health, agriculture, infrastructure, water and sanitation etc.

you say, women have been left behind for so long. But because of the efforts of SEND foundation and women themselves, they will want to forge ahead.' Radio journalist (female)

4.3 Changes for the way politics is done

'One thing about those that are councillors, the women, they are committed, consultative, honest and trustworthy. Transparency and accountability is their policy.'

Political party representative (male)

Women's perceived lack of corruption, increased accountability through being part of a network, and commitment to serve their communities, can contribute to change in local governance and politics generally. This research would suggest that the women's approach to politics may contribute to more inclusive, effective and accountable local governance and development in general. However, it will be important that the woman councillors do not become held to a higher standard than their male counterparts. This is explored in more detail in Section 5, below.

5 Observations and reflections

The intention of this assessment was to listen to and document the experiences and perceptions of women involved in politics (either as councillors or network members) and other stakeholders, in relation to women's greater involvement in politics in Kailahun district, Sierra Leone. The assessment was not to review programming per se and as a result there are no formal recommendations. The assessment aimed to contribute to Christian Aid's knowledge of governance programming, strengthen the research skills of SEND, and provide both SEND and Christian Aid with a set of data and materials (edited first-hand accounts, photographs, other images) that can support their own learning and communication work on governance.

This section contains discussions around a limited number of observations and reflections made by the consultants. These are:

- An apparent positive public narrative around women in politics as less corrupt and more focused on development of their communities
- Women entering politics in Sierra Leone have the potential to change local governance systems and political behaviours in a positive way
- There is a need for support to enable women councillors to deliver once in power - they face on-going challenges relating to male power, lack of finance and mobility to visit the communities they represent
- The acknowledgement by many of the severity and prevalence of gender-based violence affecting women and girls.

5.1 Positive public narrative around women and politics

The research demonstrates apparent strong levels of public support for women in politics; something to which Christian Aid's long-term support and SEND's close collaboration with local radio may have well contributed. This public support provides a real opportunity for women to maintain a strong and visible presence in local politics and the potential for a similarly increased presence of women in national parliament. Making the most of this opportunity will depend on support for SEND to continue with programming that encourages and supports women to stand for councillors in the next elections in 2017. At national level, can Christian Aid Sierra Leone (and SEND) lobby political parties to invest in women MPs, as well as ensuring, through SEND, that the women councillors in Kailahun interested in standing as MPs are supported to do this?

The public support includes a narrative about women in politics being less corrupt, more honest, and more focused on development, than men in politics. This gendered narrative demonstrates how women in politics are simultaneously conforming to as well as breaking social norms. There is a need to guard against ascribing qualities and values relating to good governance as 'female' and similarly to avoid the assumption that women will always make 'good' politicians.

5.2 Towards positive and gender-neutral politics

Ultimately society needs both men and women in politics who possess qualities relating to responsible, inclusive, representative, accountable and transparent governance. Christian Aid and SEND, together with the KWIGN and the local radio, could consider trying to shift the narrative towards positive attributes for politics generally, not of women in politics per se. There were calls from some research participants for good governance generally in relation to governance that is devoid of regionalism and favouritism for districts which voted for the party in power.

While it is important to capitalise on the positive labelling of women in politics and share women politicians' values and strategies more broadly, it is also important to focus the debate on aspects

of good governance among both men and women in politics, especially given the very real challenges women councillors face in accessing power within the council.

The research would suggest that SEND must continue with their focus on working to increase support for women councillors among male councillors and other male leaders if women are really to have an equal role in local governance once elected. The hidden and invisible forms of power facing women who have been elected as councillors need to be identified, challenged and overcome for women councillors to be able to truly represent their communities.

Christian Aid and its partners must avoid ascribing particular values, such as 'honesty', to women and others, such as 'corruption', to men. Political values should be gender neutral; not least because otherwise there is a risk of women being judged against higher standards once in leadership given these differing and 'gendered' expectations of men and women in politics. Increasing the numbers, role and position of women in politics in Sierra Leone should not be about adding to women's burden; women politicians should not find themselves in a position where they are expected to work harder than male politicians. Advocacy relating to good governance should be around equal representation of men and women working towards a set of equal values and principles.

5.3 Support to deliver once elected – long-term support

This research certainly demonstrates the need for long-term donor support for governance programming. For the gains made in the 2012 elections in relation to women in politics to last beyond the next election, programming needs to be on-going. SEND needs support to be able to address the challenges facing women councillors once elected, both in terms of working with others in power to ensure women councillors have voice and influence in council decisions (addressing hidden and invisible power), and in terms of women councillors having the mobility and resources to visit and deliver to the communities they represent. In the words of one of the co-researchers, working to increase women's involvement in politics is '*challenging, unpredictable and a long-term endeavour*'.

'The challenges for women councillors we know very well. They have not been in governance, some of them actually need to be continuously trained, [have access to] capacity building, how to lead themselves, their community... Resources – they need the resources to do the things they need to do.' Radio journalist (male)

'One of the challenges is finance, they are not financially strong [enough] to deliver... we need to build their capacity, because when you are in such a position you need to be able to write proposals and ask other people to help you...who are mentors. So we want to ask Christian Aid that the next project, that is already started, let there be some provisions for somebody to help female councillors to write proposals so that they will succeed, because we don't want this number to reduce, we want them to increase, and for that to happen they have to deliver in their communities.' Radio journalist (female)

5.4 Two steps forward, one step back - the severity and prevalence of gender-based violence

The term 'two steps forward, one step back' is often used to reference work which aims to empower women within patriarchal and challenging contexts. On the one hand in Kailahun we have women councillors describing the increased respect they receive, and greater opportunities for women to be heard and be involved in decision-making, and on the other we hear about the on-going risk of GBV for women and girls, including sexual exploitation and marital rape. Christian Aid and SEND's current project's focus on supporting KWIGN and women councillors to work with boys and girls, men and women, to reduce GBV, responds to the priorities of the participants of this

research. It is also an important commitment to linking gains made in women in governance in Kailahun to priority issues for women and others in the community.

It is hoped that those women standing for councillorship in the 2017 elections will receive less harassment and abuse than those who stood in 2007 and 2012. Devising a system for monitoring and recording such harassment and abuse during the election period could be a valuable way to draw attention to this problem.

5.5 Representing women as diverse and successful

Finally, while it is to understand external challenges facing women, alongside the support they receive from others (including Christian Aid), it is important to highlight women's own determination, confidence, hard work, intellect, commitment and expertise as key factors in their success as political leaders. Related to this it is important to represent women in Kailahun beyond their status as victims or saviours and to recognise their diversity as individuals, be they activists, farmers, mothers, journalists or politicians.²³

²³A recent article in Sci-Dev (<http://www.scidev.net/global/gender/news/girl-centred-projects-development-fantasy.html>) warned against presenting girls as only victims or saviours. It is important for Christian Aid and SEND to represent women councillors and network members appropriately in terms of their ambition for themselves as well as their service to others.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Secondary documentation reviewed during the assessment:

- Power to the Women of Sierra Leone, briefing paper, Christian AID: <http://www.kpmg.com/eastafrica/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/Documents/Sierra%20Leone%20case%20study%20on%20women%20in%20leadership.pdf>
- Power to Women project factsheet: <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/Images/Women-in-power-Sierra-Leone-factsheet-Jun2015.pdf>
- SEND – Sierra Leone to host Christian AID and GTF Partners Learning and Experience Sharing Event, news release, 22 May 2013
- Kailahun Women in Governance (KWIG) Project, Project Completion Report, SEND Sierra Leone (5 August 2013)
- Most significant Results Analysis, GTF project, SEND, Sierra Leone
- SEND and NMJD Power to Women Project document
- The power to decide: women, decisionmaking and gender equality, ODI briefing, September 2015 <http://www.odi.org/publications/9910-women-decision-making-gender-equality>
- The Elephant in the Room <http://bit.ly/1QHx32W>
- Provocations for Development, Robert Chambers, 2012, Practical Action
- Gaventa (2006) Power Cube www.powercube.net
- http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/GBV_Sierra_Leone.pdf

Appendix 2: Overview of assessment activities in Kailahun, Sierra Leone, September 2015

Day	Date	Consultant-led activities	Co-researchers
Sun	13 Sept	Consultant arrives in Freetown following overnight flight	
Mon	14 Sept	AM Purchase necessary supplies, and security briefing PM travel Freetown to Kenema	
Tue	15 Sept	AM: Travel Kenema to Kailahun PM: Introductions, security preparations, and training session with co-researchers	
Wed	16 Sept	AM: Workshop with Women Councillors: Introductions, Jo Blagg activity, Start Life Maps, Video vox pops	AM: 2 Male co-researchers conduct 4 small group 'street' interviews with women, younger men, older men and a Mammy Queen.
		PM: Data organisation, write up, transcription, planning, and administration	
Thu	17 Sept	AM: Workshop with Women Councillors: Presenting Life Maps	AM: male co-researchers conduct individual interviews with two Town Chiefs (male)
		PM: Individual interviews with Councillors. Data organisation, write up, transcription, planning, and administration	
Fri	18 Sept	Thinking, organising, documentation/translation Co-researchers practicing photography	
Sat	19 Sept	AM: Workshop with Women Network Members: Introductions, Jo Blagg activity, Start Life Maps, Video vox pops	AM: 2 male co-researchers conduct 2 interviews with radio journalists and political party representatives
		PM: Data organisation, write up, transcription, planning, and administration	PM: female co-researchers visit Nyandehun village and carry out 2 small group interviews with women
Sun	20 Sept	AM Workshop: Women Network members: Presenting Life Maps PM: Joint Analysis, Closing discussions. Evening: Brief meeting with Joseph Ayamga	
Mon	21 Sept	AM: Travel to Freetown	
Tues	22 Sept	AM: Interview with Jeanne Kamara Steven Kaindaneh Christian Aid Sierra Leone and Travel to Airport Hotel PM: Data organisation and administration	