



# HUMANIST WATCH SALONE

THE WATCH  NEWSLETTER

2013 Activity Update

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## REFLECTION ON 2013 FISCAL YEAR



**Christopher M. Briama**  
National Coordinator

### Message From The National Coordinator

In the push of HUWASAL's projects implementation in 2013, I wish to recognize the support of our partners; UNDP, Engineers Without Boarder- Demark through Engineers Without Boarders-Sierra Leone, and Amnesty International-Sierra Leone as well as our Board, staff members and Non-State Actors' (NSA)s, the Family Support Unit of the Police, Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA), the courts (Local, Magistrate and High courts), Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone and Budget Advocacy Network (BAN) towards our achievements realized. It is because of your steadfast support that we have been able to continue supporting those who are our target clients. Your tireless efforts have gone directly into the hands of the less privileged and deprived thus improved their lives and make history.

As we move forward together, we were faced with a sadden moment, as we lost our brother, founder and National Coordinator of the Humanist Watch Salone, (The Late Titus Massally) yet, we cannot be blind to the challenges we face daily in our work but to consolidate our energy to forge ahead. This will drive us in our task of improving social justice thus advancing peace and development in Sierra Leone.

In our work, we are at a crossroads, while the horror of social injustice more especially against women, children and other underprivileged sector of the society has not abated. Our task to ensure the attainment of social justice, peace and development is a clear vision of better future and hope for the society. Innovative and effective work is being done every day



HUWASAL Head Office in Kenema City, Eastern Region Sierra Leone

### HUWASAL THEORY OF CHANGE

*Humanist Watch Salone (HUWASAL) believes that when people are well informed, has sustained income, are decision makers, and have strong social networks and safety nets, they are in a much stronger position to advocate for their rights. This philosophy and commitment builds change and capacity of the marginalized in the society.*

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Stakeholders at the dialogue forum on tax justice in Kenema District

### [HUWASAL Joins CSO Partners to improve Tax Justice in Kenema District](#)

As taxation is one of the significant entering point towards improving governance, HUWASAL in partnership with Kenema District Tax Justice Network, (a coalition of CSOs) embarked on tax mobilization and advocacy for effective and efficient used of revenues at local governance level in Kenema District, with support from Budget Advocacy Network (BAN).

HUWASAL in collaboration with Kenema District Tax Justice Network in their task, organized stakeholder's dialogue forum with Kenema City and District Councils with the aim of creating a forum of deliberation among key stakeholders of concern in taxation, in ensuring effective tax mobilization and utilization in Kenema District.

The forum brought together 40 participants including Revenue Collectors, Councilors, and core staff of both Kenema City and District Councils. Having gone through constructive deliberations, participants were able to identify the tax base of both Kenema City and District Councils, challenges faced in revenue mobilization and developed way forward in ensuring effective tax mobilization and prudent use of revenues.

### [HUWASAL works with CSOs partners to improve citizens 'Access to Justice](#)

As an effort to increase awareness about the realities of court system more especially in cases of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) thus strengthen citizens' ability to demand justice, HUWASAL is working with a network of 20 CSOs as a cluster head in monitoring of courts (Local, Magistrate and High courts) within Kenema, Kailahun and Kono Districts. The court monitoring is to identify problems and issues, and propose practical solutions through paralegal services as well as conducting court users' perception survey. Moreover, the exercise also provided justice information to the public through radio discussions utilizing community radio stations. In 2013, 50 courts were monitored, 1,354 cases were monitored, 583 cases relating to domestic violence, sexual violence, divorce and property inheritance were provided with paralegal services, 956 court users' perception survey forms were administered and 54 radio discussions conducted.

The court monitoring activities funded by UNDP has significantly improved administration of justice and likewise increased public trust in the justice system, especially in the Local Court system. Continuity of court monitoring activities is vital in the process of improving citizens' access to justice as it will enable CSOs, court personnel and communities as well as other interested agencies to strategize ways of overcoming justice challenges in Sierra Leone.

### [HUWASAL PROVIDES COST FREE MEDIATION SERVICES](#)

HUWASAL is actively engaged in resolving matters of social injustice mainly faced by women, children and other vulnerable groups with no cost through mediation.

In 2013, HUWASAL was able to mediate and resolved 75 reported cases of which 45% involved matters of property deprivation.

In the quest of improving access to justice more especially for less privileged sectors of the society, HUWASAL will continue providing free of cost mediation services in the community.

### [Knowledge building of influential community leaders on legal protection of women and girls' rights](#)

In the prevention and response drive of SGBV, it needs building capacity of influential community leaders on national laws that protect and promote the rights of women and girls. On this note, HUWASAL focuses on providing training opportunities to key influential community stakeholders on SGBV concept, human rights and national laws against SGBV such as Domestic Violence Act 2007, Devolution of Estate 2007, Registration of Customary Marriages and Divorce Act 2008 and the Sexual Offences Act 2012. During 2013 activities gear towards addressing SGBV in rural communities in Kenema and Kailahun Districts, HUWASAL conducted capacity building trainings in 10 communities (i.e. 5 communities in Kenema District and 5 communities in Kailahun District). 450 community stakeholders were reached (292 male and 158 female) with support

IN MEMORY OF OUR  
FOUNDER, BROTHER AND  
COLLEAGUE



As we energize our struggle and strive towards achieving success in our mission, we sincerely miss the company and valued contributions of our founder, brother and colleague; the late Titus Sei Massally.

Our hearts are still saddened and disturbed by this great loss, but yet we are moving on.

Titus you are gone, but you left a team behind. In line with our values, passion and work ethic, we now exist to complete the mission that you started and strive to actualize the dream that you once had for HUWASAL.

On behalf of your entire family and the board, the staff of HUWASAL pray that you receive GOD's forgiveness and grace wherever you are.

Our hearts go out to you

Rest in peace brother.

Who we are & What we do

Humanist Watch Salone (HUWASAL) is a Human Right and developmental organization working in the Eastern region in both Kenema and Kailahun district with funds from UNDP access to justice Programme. The organization works in partnership with the Family Support Unit in the police (FSU), Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affair, Ministry of Education, to promote women and girl's right in all sphere of life.

Knowledge building on influential community leaders on Legal Protection of Women and Girl's right is done in communities through workshops, for them to handle matters amicably when the need arises, to know their mandates in handling SGBV matters. This also helps them to do referrals when necessary and be an eye opener in their communities.

Support to survivors of SGBV to access justice is one of the key mandates of the organization. The organization make sure that internal transportation is given to victims as well as parents to help access Rainbo center at the Kenema government hospital for medical examination and treatment. Transportation is also paid to and fro after court sittings to go back to their locations as well as accommodation and daily sustenance allowance. The cases in court are monitored by the organization to see that justice prevails. The support given has made the organization become a reputable one and victims are always in the office with their complains.

Support to survivors of SGBV to access justice

Accessing justice by survivors of SGBV through the legal system in Sierra Leone is quite challenging. As a way forward of improving women and children's access to justice, HUWASAL works to provide support to survivors of SGBV to access medical treatment as well as transportation, daily sustenance allowance and accommodation during police investigation and court sittings, and likewise support key witnesses and family members in the process. Supports to survivors of SGBV also include providing seed money to survivors and families in critical cases as a start- up of income generating activities geared to improve their livelihood. In 2013, HUWASAL documented and supported 115 cases of SGBV, this include; 48 sexual penetrations, 54 domestic violence, 12 property deprivation and 1 rape. The intervention of HUWASAL towards providing support in cases of SGBV, support by UNDP, has enable survivors and families to pursue legal proceedings, hence, further the realization of justice in SGBV matters in Kenema and Kailahun Districts.

Working with schools in the prevention and response to SGBV

Empowering school going children to ensure appropriate prevention and response to SGBV is one of the tasks of HUWASAL in the quest of addressing SGBV in its operational communities. In this direction, HUWASAL conducted 36 outreach sensitization sessions in 36 schools (18 schools in Kailahun and 18 schools in Kenema districts respectively) reaching 5,660 (2,264 Male and 3,396 Female) through outreach sensitization on sexual exploitation and harassment, and the Sexual Offences Act 2012. Also, HUWASAL has established and supported focal points in each of the target school to refer incidents of SGBV. This activity has relatively increased the understanding of school children more especially girls on the referral pathway and become assertive in saying no to sexual violence. Interestingly, the sessions were interactive which enable students to share their live ex-



## **SGBV CASE STUDIES**

A 39 years old woman (Client), was married to Ibrahim Fallay (48 years) in Ngardorhun village, Jawei chiefdom Kailahun District, for a period of one year. But having undergone some maltreatment from her husband over the period, the client one day decided to leave the relationship because she became fed up with the regular attitude of her husband, abusing her, throwing her things out and even refusing to provide food in the home. After their divorce, the client stayed on her own in the same village because she was no longer able to endure the treatment.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013, while client was on her way back to Ngardorhun village after visiting her son in a nearby village called Yengema, she met her former husband standing along the bush road, with a cutlass in his hand. Upon seeing client, he grabbed her at once, and said *“Today is your last day of having sex with a man since you have abandoned me”*. When the client attempted to shout or struggled to free herself from him, he threatened to kill her. Due to this threat, the client was left with no alternative but to allow her former husband to do whatever he wants with her, since the cutlass was right under her neck. The perpetrator forcefully had sex with the client, after which the man put caustic soda into her vaginal and anus of the client, and left her lying in pain. Client was later rescued by some men (Residents of the same village) who were passing and she shouts for help. The matter was reported to the Family Support Unit (FSU), Daru Police Station, Kailahun District. The police wasted no time in reaching the village but the perpetrator was nowhere to be seen. Later on, Humanist Watch Salone was contacted on the incident through the SGBV Focal Points and the FSU at Daru Police Station and client was immediately taken to Kenema Government Hospital where she was admitted for 6 weeks with support from Humanist Watch Salone under the SGBV Grant from UNDP- Access to Justice Programme in Sierra Leone. On the day of her discharge, client prayed for seeing herself alive and she said *“Humanist Watch Salone acted as my mother and father, if it hadn't been for the timely intervention of Humanist Watch Salone, I would have been a dead person by now”*.

The case is pending and awaiting court trial, as the alleged perpetrator is still at large; who happened to have fled to Liberia thus escaped police arrest.

### **HUWASAL works on Public Financial Management Activities**

Humanist Watch Salone is an active member of the Non-State Actors' (NSAs) working with the Integrated Public Financial Management Reform Project (IPFMRP) at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) with support from development partners (World Bank, EU, DFID, IDA and AfDB). The NSAs component is to exercise oversight and scrutiny over the use of public resources as well as to build constituency for reform of the public financial management system.

## **Contact Us**

Give us a call for more information about programmes and strategic partnership.

### **Office Address**

29 Humonya Avenue

Kenema City

Kenema District

Eastern Region

Sierra Leone

### **Mobile Number**

+23276-582-937

### **Email Address**

humanistwatch@gmail.com

### **Our Website**

Visit us on the web at  
[www.huwasal.com](http://www.huwasal.com)