UDF-SIL-12-496 – Enhancing Grassroots Democracy and Responsive Traditional Leadership (Chieftaincy) in Sierra Leone

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Disclaimer
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(i) Project data
This report is the evaluation of the project “Enhancing grassroots democracy and responsive traditional leadership (chieftaincy) in Sierra Leone”, implemented from October 2013 to September 2015 inclusive by the Sierra Leonean non-governmental organization (NGO) West Africa Network for Peacebuilding-Sierra Leone (WANEP-SL) in partnership with the Foundation for Civil Society-Sierra Leone (FCS-SL) and Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET). The project’s operating budget was US$180,000.

According to the project document, its objective was to enhance “local capacities and create democratic space for traditional authorities/chieftaincy to be accountable and responsive to the needs and rights of the people”, by providing “a platform for community dialogue with chiefs as well as [promoting] broad participation and regular feedback on chiefdom governance-related issues. The project’s expected outcomes were:

- “Increased capacity of chiefs, civil society organizations (CSOs) and communities [to understand and exercise] democratic principles, dialogue and mediation”;
- “Enhanced participation in chiefdom governance through increased awareness among local communities to understand and claim rights in the four project target districts”.

(ii) Evaluation findings
The project was very relevant: it was based on a sound understanding of the challenges posed by traditional leadership processes running in parallel with state administration, and of the capacity building needs of local and paramount chiefs, and those of citizens and CSOs. However, the relevance of the project was undermined by some design flaws, which led to insufficient involvement of chiefs at local level. The participation of women in on-going debates on issues of concern to communities at local level was also weaker than anticipated, partly as a result of a project design that did not sufficiently emphasize gender equality concerns.

Although the project document identified these various needs and consequently proposed activities to address them, it did not sufficiently consider why these needs arose. In particular, it did not sufficiently identify the fact that chiefs may have divergent interests from those of the communities they lead – particularly economic interests – and that powerful families that provide chiefs may perceive themselves as distant from ordinary citizens. The project document suggested that, once they are made aware of their rights and duties, both sides (chiefs and communities) would engage in an on-going dialogue on matters of concern. This suggestion was not supported by an explicit analysis of power relationships at local level. The project was further hampered by the following design weaknesses:

- The contents of the training sessions on democratic principles, participation and the Code of Ethics of the NCPC was appropriate and met the needs of the participants. However few paramount or senior chiefs took part in these sessions (and in other subsequent project activities at local level), instead choosing to send lower-rank chiefs and other local leaders to represent them.
- While the proportion of women participating in training sessions on democratic accountability was high (about 40%), the training did not include a special focus on
gender equality. There were no specific activities in the project design to encourage women to collaborate with each other to highlight gender-related concerns in dialogues with chiefs.

The project was generally effective, in the sense that both of its outcomes were achieved – at least to some degree – and that most planned activities were implemented, despite the severe social tensions, humanitarian concerns and logistical constraints caused by the Ebola outbreak. Nevertheless, not all the indicators of success set out in the project document were appropriate to assess effectiveness, partly because of the lack of a reliable baseline. The project’s two outcomes were largely achieved. The outcome on capacity building for chiefs, CSOs and communities on democratic principles was substantially achieved. The field visits and interviews showed that many chiefs, CSOs and communities improved their understanding of democratic principles.

The outcome on participation by local communities in governance was met too, albeit to a lesser extent than the previous one, partly due to the impact of the Ebola virus epidemic. Dialogue and accountability fora were established and used to debate issues of community concern. In the context of the Ebola crisis, many of these fora were used to share information about Ebola prevention, but also – according to participants – about access to health services and about land allocation and use (a field in which chiefs traditionally play a key role).

Although the Financial Utilization Report had not been finalized at the time of the evaluation, the evaluators’ view is that the project was efficient, both in terms of value for money and use of funds, and in terms of the responsiveness of project management. It is noteworthy that the two implementing partners only received a marginal proportion of the funds – and that only to cover research costs, not staff time. This demonstrates further that the two partners were in fact merely used as “service providers”, which had not been substantially involved in the design and management of the project, and as providers of participants at local level, particularly women members of WIPNET. Project management was impressive, in the sense that the planned activities were virtually all carried out (albeit with notable delays) despite the major crisis caused by the Ebola virus disease epidemic. It is a testimony to the commitment of the WANEP staff and management that the project was steered through to the end with relatively little disruption.

The project had its clearest impact at the national level, in that it has encouraged the NCPC to build on its Code of Ethics to further formalize the tasks of chiefs and to provide a kind of self-regulation for their activities. This is particularly important in view of the hybrid status of chiefs, partly bound by tradition and partly committed to implementing democratic principles enshrined in the Constitution. Building chiefs’ capacity and making the institution of chieftaincy more transparent and accountable is an important aim in the Sierra Leone context, and the project has played a significant role towards encouraging chiefs to adopt new attitudes. At district level, the project’s impact was more diffuse. Some chiefs have willingly stated to the evaluators that the project contributed to enhancing their willingness to interact and debate with the local communities. Communities and chiefs have also praised the institution of the Chiefdom Peace Committees, which provided a communication channel that proved particularly useful during the Ebola crisis. The key limitation to the project achieving more impact was probably its failure adequately to address gender equality issues.

The project had significant elements of sustainability: the Chiefdom Peace Committees – which to some extent institutionalized pre-existing consultative meetings at chiefdom level – were
established across the project areas, and their establishment has since been recommended by the NCPC across the country. Similarly, the dialogue and accountability fora have been appreciated by participants, particularly in the context of the fight against Ebola. It is not clear yet whether the momentum achieved by the project will be sufficient to ensure that the fora are reproduced in future. The Position Paper recommending a constitutional framework for the regulation of chiefdoms is also likely to contribute to the project’s sustainability, in that its provisions appear to be consensual and therefore may be adopted with little change. The dissemination and awareness raising work done through research and broadcasts on community radio also contributed to the sustainability of the project, in that the democratic values and principles conveyed by training workshops, conferences and other meetings, are disseminated to a wider audience, which appears receptive according to WANEP’s research.

It is important for WANEP in future to build on these elements of sustainability to follow-up the project with a broader range of districts, while implementing a gradual exit strategy from the four initial districts. These districts should be encouraged to maintain the newly established mechanisms without external support other than that which may come from the NCPC and the Ministry of Local Government.

(iii) Conclusions

- **The project was relevant.** It had a very good, balanced analysis of the role of chiefs and of the balance between traditional leadership structures and democratic accountability needs. The project’s relevance was reinforced by the Ebola crisis, in that it addressed needs for local level dialogue and information-sharing.

- **The project design was appropriate and strategic.** The project focused on outcomes on capacity building and channels of communications, building on the grantee’s earlier work in the districts.

- **The project failed to incorporate a sufficient focus on gender equality, hence its inability to reduce the gender gap in participation in political decision-making.** Although the project was formally supportive of gender equality, it did not devote specific resources to capacity building for women, and neither did women’s groups contribute to project design.

- **The project was effective and achieved its planned outcomes despite the constraints caused by the Ebola virus disease epidemic.** The project team’s commitment and the dedication of local stakeholders helped ensure that most planned project activities were implemented, albeit with some delays.

- **The project was managed well, and represented good value for money.** The allocation of funds was appropriate, and a large amount of activities was implemented with a relatively moderate budget.

- **The project achieved clear impact at national level, while impact in the districts was more diffuse.** Interviews demonstrated that paramount chiefs who dealt closely with WANEP during project implementation had clearly understood the need for more
transparency and accountability to communities on the part of chiefs, and were acting accordingly.

- **The project achieved a substantial level of sustainability by encouraging the establishment of new institutions and supporting increased self-regulation by chiefs.** The dialogue channels established by the project (Chiefdom Peace Committees, dialogue and accountability fora) are likely to be maintained after the end of the project, thanks in part to support by the NCPC.

(iv) **Recommendations**

- **WANEP should continue supporting the Chiefdom Peace Committees and the dialogue and accountability fora established by the project, and encourage their dissemination to other districts.**

- **WANEP should ensure that future project design more explicitly addresses need related to gender equality.**

- **WANEP should continue working with NCPC, further addressing the need for the chieftaincy system to meet democratic accountability requirements.**
II. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

(i) The project and evaluation objectives
This report is the evaluation of the project “Enhancing grassroots democracy and responsive traditional leadership (chieftaincy) in Sierra Leone”, implemented from October 2013 to September 2015 inclusive by the Sierra Leonean non-governmental organization (NGO) West Africa Network for Peacebuilding-Sierra Leone (WANEP-SL) in partnership with the Foundation for Civil Society-Sierra Leone (FCS-SL) and Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET). The project budget was US$200,000, of which US$ 20,000 was retained by UNDEF for evaluation and monitoring purposes.

According to the project document, its objective was to enhance “local capacities and create democratic space for traditional authorities/chieftaincy to be accountable and responsive to the needs and rights of the people”, by providing “a platform for community dialogue with chiefs as well as [promoting] broad participation and regular feedback on chieftain governance-related issues. The project’s expected outcomes were:

- “Increased capacity of chiefs, civil society organizations (CSOs) and communities [to understand and exercise] democratic principles, dialogue and mediation”;
- “Enhanced participation in chieftain governance through increased awareness among local communities to understand and claim rights in the four project target districts”.

The project involved activities at the national level – mainly targeting the Paramount Chiefs (PCs), chiefs who oversee several chieftoms – and in four districts around the country: Kambia and Port Loko in the north, Kono in the east, and Pujehun in the south. Activities included training on democratic principles and democratic accountability; establishment of Chiefdom Peace Committees; development of a strategic plan for the National Council of Paramount Chiefs (NCPC); study visit to Ghana; implementation of Chief-Citizens Dialogue and Accountability For a; radio discussions; and research on governance and accountability at local level.

The evaluation of this project is part of the larger set of evaluations of UNDEF-funded projects. The purpose of these evaluations is to "contribute to a better understanding of what constitutes a successful project, which will in turn help UNDEF to develop future project strategies. Evaluations are also to assist stakeholders to determine whether projects have been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether anticipated project outputs have been achieved".¹

(ii) Evaluation methodology
The evaluation started in December 2015 with fieldwork in Sierra Leone from 14 to 17 December 2015 inclusive. An international expert and a national expert conducted the evaluation. UNDEF evaluations are more qualitative than quantitative in nature and follow a standard set of evaluation questions that focus on the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and any value added from UNDEF-funding (Annex 1). This is to allow meta-analysis in cluster evaluations at a later stage. This report follows that structure.

The evaluators reviewed the standard project documentation: initial project document, mid-term and final narrative reports, milestones reports, etc. (see list of documents annexed to this report). The evaluators also reviewed academic reports and political/economic studies about the chiefdom system; they also considered news clippings about project activities and other material produced by WANEP-SL as part of the project.

As a result of the initial desk study of project documentation (Launch Note UDF-SIL-12-496, December 2015), the evaluators also identified the following key issues requiring closer scrutiny:

- **Relevance to democratic accountability.** The evaluators the extent to which the designers and implementers of the project took into account the need for continuing reform of the chieftaincy system to enhance its accountability.

- **Relevance to peace, service delivery and development.** The chiefdoms are the basic unit of local administration in Sierra Leone, and therefore have a big role to play in the implementation of poverty reduction plans and other development programs devised by the national government – including, during the period of the project, the fight against the Ebola epidemic. The evaluators probed the extent to which government policies were effectively implemented in the project target areas, and whether the training provided to chiefs by the project contributed to more effective governance.

- **Role of women in decision-making.** While most current Paramount Chiefs are male, a number of women have begun to assume this role. The scope for this trend to continue, and for civil society to further encourage it, was assessed.

- **Coordination between traditional chiefs and state institutions.** Although chieftaincy is traditionally a status conferred to members of senior families, an element of popular choice is playing an increasing role. The scope of chiefs’ role in local administration – and therefore the impact of their capacity building by the project – was assessed.

- **Advocacy.** The second phase of the project focused on advocacy. It was important to determine the extent to which the advocacy strategies developed by the project were appropriate to the needs, and were effectively implemented.

- **Risk identification and mitigation.** The project document identified some risks to the project, but could not have predicted the level of disruption caused by the Ebola crisis. The evaluators assessed the impact of the crisis on the project.

- **Effectiveness/outcomes.** The project document sets out detailed indicators of success. The evaluators assessed the extent to which the indicators were actually used and whether the relevant information base was available, or developed during the project.

- **Efficiency/project management.** The project document referred to FSC-SL and WIPNET as implementing partners, while WANEP-SL was in charge of overall management. The evaluation assessed this approach.

- **Sustainability and impact.** The Final Narrative Report outlined some project impacts and achievements. The evaluation sought to find out the current situation, and whether the successes described were sustained over time.

The evaluators met a range of stakeholders during their visit:

- Representatives of WANEP-SL and the implementing NGOs FSC-SL and WIPNET;
- Representatives of the NCPC (Paramount Chiefs);
- Local chiefs in Kambia and Port Loko;
- A sample/focus group of community members impacted by the project.
In addition, phone interviews were carried out with project stakeholders in locations that were not visited. A list of people interviewed is annexed to this report. Despite the time limitations, the evaluators were able to form a well-rounded view of the project.

**Note on Ebola crisis:** the first cases of Ebola virus disease were officially reported in Sierra Leone in May 2014, after appearing in Guinea (December 2013) and Liberia (March 2014). The country was officially declared free of Ebola virus transmission on 7 November 2015. In this 18-months period, over 14,000 suspected and confirmed cases were reported to the World Health Organization, and 3,955 people died, out of a population of about 6.2m (official Sierra Leone Government estimate of 2013). In addition to its many victims, the epidemic caused widespread and profound disruption to all aspects of life in Sierra Leone, hampering travel and constraining economic activities as well as development projects. The work of NGOs, including WANEP and its partners, was also severely constrained.

The epidemic largely coincided with the period of the project, which ended in September 2015. Some of the planned activities were reoriented to take into account the imperative to fight the epidemic. The evaluators took these exceptional circumstances into account, in two ways in particular:

- They had in mind the extent to which logistical hurdles were increased by the epidemic. Apart from Ebola’s actual toll (Port Loko and Kono districts being among those most affected) restrictions on the movement of people heavily affected project implementers and beneficiaries. NGO staff members, often among the most educated people at local level, also consciously and understandably focused on disease-related work, to the detriment of their project plans.
- The epidemic also gave rise to new concerns affecting local governance, in relation for example to the provision of health services. Discrimination against victims – including their relatives and survivors of the disease – also had an impact on local governance.

**(iii) Development context**

Sierra Leone operates a system of governance that is a product of two influences: the traditional, informal system and the formal, institutional model of governance. The dualism that characterises the political governance system also permeates the legal system, where constitutional rule co-exists with traditional law, although in situations of conflict, the Sierra Leone Constitution is deemed superior. The challenge for the country since the end of the civil war of the 1990s has been to develop governance structures that fulfil modern principles of democracy, social inclusion and service provision, yet also respect the political and cultural preferences of Sierra Leoneans. An attempt has been made to achieve this through a decentralized system of governance with 19 local government structures established in all four regions.

In Sierra Leone, 149 paramount chiefs and over 1500 sub-chiefs (section chiefs and town chiefs) perform chieftaincy governance. The project was implemented in four of the fourteen districts of Sierra Leone:

- Port Loko, a northern district, predominantly populated by the Temne ethnic group with 11 chiefdoms;
- Kambia district, a multi-ethnic district with Limba, Soso, Temne and Mandingo communities on Sierra Leone’s North-western border with Guinea, with 7 chiefdoms;
• Pujehun district, with 12 Mende chiefdoms in the far South towards the Liberia border;
• Kono, a diamond-rich district predominantly occupied by Konos, with 11 chiefdoms in the Eastern Region of Sierra Leone.

Chiefs draw their legitimacy from the support they get from the 16 ethnic groups in Sierra Leone. The two largest ethnic groups, the Temne in the North and Mende in the South and East, each constitute about 30% of the population. Chiefs are the frontline of the justice sector, receiving over 70% of cases at the community level. However, they carry out these functions without sufficient training and, sometimes, with limited authority. Similarly, there is no strong national chieftaincy secretariat to maintain a national register of the operations of chiefs.

**Historical background: chiefdom justice procedure**

The three interior provinces of Sierra Leone were administered from 1896 until 1951 as a colonial protectorate under “indirect rule” — meaning that the colonial government exercised power through chiefs. The courts of “Native Chiefs” were legally recognized throughout this period. Chiefs had jurisdiction to hear and determine:

- Civil cases arising exclusively between “natives” (except for cases involving questions of title to land between two or more paramount chiefs or of a debt claimed by the holder of a store license); and
- Criminal cases arising exclusively between “natives” other than cases of murder, culpable homicide, rape, pretended witchcraft, slave raiding, dealing in slaves, cannibalism, robbery with violence, or inflicting grievous bodily harm, matters or offences relating to secret societies, cases arising out of factional or “tribal fights” and any other matters made offences under state law.

A “native” was legally defined as any member of the aboriginal races or tribes of Africa ordinarily resident within the Protectorate. Cases between “natives” and “non-natives” (the latter group included the Krios of the Sierra Leone Colony) were heard at a Combined Court presided over by the British District Commissioner and two or more paramount chiefs selected by him. Early observers of chiefs’ courts in the provinces reported that complainants, defendants and witnesses gave testimony under the force of oaths (“swears”) and that considerable resources were often staked in the outcome of cases. As C. Braithwaite-Wallis observed in 1905:

> When a case has to be brought into Court, the complainant goes to the Chief of the Country […] and pays a fee. The fee may be in cash or kind, its amount being assessed according to the wealth and status of the complainant, and to the importance of the case to be tried. When the fee has been paid, the Chief sends for the defendant. If he ignores this summons, he is brought by force, and then and there charged with contempt of Court, and fined. This is known as giving him “kassi”, and a person guilty of any breach of local custom in Court, or elsewhere, would be “kassied”. Upon the appearance of the defendant in Court, the Chief […] informs him of the nature of the complaint or charge, and if he pleads guilty, judgment can be given at once, and the expenses of the Court, together with the fees paid to the Chief by the complainant, must be defrayed by him. If, on the other hand, the defendant

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2 Ordinance No.20 of 1896.
3 While Braithwaite-Wallis’ description of kassi (indigenously known as fines) as a breach of local custom was broadly accurate, subsequent anthropological research revealed that the word (which is common to many Sierra Leonean languages) connotes, specifically, the breach of a spiritually sanctioned rule or prohibition. The main sources of such sanctioning are the secret societies and paramount chiefs who have undergone ritual investiture.
pleads not guilty, a kind of betting transaction takes place, and is settled before the case proceeds. In this betting transaction, the complainant makes a statement to the effect that, if he is wrong, he will forfeit the whole of the money or goods he is about to place in the Court. He then stakes by deposits, which, if they are in kind, as a rule consist of native made cloths. The defendant has to deposit an equal amount, and, at the termination of the case, the winner receives the whole of these fees, and not the Court. The defendant has also to pay Court fees to the Chief of value equivalent to those paid by the complainant.4

According to Braithwaite-Wallis, the punishments handed down by these courts could be draconian. Conviction for murder, for example, could result execution, enslavement, or a fine that would “practically ruin the accused for life”. Rape carried similar penalties. Braithwaite-Wallis goes on to note that while chiefs of all ranks tended to preside over courts, sub-chiefs’ judicial authority was “delegated” to them by the paramount chief.

Chiefdom justice today
For a number of authors, including Paul Richards5, excesses and abuses in the chieftaincy system were among key reasons for the outbreak of civil war. Consequently, justice and security reforms, including within the chieftaincy, have been hallmarks of Sierra Leone’s post-conflict reconstruction process. In the post-conflict era, a Local Court Act of 2011 has brought the chiefs’ court under the supervision of the judiciary; District Officers have been re-established to coordinate and supervise chiefs’ activities and the National Council of Paramount Chiefs is now functional and has developed a code of ethics and service standards for chiefs. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development is also supporting capacity building of traditional leaders to make justice more accessible to poor and disadvantaged people and to provide speedy, affordable and meaningful remedies to disputes.

At the same time, the relationship between citizens and chiefs remains problematic and the perception remains that chiefs are not accountable to their citizens. It is against this backdrop that the project under review was developed, with the central goal of improving chiefs-citizen relations, including citizen access to equitable and fair justice.

WANEP-SL and its partners
WANEP-SL is the Sierra Leone branch of WANEP, a regional peace-building organization founded in 1998. It carries out conflict analysis, monitoring and early warning, including through a partnership with ECOWAS. It also conducts training and other capacity building activities on peace and conflict resolution. One of the two project partners, WIPNET, is originally a program launched by WANEP-SL to build the capacity of women in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. The other, FSC-SL, has worked alongside WANEP on previous community support projects, particularly on governance issues, where its expertise complements that of WANEP.

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

i. Project strategy and approach

Strategy
The project had a two-part implementation strategy, described in the project document, to achieve its objective of increasing capacity and awareness of citizens to participate in governance and to create democratic space to hold traditional leaders accountable and responsible to citizen’s needs:

- The first part focused on capacity building for project implementers, chiefs, CSOs and community participants. This involved awareness-raising on the legal framework of chiefdom governance, as well as on the NCPC Code of Ethics on Justice and Security, which WANEP had helped draft. At national level, the NCPC was also targeted for capacity building, to enhance learning among Chiefs and exchanges with political decision-makers.

- The second part of the strategy was to establish local Dialogue and Accountability Fora, where chiefs (paramount as well as section- and town-level) and citizens debated issues of concern such as access to government services. The strategy also included advocacy directed at paramount chiefs, research on governance in the four target districts and outreach activities such as radio programmes and community discussion groups.

This strategy was consistent with the analysis developed in the project document, and with the development context reviewed above. The key assumptions of the strategy were the following:

- That the risk of violence, intolerance and socio-economic instability could be managed through the involvement of local authorities and civil society. In the event, political violence was not an issue during the project, thanks in part to earlier conflict prevention mechanisms established by CSOs at district level around the country.

- That sustained involvement of women, youth and people with disabilities could help foster change in cultural practices that marginalize women and other vulnerable groups. Although participation by members of such groups was a reality during the project, it is not clear that attitudes towards them changed significantly (this is reviewed in the impact section of the next chapter).

- That political will to enhance participation of citizens in dialogue with chiefs could be fostered by creating appropriate space for dialogue. The evidence on this point is mixed: the provision of a space for dialogue certainly helped, but the sustainability of this dialogue is unclear, if it is not continuously fostered by WANEP and its partners.

Approach
The project document demonstrates that the project designers took into account both the “argued undemocratic nature of chieftaincy in Sierra Leone” and the fact that chiefs effectively exercise jurisdiction at local level, with at least a degree of consent on the part of the population. The project clearly identified the twin needs to enhance the capacity of chiefs to govern effectively and accountably, and to enhance the capacity and will of citizens to engage in debate on governance matters. The project also sought to address the marginalization of women, which is contributes to low citizen participation in political debates.
The project explicitly built on previous activities by WANEP and its partners. Community peace monitors, trained by WANEP, are active in districts including the four targeted by this project, to identify and report on conflict risk factors. The National Peace and Development Forum, also initiated by WANEP, was a precursor to the district-level Dialogue and Accountability planned within this project. The project document identified two outcomes, ten outputs and eight key indicators that were to be used to assess the achievement of the outputs. These will be reviewed in the next chapter.

The project districts are marked with arrows. The evaluators visited Kambia and Port Loko districts, in the northwest. Project activities also took place in Kono (East) and Pujehun districts (Southwest), as well as in the capital Freetown.
**Logical framework**

The framework below aims to capture the project logic. In view of the focus placed by the project document on outcomes and indicators, these are set out in separate columns. There were different formulations of the long-term development objective in the project document: the text given in the right-hand column attempts to cover all aspects of the various formulations. The activities should not necessarily be seen as serving only one outcome each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project outputs</th>
<th>Output indicators</th>
<th>Project outcomes</th>
<th>Development Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Implementing partners, NCPC and WANEP project staff trained on project management and on the project.</td>
<td>• Number of community members integrating skills learned into conflict resolution.</td>
<td>Increased capacity of chiefs, CSOs and communities on democratic principles, dialogue and mediation that lead to effectiveness and efficiency in leadership at local level by the end of the project period.</td>
<td>To contribute to make traditional leaders accountable and responsive to the needs and rights of the people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Chiefs, CSOs and selected community members trained on democracy principles with focus on the accountability and participatory provisions of the chieftaincy.</td>
<td>• Number of functioning chiefdom peace committees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Selected chiefdom citizens trained in effective leadership, dialogue and mediation, and Chiefdom Peace Committees established.</td>
<td>• Quality of chiefs’ leadership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Five-year strategic plan for the operation of NCPC developed</td>
<td>• Number of CSOs able to build coalitions to improve governance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Annual conference to validate and adopt the strategic plan, share information and design enforcement mechanisms of the Code of Ethics on justice and security.</td>
<td>• Numbr of Fora held.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Study visits to Ghana and participation in training program on governance, dialogue and mediation for selected paramount chiefs.</td>
<td>• Number of accountable chiefs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Chief-Citizens Dialogue and Accountability Fora.</td>
<td>• Increase in complaints filed before chiefs by women and members of vulnerable groups.</td>
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<td>• Community radio discussions and post-broadcast fora.</td>
<td>• Response to radio programmes, other outreach activities.</td>
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<td>• Progress reports on traditional governance and social accountability</td>
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<td>• Public launch of progress reports.</td>
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To increase capacity and awareness of citizens to participate in chiefdom governance and create democratic space to hold traditional leaders accountable and responsive.
IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

This evaluation is based on questions formulated to meet the criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The questions and sub-questions are found in Annex 1 of this document.

(i) Relevance
The project was very relevant: it was based on a sound understanding of the challenges posed by traditional leadership processes running in parallel with state administration, and of the capacity building needs of local and paramount chiefs, and those of citizens and CSOs. The project was also relevant in that it built on earlier work by WANEP and others to improve the accountability of the chieftaincy system and to further integrated democratic governance principles into that system. The project’s relevance was further enhanced by its focus on capacity building for local communities, including marginalized groups – particularly women.

However, the relevance of the project was undermined by some design flaws, which led to insufficient involvement of chiefs at local level. The participation of women in on-going debates on issues of concern to communities at local level was also weaker than anticipated, partly as a result of a project design that did not sufficiently emphasize gender equality concerns. These issues are reviewed below.

Response to needs
The project design was based on a detailed and accurate analysis of the chieftaincy system, which is characterized by its ambivalence in terms of democratic accountability. Academic studies consulted by the evaluators (see Development Context section, and list of documents consulted in annex) show that the chieftaincy system is well accepted by the population – it is “democratic” in that sense – partly because it is also connected to traditional social structures, including the secret societies that form part of Sierra Leone’s social fabric. Ordinary citizens also perceive the chieftaincy system as accessible and understandable, in contrast to the state administration systems, which may often appear remote. Since chiefs have a key role in adjudicating disputes at community level (among community members and between communities) the fact that the system is perceived as being based on a strong tradition, gives a sense of accessibility that the state judicial system does not necessarily have.

Despite its acceptability by the public, the chieftaincy system suffers from key weaknesses in terms of training and capacity on the part of chiefs, as described in the project document. These weaknesses compromise the system’s ability to contribute to sound administration, and may in some cases contribute to community-level conflicts. The weaknesses may also discourage political participation by citizens. As a result of this analysis, the project correctly identified capacity building and policy dialogue as two key needs to be addressed.

Three additional needs were identified by the project document, and addressed by project activities:

6 It would be wrong to read a sinister, clandestine meaning into the term “secret societies”. These are groups whose existence is well known, and whose internal workings are also known, and that serve legitimate community interests. Membership is important for many Sierra Leoneans as part of the socialization process, particularly in rural areas, and also because of its spiritual significance.
• The need to improve the legal and policy framework of the chieftaincy system, including self-regulatory aspects. Meeting this need required working with the NCPC to further clarify the position of chiefs in the socio-political system, and to enhance their accountability to the public. This aspect of the project built on earlier work by WANEP with the NCPC to draft and disseminate a Code of Ethics for paramount chiefs.

• The need to enhance women’s involvement in the chieftaincy system and participation in policy debates. Only a small minority of chiefs are women, and customs in some areas prevent women from acceding to chieftdom altogether. At community level, many hurdles prevent women from actively participating in debates on governance issues. The project sought inter alia to complement CSOs’ efforts to enhance the status of women.

• The need to disseminate information about good chieftaincy practices and to advocate in favor of more community-based dialogues between communities and chiefs (as well as local administrative bodies). The project in this regard built on the implementing NGOs’ earlier experience of the chieftaincy system, in which some chiefs are reluctant to enhance their interactions with communities.

Although the project document identified these various needs and consequently proposed activities to address them, it did not sufficiently consider why these needs arose. In particular, it did not sufficiently identify the fact that chiefs may have divergent interests from those of the communities they lead – particularly economic interests – and that powerful families that provide chiefs may perceive themselves as distant from ordinary citizens. The project document suggested that, once they are made aware of their rights and duties, both sides (chiefs and communities) would engage in an on-going dialogue on matters of concern. This suggestion was not supported by an explicit analysis of power relationships at local level. The project document could have further enhanced the relevance of the project by developing in more detail a political economy analysis (PEA) to help describe how power and resources are distributed in the specific, mostly rural, Sierra Leonean districts where the chieftaincy system plays a major role. Such an analysis could have highlighted chiefs’ role in the adjudication of land (among other areas with direct consequences on livelihoods) and the difficulty for local communities to keep chiefs accountable in a systematic way. A PEA could also have provided further analysis of the complementarity –

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7 These hurdles include lower levels of education as is the case of men, as well as the perceived need for women to defer in public to men’s wishes. Reluctance by men to allow women to take on a public role has also been cited as a factor by interviewees.
or lack of it – between chiefs’ role as local administrators and that of local council and their administrative machinery.

**Project design**
In essence, the project was designed with a two-pronged approach: capacity building and advocacy/debate. The ten different activities summarized in the table in chapter III helped fulfill one of these two elements. One of the most relevant activities was the support given to the NCPC, both in terms of institutional capacity building and through the development of a strategic plan for the organization. By helping the development of a five-year strategic plan – which followed earlier support whereby WANEP helped disseminate a Code of Ethics – WANEP Placed the NCPC in the public eye and ensured that Paramount Chiefs made formal, public commitments, to which they could be held accountable.

Although the project design appropriately encompassed the identified needs and were conducive to achieving the project’s objectives, it lacked two key elements:

- **On-going research.** Much of the project analysis was based on the knowledge accumulated by WANEP and its partners through years of presence on the ground. However this knowledge was focused on conflict prevention – which is WANEP’s long-standing focus – rather than on governance, livelihoods and service delivery. The project did include a small research component (progress reports on governance and accountability at local level) but this was not systematic and the reporting was not planned to feed back into project design.  

- **A rights-based and gender equality focus.** Although democratic accountability was key to the project, activities to raise awareness of rights among communities were only planned for the early phase of the project, and not through its entire duration. Similarly, the gender focus of the project was not consistent throughout its entire duration: women were selected for training and for participation in other activities, but there was no dedicated focus on raising awareness of gender equality throughout the project period.

The project was further hampered by the following design weaknesses:

- **The contents of the training sessions on democratic principles, participation and the Code of Ethics of the NCPC was appropriate and met the needs of the participants. However few paramount or senior chiefs took part in these sessions (and in other subsequent project activities at local level), instead choosing to send lower-rank chiefs and other local leaders to represent them. One cause for this pattern was a reluctance to be placed in a learning situation, on an equal footing with community members and NGO activists. Separate capacity building activities should have been implemented for chiefs. The fact that project activities designed specifically for participation by chiefs were successful proves this point: chiefs willingly engage in training activities but do so much less if the activities are not involving only other chiefs.**

- **A similar concern arose in relation to women’s participation. While the proportion of women participating in training sessions on democratic accountability was high (about 40%), the training did not include a special focus on gender equality. There were no specific activities in the project design to encourage women to collaborate with each other to highlight gender-related concerns in dialogues with chiefs. As in the case of chiefs, separate capacity building sessions on democratic accountability aimed at women would have gone some way towards enhancing the project’s focus on gender equality.**
Partnerships
The project was implemented by WANEP in cooperation with WIPNET, a network of women involved in peace building, and by FSC, an NGO with a background of work on governance at local level. The project, however, was largely carried by WANEP, the largest of the three organizations. WANEP members were present in every project district, implementing conflict monitoring activities; these pre-existing WANEP members constituted the bulk of the project’s beneficiaries at community level. The women’s organization, WIPNET, helped ensure a degree of participation in the project by women, but did not have a significant role in the design and management of the project. As WIPNET was originally a project launched by WANEP, there was a clear relationship of subordination between WIPNET and WANEP. FSC’s role was also relatively minor, and consisted mainly in contributions to training activities.

Ebola
The project was already designed and well underway when the Ebola virus disease first struck Sierra Leone. Nevertheless, the Ebola crisis had an impact on the relevance of the project, in the sense that it highlighted the crucial role that chiefdoms play in conveying information to citizens. As is recounted below, Dialogue and Accountability Fora in the target districts provided an appropriate setting to discuss Ebola prevention measures, access to healthcare, etc.

The crisis had one specific impact on project design. A week-long training session in Ghana on dialogue and mediation was cancelled because of travel restrictions, and was replaced by a training session of the same length in Sierra Leone, attended by 15 paramount chiefs (including three women). As the training took place within Sierra Leone, more chiefs could attend it than would have been able to travel to Ghana – this was an unexpected benefit, which partly counter-balanced the concern expressed above with regard to project design, that, too few activities were directed at chiefs alone.

(ii) Effectiveness
The project was generally effective, in the sense that both of its outcomes were achieved – at least to some degree – and that most planned activities were implemented, despite the severe social tensions, humanitarian concerns and logistical constraints caused by the Ebola outbreak. Nevertheless, not all the indicators of success set out in the project document were appropriate to assess effectiveness, partly because of the lack of a reliable baseline. At activity level, planned project activities were mostly implemented, albeit in many cases with some delays. Interviews conducted with beneficiaries during field visits indicated that training had been of a good standard and that follow-up of many activities by WANEP and its partner NGOs had generally been adequate.
Against this generally positive background, there were the following concerns relating to effectiveness:

- The key concern was about gender equality. The project document made two specific commitments in this regard:
  - To ensure that "issues that negatively impact women are addressed"; and
  - That "approximately 45% female to 55% male will take part in all trainings, public dialogue fora and... Chiefdom Peace Committees".

Although the second commitment was kept, at least in terms of women’s participation in training sessions, there was insufficient focus on issues of specific concern to women in terms of local governance (see below).

- Some of the indicators related much more to activities than to outcomes, and were therefore inadequate for the purpose of assessing the achievement of outcomes. This included the indicators on the number of peace committees established and functional and the number of dialogue and accountability fora.

Effectiveness at outcome level
The degree of achievement of the anticipated outcomes can be summarized as follows:

- *Increased capacity of chiefs, CSOs and communities on democratic principles, dialogue and mediation that lead to effectiveness and efficiency in leadership at local level by the end of the project period.* This outcome was substantially achieved. The three indicators that framed it are reviewed below. In general terms the field visits and interviews showed that many chiefs, CSOs and communities improved their understanding of democratic principles. Though this could not entirely be attributed to the project alone, the following components of the project were instrumental in this respect:
  - *Interaction with the NCPC.* WANEP had correctly understood the importance of addressing chiefs in a top-down, hierarchical manner, so that Paramount Chiefs...
influence local chiefs. WANEP’s long-standing work with NCPC, which included the development and dissemination of a Code of Ethics, and work on a Position Paper on constitutional reform, helped ensure that democratic principles were better understood, and espoused, by the NCPC as an institution. Though this is a long-term aim, the project made a significant contribution to it by enabling continued high-level work with the NCPC and disseminating its outcome at local level (through training).

- **Training at community level.** The training sessions (3-day sessions for 60 participants, and 2-day sessions for another 656) were also effective, according to participants. Although they did not only cover democratic principles – the 2-day sessions tended to focus on dialogue and mediation – the training sessions were key to the project’s effectiveness, thanks to the quality of the trainers and to appropriate curricula.

- **Visit to Ghana and training for chiefs.** Six paramount chiefs, including two women, visited Ghana to familiarize themselves with governance approaches in that country. They were due to take part in a weeklong training course, but this had to be cancelled as a result of the Ebola outbreak. Instead, additional training for 15 paramount chiefs was conducted in Sierra Leone. This turned out to reinforce the project’s effectiveness by exposing more chiefs to training (15 instead of the 6 who visited Ghana) and by reinforcing the follow-up to the visit and training through radio broadcasts.

- **Enhanced participation in chiefdom governance through increased awareness among local communities to understand and claim rights in the four project target districts.** This outcome was met too, albeit to a lesser extent than the previous one, partly due to the impact of the Ebola virus epidemic. Dialogue and accountability fora were established and used to debate issues of community concern. In the context of the Ebola crisis, many of these fora were used to share information about Ebola prevention, but also – according to participants – about access to health services and about land allocation and use (a field in which chiefs traditionally play a key role). Despite these elements showing a fulfillment of the planned outcome, some interviews suggested that the outcome was not fully achieved, because:
  - **Some chiefs “delegated” attendance.** The dialogue and accountability fora were meant to bring together chiefs (of all ranks), CSO members as well as ordinary citizens. In practice, interviews indicated that chiefs tended to participate mainly at the opening of the meetings to “give their blessing”, to letting subordinates attend the rest of the meetings. WANEP did not have a record of the proportion of dialogue and accountability forum meetings that were actually attended in full by all the chiefs concerned. However, this pattern of “delegated” attendance was illustrative of the distance between chiefs and communities, which the project was attempting to bridge.
  - **Local administrative authorities not always represented.** Chiefs have a degree of authority derived from tradition, and entrenched in the Constitution of Sierra Leone, but they are not managing local government administration. Although local government officials were systematically included in the dialogue and accountability fora, they did not necessarily attend all meetings. In their absence, debates about local government matters were less likely to be followed-up.
  - **Women’s concerns and rights were not widely addressed.** Human rights issues affecting women in rural Sierra Leone – from early marriage to access to land and
gender-based violence – were not, according to participants, commonly raised during dialogue and accountability fora. It is clear that the Ebola crisis context may have contributed to a focus on Ebola prevention issues rather than specific concern affecting women. Nevertheless, the failure of the project to systematically raise issues concerning the situation of women is also a reflection of the fact that WANEP, and its women’s network partner WIPNET, are conflict mediation organizations which do not traditionally focus on rights.

Effectiveness at activity level

The project activities were implemented, to a very large extent, as planned. The breakdown of effectiveness at project activity level is as follows:

- **Training workshops for chiefs, CSOs and communities on democratic principles and the Chieftaincy Act.** These were implemented as planned in three of the four districts (participants from the fourth district, Kambia, joined those in nearby Port Loko). A third of the 60 participants were chiefs. Post-training evaluations indicated that the sessions had been effective in conveying notions of democratic accountability and in raising awareness about the provisions of the Chieftaincy Act that govern the relationship between chiefs and communities. The participants were asked to jointly develop district action plans to put in place the planned dialogue and accountability fora.

- **Community-level training workshops on dialogue and mediation.** These sessions took place in each of the 44 chiefdoms across the four project districts, and led to the establishment of local Chiefdom Peace Committees in those chiefdoms that did not yet have any (some chiefdoms had previously established such peace committees as a result of earlier involvement by WANEP).

- **Strategic plan developed and adopted by the NCPC.** WANEP clearly played a key role in the drafting of this five-year plan, which commits Paramount Chiefs and local chiefs to consult the local population, through the Chiefdom Peace Committees. The strategic plan was developed on the basis of consultations with NCPC members in each of the country’s four regions, thus ensuring a degree of local buy-in and awareness of the plan’s provisions. A national
conference was held to launch the strategic plan, which was endorsed by the relevant government ministry.

- **Study visit to Ghana.** This was mainly focused on learning about local governance and conflict prevention mechanisms developed by WANEP’s Ghanaian counterpart. The training course on this topic was moved from Ghana to Sierra Leone due to Ebola – with the benefit that more paramount chiefs could attend.

- **Dialogue and accountability fora/community radio broadcasts.** These meetings were held on a six-monthly basis at district level, with the participation of community representatives nominated by their respective Chiefdom Peace Committee. The fora were a mixture of presentations by chiefs at various levels, and debates with participants. Not all chiefs participated in their district’s fora. Nevertheless participants noted that concerns raised by citizens were addressed, and reflected in community radio broadcasts.

- **Reports on traditional governance and social accountability.** These two reports were produced with support from social science consultants. The first report was originally supposed, according to the project document, to trace changes in chiefdom governance and to identify the impact of accountability processes. In practice, however, WANEP used the research conducted by its consultants to work with NCPC towards the development of an NCPC “Position Paper” in the context of the revision of the Constitution of Sierra Leone. The Position Paper recommends changes to the Constitution, on issues ranging from the judicial role of chiefs to the modalities of land allocation (see box on this page). The second report looked specifically at the impact of the Ebola crisis on governance and at the post-Ebola recovery agenda. While the second report was in line with the project proposal, in the sense that it built on the experience acquired by WANEP in the context of the project, the Position Paper was in a different situation. It was presented as authored by NCPC, not by WANEP, and made no mention of the project. However, the paper was relevant to the policy dialogue in Sierra Leone.

This overview shows that the activities were largely implemented as planned – a significant feat in view of the Ebola crisis context. The crisis itself had a clear impact on the contents of activities – including the second research report, which sought to draw lessons from the crisis on local governance – but the implementers were able to organize the great majority of the planned activities.

**Overview of outcome indicators**
The project document provided eight outcome indicators, complemented with baseline indications and quantitative targets. This was generally helpful in terms of project monitoring, and in assessing the effectiveness of the project. Although some indicators focused on activities more than outcomes, the balance between quantitative and qualitative criteria was appropriate. Here is a review of the eight indicators:

- **Number of community members, CSO representatives and chiefs who have integrated skills acquired in training** (target: 660). This indicator focused on the training activities, but WANEP was able to demonstrate that skills acquired during training were subsequently used.

- **Number of Chiefdom Peace Committees established and functioning** (target: 44). In the project districts, interviewees indicated that these committees have been meeting regularly, though it is not clear that the “fortnightly” frequency referred to in WANEP’s reports is actually kept to. In some areas, the meetings were happening on a weekly basis during the Ebola crisis.
• **Improvement of chiefs’ leadership skills** (target: 6 chiefs and 2 project staff). This indicator was met in the sense that six paramount chiefs visited Ghana and received additional training. In fact, this indicator was met more broadly, because the Code of Ethics developed by NCPC with WANEP’s help is beginning to be widely known and referred to among chiefs. WANEP also noted that, until training started as part of this project, many chiefs had never received any training at all.

• **Community members and CSOs enhance their understanding of governance and build coalitions to demand better service** (target: 1,400 people). This indicator was largely met, with attendance levels at dialogue and accountability fora demonstrating a keen interest on the part of communities to discuss governance issues. The Ebola virus disease epidemic may have contributed to communities’ interest in attending the sessions, since access to health services and to information about disease prevention were urgent needs through most of the project period.

• **Establishment of four district-level dialogue and accountability fora** (target: one forum per district, meeting twice per year). This indicator was also met, in terms of the number of meetings. However, in at least some locations, chiefs failed to attend the fora in their entirety. WANEP noted in its final report that women in the two northern districts did not actively participate in debates. This confirmed the remark made in the relevance section above, that meetings and other activities specifically dedicated to women would have helped encourage their participation.

• **Chiefs become more accountable and responsive to communities** (target: 44 chiefs – all chiefdoms). Although WANEP claims that this indicator was fulfilled, the evaluators heard indications that some chiefs had yet to respond to communities’ demand for more transparency. There is evidence, however, that several chiefs have adopted a more responsive and transparent attitude, for example by disclosing amounts of money received from the central government and allowing the use of funds to be monitored.

• **Increased number of rights-related complaints filed by women and marginalized people** (no quantitative target). WANEP stated that at least ten new complaints were made before chiefs, concerning the exercise of rights by vulnerable people and women. It was difficult, however, to assess whether the new complaints were made as a result of the project.

• **Increased community outreach through radio broadcasts** (no target). This was mostly an activity indicator, in the sense that it was closely connected to the 88 broadcasts on community radio stations, reporting about the dialogue fora and other project activities.

In conclusion, the indicators were correctly formulated and taken together they provided a good overview of the achievement of project outcomes. They demonstrated that the project was broadly effective, despite the caveats noted above.

(iii) **Efficiency**

Although the Financial Utilization Report had not been finalized at the time of the evaluation, the evaluators’ view is that the project was implemented efficiently, both in terms of value for money and use of funds, and in terms of the responsiveness of project management. According to WANEP, the project funds were spent broadly in line with the original budget projection, which anticipated the following main areas of spending:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount (US$)*</th>
<th>% of budget**</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional and administrative staff costs</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>Low amount but payments to consultants, trainers, coordinators, is included in training/workshop budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local travel and related costs</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>As above, transport costs to activities included in training/workshop budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocation partners to implementing</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Minimal allocation covering meeting costs for research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings, conferences, workshops, training</td>
<td>93,000</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>Amount covers logistics as well as payments to consultants, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research, radio broadcasts</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Includes payment to research consultant, radio panelists, broadcasters and listening group participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit to Ghana</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>Part of this budget was used instead for training within Sierra Leone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*: Rounded figures  
**: The operating budget was US$180,000

The above overview of the budget demonstrates that costs were reasonable in view of the amount of activities implemented. Professional and administrative costs were also low, though this item did not cover all salaries and fees, since most such payments were budgeted as part of the workshop and training sessions budget.

It is noteworthy that the two implementing partners only received a marginal proportion of the funds – and that only to cover research costs, not staff time. This demonstrates further that the two partners were in fact merely used as “service providers”, which had not been substantially involved in the design and management of the project, and as providers of participants at local level, particularly women members of WIPNET. This approach to partnership may have been legitimate – and WANEP clearly had the capacity to manage the project on its own – but the project document had suggested a more collegial approach to project design and implementation than was effectively the case.

**Project management**

Project management was impressive, in the sense that the planned activities were virtually all carried out (albeit with notable delays) despite the major crisis caused by the Ebola virus disease epidemic. It is a testimony to the commitment of the WANEP staff and management that the project was steered through to the end with relatively little disruption. The only two caveats related to project management have already been noted above: one is that the two partner organizations, WIPNET and FCS-SL, were not really associated with the design and management of the project. The other is that women’s concerns were not sufficiently highlighted throughout the project – and that few if any women were involved in project management at national level or in coordination at local level.

**Impact**

The project – which followed a sustained pre-existing engagement of WANEP with the NCPC – has had its clearest impact at the national level, in that it has encouraged the NCPC to build on its Code of Ethics to further formalize the tasks of chiefs and to provide a kind of self-regulation
for their activities. This is particularly important in view of the hybrid status of chiefs, partly bound by tradition and partly committed to implementing democratic principles enshrined in the Constitution. Building chiefs’ capacity and making the institution of chieftaincy more transparent and accountable is an important aim in the Sierra Leone context, and the project has played a significant role towards encouraging chiefs to adopt new attitudes. Example of impact directly connected to the project include dispute resolution between two paramount chiefs, as well the willingness of the NCPC to espouse, to some extent, democratic accountability principles in its constitutional reform position paper.

At district level, the project’s impact was more diffuse. Some chiefs have willingly stated to the evaluators that the project contributed to enhancing their willingness to interact and debate with the local communities. Communities and chiefs have also praised the institution of the Chieftain Peace Committees, which provided a communication channel that proved particularly useful during the Ebola crisis. These statements to the evaluators are illustrative of changing attitudes among both chiefs and communities, but they cannot be attributed solely to the project – if only because WANEP and its partners have been working on chiefdom reform at local level for a long time prior to the project.

The key limitation to the project achieving more impact was probably its failure adequately to address gender equality issues. There is no doubt that WANEP and its partners are committed to gender equality, but commitment in principle is insufficient if not followed up with specific activities addressing gender inequality, design in cooperation with relevant women’s groups. The approach consisting in referring to women together with “vulnerable groups” is also often unhelpful, as it may detract from focusing on gender concerns.

(v) **Sustainability**

The project had significant elements of sustainability:

- The Chieftain Peace Committees – which to some extent institutionalized pre-existing consultative meetings at chiefdom level – were established across the project areas, and their establishment has since been recommended by the NCPC across the country. These structures are seen to be useful at local level, which should encourage chiefs to maintain them and communities to use them.

- Similarly, the dialogue and accountability fora have been appreciated by participants, particularly in the context of the fight against Ebola. It is not clear yet whether the momentum achieved by the project will be sufficient to ensure that the fora are reproduced in future. However, WANEP and its partners state that they are committed to work with districts to maintain these twice-yearly meetings.

- The Position Paper recommending a constitutional framework for the regulation of chiefdoms is also likely to contribute to the project’s sustainability, in that its provisions appear to be consensual and therefore may be adopted with little change.

- The dissemination and awareness raising work done through research and broadcasts on community radio also contributed to the sustainability of the project, in that the democratic values and principles conveyed by training workshops, conferences and other meetings, are disseminated to a wider audience, which appears receptive according to WANEP’s research.

It is important for WANEP in future to build on these elements of sustainability to follow-up the project with a broader range of districts, while implementing a gradual exit strategy from the four
initial districts. These districts should be encouraged to maintain the newly established mechanisms without external support other than that which may come from the NCPC and the Ministry of Local Government.
V. CONCLUSIONS

(i) The project was relevant. It had a very good, balanced analysis of the role of chiefs and of the balance between traditional leadership structures and democratic accountability needs. The project’s relevance was reinforced by the Ebola crisis, in that it addressed needs for local level dialogue and information-sharing.

(ii) The project design was appropriate and strategic. The project focused on outcomes on capacity building and channels of communications, building on the grantee’s earlier work in the districts. The design had an appropriate mix of innovation (new dialogue fora at local level) and consolidation of existing structures (NCPC at national level).

(iii) The project failed to incorporate a sufficient focus on gender equality, hence its inability to reduce the gender gap in participation in political decision-making. Although the project was formally supportive of gender equality, it did not devote specific resources to capacity building for women, and neither did women’s groups contribute to project design. As a result, a degree of gender balance was achieved only in terms of participation in training activities and workshops, but not in terms of policy debate topics or project management.

(iv) The project was effective and achieved its planned outcomes despite the constraints caused by the Ebola virus disease epidemic. The project team’s commitment and the dedication of local stakeholders helped ensure that most planned project activities were implemented, albeit with some delays. The capacity-building outcome was achieved, whereas the institution building outcome was achieved to a lesser extent.

(v) The project was managed well, and represented good value for money. The allocation of funds was appropriate, and a large amount of activities was implemented with a relatively moderate budget. Training, conferences and workshops represented half of all spending, which was appropriate in view of the outcomes to achieve. WANEP’s project management was responsive and dealt effectively with the constraints related to the Ebola crisis.

(vi) The project achieved clear impact at national level, while impact in the districts was more diffuse. Interviews demonstrated that paramount chiefs who dealt closely with WANEP during project implementation had clearly understood the need for more transparency and accountability to communities on the part of chiefs, and were acting accordingly. The project’s impact on chiefs’ attitudes at local level was less clear, and little was achieved locally in terms of attitudes towards gender equality – although debates and lawsuits were initiated in this regard.
(vii) The project achieved a substantial level of sustainability by encouraging the establishment of new institutions and supporting increased self-regulation by chiefs. The dialogue channels established by the project (Chiefdom Peace Committees, dialogue and accountability fora) are likely to be maintained after the end of the project, thanks in part to support by the NCPC. WANEP’s engagement with the NCPC also contributed to improving the self-regulation framework under which chieftaincy operates, which is likely to enhance the sustainability of the chieftaincy system.
VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

(i) **WANEP should continue supporting the Chiefdom Peace Committees and the dialogue and accountability fora established by the project, and encourage their dissemination to other districts.** WANEP should lobby the NCPC and the relevant government ministries to encourage them to provide further support to these channels of communication between chiefs and communities.

(ii) **WANEP should ensure that future project design more explicitly addresses need related to gender equality.** In particular, future projects should address women’s needs separately from those of other “vulnerable groups”; specific activities should be targeted at women, and there should be a degree of gender balance in project management teams or local coordination teams.

(iii) **WANEP should continue working with NCPC, further addressing the need for the chieftaincy system to meet democratic accountability requirements.** While the self-regulation approach taken by the NCPC with WANEP support may be appropriate, it is important to further encourage the chieftaincy system to adapt to democratic principles, including by maintaining the trend towards the inclusion of women chiefs (including in the north of Sierra Leone) and ensuring that the judicial role of chiefs does not interfere with, or pre-empt, the state judiciary system.
## VII. ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAC criterion</th>
<th>Evaluation Question</th>
<th>Related sub-questions</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Relevance** | To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels? | ▪ Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context?  
▪ Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse? |
| **Effectiveness** | To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals? | ▪ To what extent have the project’s objectives been reached?  
▪ To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not?  
▪ Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives?  
▪ What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this? |
| **Efficiency** | To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts? | ▪ Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs?  
▪ Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability?  
▪ Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives? |
| **Impact** | To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy? | ▪ To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address?  
▪ Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative?  
▪ To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization?  
▪ Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples? |
| **Sustainability** | To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development? | ▪ To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact?  
▪ Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)? |
| **UNDEF value-added** | To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors? | ▪ What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project, that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc.).  
▪ Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF’s comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues? |
ANNEX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Project documents UDF-SIL-12-496:

- Project Document
- Narrative Final Report
- Milestone Verification Reports
- Position Paper on Chiefdom Governance
- NCPC Strategic Plan 2014-2018

External sources:

- News articles on Dialogue Forums, Strategic Plan Launch, etc.
- Sierra Leone: Concrete Steps needed to move Human Rights forward, Amnesty International, September 2015
- The State of Human Rights in Sierra Leone, 2011, Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone
- The Role of Paramount Chiefs in Sierra Leone – The Views of the People; Christian Aid & Partners in Conflict Transformation, 2011
- Chiefs – Economic Development and Elite Control of Civil Society in Sierra Leone, by Daron Acemoglu, Tristan Reed and James Robinson, Harvard University, September 2013
- The Chiefdoms of Sierra Leone, by Tristan Reed and James Robinson, July 2013, Harvard University, July 2013
- The Civil Society Landscape in Sierra Leone – Understanding Context, Motives and Challenges, World Bank Africa Region External Affairs Unit, June 2007
ANNEX 3: LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

*: denotes telephone interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 December 2015</td>
<td>Freetown</td>
<td>Edward Jombla</td>
<td>National Network Coordinator, WANEP-SL</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yeama Caulker</td>
<td>Coordinator, WIPNET</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Duramany S. Bockarie</td>
<td>Programs Manager, FCS</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 December 2015</td>
<td>Freetown</td>
<td>PC Sondufu Sovula</td>
<td>Public Relations Officer, NCPC</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Komba Momoh*</td>
<td>Peace Committee, Kono District</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gibril M. Bassie*</td>
<td>Executive Director, CAPE Sierra Leone</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Abdulai Kissimi Kallon*</td>
<td>WANEP Focal Points, Pujehun district</td>
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<td>Rev. Christian Fayla*</td>
<td>Kono District Peace Committee, HRCSL member</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prof. Joe A. D. Alie*</td>
<td>Dean of Post-Graduate Studies, University of Sierra Leone</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PC Charles Caulker*</td>
<td>Chair, NCPC</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 December 2015</td>
<td>Visit to Kambia District</td>
<td>Mohamed Jalioh</td>
<td>Kambia District Peace Committee, WANEP Focal point</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Saymah Kanu; Ahmed M. Kamara;</td>
<td>Development Forum participants</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Molay M. Kamara (border monitor, IOM); Kamara (Chiefdom Information Officer)</td>
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<td>PC Kondubala Kokodioko II</td>
<td>Paramount Chief, Kambia</td>
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<td>Akilale Shuma</td>
<td>Section Chief, Kambia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Visit to Port Loko</td>
<td>Lincoln O. Kanu</td>
<td>WANEP Focal Point</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Samuel Koneh</td>
<td>Training and development forum participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 December 2015</td>
<td>Freetown</td>
<td>Edward Jombla</td>
<td>WANEP (debriefing)</td>
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**ANNEX 4: LIST OF ACRONYMS**

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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Foundation for Civil Society-Sierra Leone</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCPC</td>
<td>National Council of Paramount Chiefs</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-government organization</td>
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<td>PEA</td>
<td>Political Economy Analysis</td>
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<td>West African Network for Peacebuilding-Sierra Leone</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIPNET</td>
<td>Women in Peacebuilding Network-Sierra Leone</td>
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