



UNPBF INCLUSIVE CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING (KOLHAT BARRAY) PROJECT

" DESPITE CONSTITUTING A MAJORITY OF SIERRA LEONE'S POPULATION, YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN STRUGGLE TO CLAIM RIGHTS, ADDRESS GRIEVANCES, AND RESOLVE CONFLICTS."

Cordaid and Youth Partnership for Peace and Development (YPPD) are implementing the Inclusive Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding (Kolhat Barray) Project funded by the United Nations Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund, with the aims of enabling young women and men, organized through youth-led CSOs and CBOs and working in solidarity with older women and men, to foster more inclusive, gender-sensitive, and conflict-sensitive CBDR mechanisms in rural and peri-urban Sierra Leone.

This project builds on the premise of UNSCR 2250 recognizes the positive role young people play in contributing to solutions for peace; and applies a people-centered, bottom-up approach that will be further adapted to the contexts of each of the three intervention sites. Despite constituting a majority of Sierra Leone's population, young women and men struggle to claim rights, address grievances, and resolve conflicts through the most widely used CBDR mechanisms at a local level, especially in rural and peri-urban areas. The continued exclusion of young women and men from CBDR has an adverse impact not only on security and justice outcomes for youth themselves but also on Sierra Leone's prospects for stability by linking local-level evidence of how Community Based Dispute Resolution (CBDR) providers become more accessible and accountable to national advocacy.

The project has further enabled young women and men to create space for their own voices on inclusive, gender-sensitive forms of conflict prevention, with positive effects for all Sierra Leoneans as well as the country's conflict and fragility outlooks.

In 2021 and early 2022, significant progress was recorded towards achieving the project's goals and objectives. Gender-sensitive youth profiling and participatory youth-led narrative inquiry (through story collection) at each of the 3 implementation sites establish a baseline of the needs of young women and men, structural barriers to their participation in CBDR and conflict prevention, and the dynamics of conflict, insecurity and injustice in their own communities. In all three project sites (Tonkolili, Pujehun and western Area Rural District), the women and youth-led organizations are currently undertaking several advocacy actions with governmental and nongovernmental bodies to address various issues affecting the security situation, and social position of youths especially young women. Special attention was given to the inclusion of women in local decision-making structures and to capacity building of 25 women and youth-led organizations.

360 young female and male leaders

Cordaid and YPPD invited pre-screened local youth-led CSOs and CBOs to participate in a co-creation workshop that supported them to develop innovative, context-specific actions that demand more inclusivity, gender sensitivity, and conflict sensitivity from CBDR providers. Small grants have been provided to support 23 youth-led advocacy initiatives including conducting policy-relevant research and engaging CBDR providers through advice, dialogue, and trust-building activities.

YPPD and Cordaid designed and conducted training workshops for 360 young female and male leaders with modules on personal and organizational leadership, organizing, conflict analysis and mitigation, advocacy, and public communication skills. Central to the training was a gender transformative approach, challenging harmful gender norms (like victim-shaming of young women who experience SGBV) and violent masculinities that reinforce conflict and injustice at the local level and engaging young men as allies in defending women's rights.





IGNITING GRASSROOTS PEACEBUILDING WITH AND BY YOUNG PEOPLE.

"ROUTINE MONITORING ACTIVITIES AND MID-POINT OUTCOME HARVESTING HAVE ALSO BEEN CONDUCTED."

Other major activities in the project's implementation have the training of 240 CBDR service providers with at least 60 females to establish codes of conduct, standard operating procedures, and protocols that entrench basic rights norms and standards, respect for jurisdictional boundaries and coordination, conflict-sensitivity, procedural safeguards, restorative justice principles (including non-financial reparation), effective recordkeeping, 30 youth palavers (facilitated dialogues) between youth and CBDR providers have enabled youth and external experts to engage change-minded CBDR providers around basic rights norms and standards, procedural safeguards, coordination, and inclusion of young women and men, and foster progress toward specific performance pledges by CBDRs. Routine monitoring activities and a mid-point outcome harvesting have also been conducted.

The project will host two major national activities before its conclusion in August 2022: one will be an inaugural Youth Conflict Prevention Summit in the second week of June, ensuring that youth-led CSOs and serving agencies involved in the project are connected with the broader Sierra Leonean youth and civil society community as well as key sector leaders from an array of ministries, departments and agencies such as the Ministry of Youth Affairs, National Youth Commission, the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs and All Political Parties Youth and Women Associations); and the National Youth Palaver (toward project conclusion) nurturing dialogue around CBDR and conflict prevention with key institutional stakeholders like ONS, SLP, NCPC and LAB, and relevant ministries, MPs, independent oversight institutions such as HRCSL, electoral institutions like the National Electoral Commission and Political Parties Registration Commission, and others.



“

Vice President Juldeh Jalloh and Youth Minister Mohamed O. Bangura at the Kolhat Barry exhibition booth in Magburaka, Tonkolili District

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Mohamed Samba Kamara

Email: mohamed.samba@yppdatwork.org / info@yppdatwork.org

Tel: +23278550022

Idrissa Sesay

Idrissa.Sesay@cordaid.org

+23279861134

SHINING THE SPOTLIGHTS ON GRASSROOTS CONFLICT PREVENTION IN SIERRA LEONE



In her contribution, Jessica Brima Sesay from Youth In Action for ICT and Transformation (YIACCT) said that the co-creation workshop revealed what elements were missing from their previous proposals and they now have a better understanding of why their previous proposals were not approved. She noted that they feel more confident about their future recourse mobilization potential, which has opened them up to international calls for proposals.

The representative from "Save the Earth Organization" in Tonkolili said that the story collection exercise that they did with Cordaid helped them to unearth previously unknown security and peace challenges in the community and that some of these turned out to be serious security threats. The rep furthered that the feedback helped community members follow the due process (in line with the local CBDR mechanisms). The story collection exercise allows them to be more proactive and effective in their follow-up. This was also embedded into the proposal that was submitted.

"Community Based Dispute Resolution (CBDR) providers have adopted more inclusive, conflict-sensitive and gender-sensitive practices that focus on addressing needs of women"

In 2021, the Mammy queen Mary Hallowell from Mabonto county in Tonkolili district began being regularly called upon to be included in discussions and decision making in the community during CBDR meetings.

This outcome is significant because the project has brought about systemic changes in the community. First is the recognition of the role of the Mammy queen and her actual inclusion in CBDR processes. The second is the strengthening of referral processes, which allows cases of GBV and others to be reported and actually followed up on.

Abdul Koroma (Youth leader in Mabonto Community) contends that before the intervention of Cordaid and YPPD, through the Kolhat Barray project, youth were only "observers" of CBDR processes in the local court. In 2021, Abdul Koroma was appointed to Chieftdom Youth leader by CBDR providers in the Simiria Chieftdom in Tonkolili district.

According to Head Man Mr. Wenzle, in 2021, CBDR providers in Waterloo, Western Area Rural District, modified their structures to facilitate the increased inclusion of youth and women in their decision-making processes.

"Young people are able to identify and act the key drivers of conflict, insecurity, and injustice in their communities"

From October to November 2021, representatives of Youth Empowerment and Development Organization in Tonkolili facilitated a mediation process consisting of a series of meetings and dialogue sessions between the local Police, a local mining company, the office of national security and the paramount chief. This mediation process ultimately led to the peaceful resolution of the conflict between the mining company and the local police. This outcome is significant because it is the first time that the Youth Empowerment and Development Organization felt confident enough to undertake a mediation process of this scale. Their undertaking of this process ultimately led to the resolution of a major peace crisis in the community.

In 2021, older and younger CSOs from Pujehun, Tonkolili and Western Area Rural District strengthened and broadened their networking and engagement with each other, thereby increasing the inclusion of younger CSOs in district coordination activities and project activity implementation.

RACAP an older CSO in Pujehun district contends that this outcome is significant because this is the first time that younger and older CSOs have collaborated in this way (in over 10 years of being operational in Pujehun). This change gives younger CSOs the opportunity to be represented at district coordination meetings and to be a part of district civil society organization platforms. This change furthermore supports improved coordination and community access for more effective and widespread intervention. For instance, RACAP says that younger CSOs in Pujehun are increasingly serving as a first point of contact for issues that arise in the community, whereas before all issues would be directly referred to them to respond to.

"In 2021, senior management staff of non-youth age (>35) from Pujehun (3), Tonkolili (1) and Western Area Rural District (2) who were leading CSOs that were supposed to be "youth-led" resigned from their functions to allow other staff of youthful age (<35) to assume these leadership positions".

This outcome is significant because the project has influenced systemic change within these CSOs (i.e., decentralization of powers and leadership eligibility requirement). Furthermore, according to Julius George Kamara from KYDO, this change in leadership enabled him to have more influence in decisions making. change has also helped him to build capacity in organizational leadership, project management, and stakeholder engagement through actual practice. This has increased their personal and professional confidence and has given them a sense of ownership and responsibility. This sense of ownership and responsibility is also the reason why KYDO believes that this change will be sustainable within their organizations.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Mohamed Samba Kamara
Email: mohamed.samba@yppdatwork.org / info@yppdatwork.org
Tel: +23278550022

Idrissa Sesay
Idrissa.Sesay@cordaid.org
+23279861134



" HARNESSING THE POWER OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION FOR SUSTAINABLE GRASSROOTS PEACEBUILDING IN SIERRA LEONE."

Our integrated and multi-stakeholder approaches co-designed with youth and grounded in context-based realities of local communities, starts with a mindset shift, the capacity to drive much-needed change and the ability to lead, advocate and influence. When given the opportunity, young women and men can lead in accompanying the full implementation of the 2030 Global Development Agenda sixteen (SDG16) for just, peaceful and inclusive societies. The Kolhat Barray Project therefore shifts the narrative from youth being mere beneficiaries of programs to co-creative and curators of development while building peace in one community at a time.

When the Kolhat Barray project started, the mistrust between the paramount chief and the subjects was identified as a key driver of conflict in this chiefdom. So, Cordaid and YPPD organized a CBRD Needs Assessment in July 2021 in Futa town where both the PC and his subjects especially the leader of the opposing camp (a section chief) were present. This was the first time that they were brought together in the chiefdom since the PC was exiled. PC came to the meeting in Futa Peje without security protection, even though he was advised to do so. He felt that coming with security would send the wrong message to the people, whereas he wanted to send a message of peace. Once they met in person, they greeted each other with a hug. According to the PC, this showcase of endearment "sent a message to the community that peace is back, and the conflict is over".

"PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES ARE NOT BUILT BY DISCONNECTING THE PEOPLE FROM THEIR OWN CHANGE PROCESS."

Futa Peje Chiefdom in Pujehun District finally has a restored Chief after protracted standoffs.

In 2018, The Futa Peje Paramount Chief (PC), Sheku, A.K.M Koroma was accused of allege corruption. As a result, he was exiled from his chiefdom. During his exile period, the PC feared for his physical safety and so he did not to return to the community for over three years. Because of this threat of conflict, there was little opportunity to initiate dialogue about the allegations made against him. As such, the conflict continued. In 2020, an investigation was carried out by Anti-Corruption Commission and he was ultimately found not guilty of corruption. Despite this, it was still not safe for him to return to the community.

