



Let's Promote Justice for Our Women and Girls of Sierra Leone Project

(1st December 2011 - 30th November 2014)

Sierra Leone West Africa

Final Project Evaluation, June 2015

International Rescue Committee

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EAŞE	Economic & Social Empowerment (IRC program)
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FSU	Family Support Unit
KIs-	Key Informant Interviews
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MSWGCA	Ministry of Social Work, Gender and Children's Affairs
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SROP	Strategic Roll Out Plan
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WAGs	Women's Action Groups

For confidentiality purposes, the names of all the women in this report have been changed.

1.0 Executive Summary

The *Lets Promote Justice for Our Women and Girls of Sierra Leone* project was a three year project (1st December 2011 - 30th November 2014), implemented by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Child Affairs (MSWGCA), the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), and local partner, Timap for Justice (“Timap”). The project was implemented at the national level, and in five districts in Sierra Leone namely - Kenema, Kailahun, Kono, Bombali and Tonkolili.

According to a 2012 IRC study, in West Africa, “the primary threat to women, is not a man with a gun or a stranger, it is their husbands”¹. Annual SLP data in 2010 showed that the majority of reported Gender-Based-Violence (GBV) cases were cases of wife beating (69%) and sexual offences (27%). Nearly all of the over 7,000 cases reported to Rainbo-Centres² between 2005 and 2010 involved young women and girls aged 6 to 20 years. Although wife beating and rape was rampant, it was surrounded by a culture of silence; most cases perpetrated by husbands, were “dealt with” within families or traditional systems such as chiefs³. With a weak formal justice system, the police were a last resort for most GBV survivors, essentially making women’s immediate circles the difference between living in fear and seeking life-saving help⁴.

The project aimed to improve access to timely and fair justice for women and girls in the formal legal system in Sierra Leone. To achieve this, the project worked with partners to strengthen national legislation; In October 2012, after years of advocacy, the Sexual Offences Act, was enacted by the President and members of parliament, effectively criminalizing, amongst other offences, child sexual abuse (“sexual penetration” according to Sierra Leonean law) and rape. The Sexual Offences Act became part of the Gender Acts⁵, which together provide a legal framework to prosecute sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) cases. In addition, the project developed tools to monitor the enforcement of the Gender Laws, and increased awareness, through training of women’s groups, Family Support Units (FSUs)⁶ of the SLP, traditional and local leaders.

This final evaluation is aimed at understanding the extent to which project objectives were achieved, while considering the impact of the Ebola outbreak on target communities. Using a primarily qualitative approach, the evaluation sought to understand the interaction of women

¹ International Rescue Committee, *Let Me Not Die Before My Time*, p.3, 2012,

² Rainbo Centres, now referred to as Rainbo Initiatives, provide medical care, psychosocial and social support to SGBV survivors in Kenema, Kailahun and Freetown.

³ United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, African Centre for Gender and Social Development (ACGSD). *Violence Against Women in Africa, a Situational Analysis*, 2010

⁴ International Rescue Committee, *Let me Not Die Before My Time*, p.15, 2012

⁵ With broad based support from civil society, in June 2007 the Sierra Leone Parliament enacted the “Gender Acts”, namely the Domestic Violence Act (Act no.20 of 2007); Devolution of Estates Act, and the Registration of Customary Marriage Act

⁶ The FSU was formed in 2001 to respond to sexual and domestic violence cases. It became an independent unit of the SLP in 2007,

with the project, their experiences of violence, and what justice means to them and in their context. Key sources of data were women, traditional leaders, CSO partners, Rainbo Centres, FSU, a magistrate, a senior prosecutor and the MSWGCA. The primary methods of data collection were Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIs). A total of 75 men and 293 women participated in the evaluation exercise. Evaluation findings will be used by the IRC to contribute to new knowledge and improve programming with women and girls. The stories of change that have emerged throughout this evaluation, the needs, priorities, interests and what is meaningful for women and girls, will (continue to) shape, guide and be at the centre of programming.

The most significant success of the project was at the community level, where, training on the Gender Laws ignited conversations among women on the possibility of a life without violence, and communities where women are treated with dignity and respect. It's these informal conversations and networks among women that survivors found accessible, meaningful and close to their own reality. Conversations with women, revealed an increased level of confidence in themselves and in the belief that violence against women is unacceptable. Most women, for the first time, recognized that they had rights too, as provided by law, and were compelled to advocate and speak up against SGBV in their communities. The women's groups became a place for survivors to find support to access justice in their context. For many women, this justice doesn't necessarily mean the perpetrator is sentenced to prison, but rather that the violence comes to an end, while protecting relationships with their spouse and extended family. In their quest for "justice" the women's first options were family, the women's groups and the traditional chieftdom structures.

When "Fatmata" from Kailahun district was beaten, it was the women's group that stood with and for her. Working with the local chief, they compelled her husband to apologize before her and the entire group. She was never beaten again. She happily introduced her husband to the evaluator, saying "**come, meet my husband, he's never beaten me again**". For her, *justice* had been found.

On the other hand, for "Issata", from the same district, it was participating in the training on the Gender Laws that gave her the courage to contest for the position of chieftdom councillor in 2012. Although she did not win, it is with pride that she says, "**I'm glad I had the courage to try**".

The trainings on the Gender Laws built on already existing solidarity and cohesion that existed among women, mainly as a result of sharing life together over a long period of time; some groups had been formed in 2008 under IRCs Women's Protection and Empowerment Program. These include the Women's Action Groups (WAGs) and the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs). In spite of the SGBV challenges that women continue to face, it is this solidarity that they rely on to believe in the possibility of a life free from violence.

Wife beating still remains the most rampant form of violence against women. This is confirmed by conversations with women and other stakeholders in the districts. According to national

annual data from the FSU, in 2014, there were 9, 157 reported cases of domestic violence, with wife beating being over 90% of these cases. Out of these, 39% were reported in the Northern Province, and 12% in the Eastern Province. In addition, nationally there were 2,124 cases of child sexual abuse and 77 cases of rape. In total, there were 255 convictions, many of which were cases from previous years. The FSU also reported an overall increase in cases reported over the life of the project; e.g. there was a 24% increase in cases of domestic violence reported in 2014 compared to 2013. However, of the number of total number of SGBV cases reported in 2014, only 19% were charged to court. Although the overall number of convictions has slightly increased (2%),⁷ it is still alarmingly low.

In Kono district however, most women spoke of a “marked decline” in cases of wife beating. In Sowa and Goroma chiefdoms, there were reportedly strict by-laws against wife beating, with fines up to 200,000 Leones (~40). Women attributed the key role the paramount chiefs had played in supporting the protection of women and girls⁸.

The project also supported the SLP to stream line its investigation and documentation processes through development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and a monitoring and evaluation framework. The (SOP), owned by the FSU, is a core part of its work and has contributed to the development of a unit that understands SGBV issues. However, this is without institutionalization of SGBV into the SLP structure, culture of practice and training curriculum. And the FSU’s continue to suffer from regular staff transfers and new recruits with no prior training or experience in managing SGBV cases. Other challenges that still face the FSU in their quest for justice for women and girls include:

- Delay in sentencing cases at the high court: some cases take up to eight years
- A lack of adequate and appropriate mobility for FSU personnel, therefore making it difficult for them to investigate and follow up on SGBV cases, including arresting perpetrators
- Lack of free medical care for survivors. A medical certificate is required to confirm wounding and or “sexual penetration” / rape. Survivors living in areas where there are no Rainbo Centres are referred to a government hospital where treatment is usually not free. Due to poverty, most survivors, when referred, do not return to pursue the case.
- Out of court settlements; mainly due to poverty, survivors are “persuaded” to take a payment in return for dropping a case.
- Most survivors are unable to follow up cases after the initial visit due to long distances to the FSU and magistrate or high court. Most communities do not even have local FSU’s
- Interference and case compromising by perpetrators and extended family.

While the formal justice system is ideal, it still remains inaccessible and too costly, both in terms of time and relationships, and detached from the reality of most women.

⁷ Data from Interview with the Superintendent of the FSU, Mira Koroma

⁸ While the evaluator never saw proof of the by-laws, she triangulated the “reported amount of fines” among different participants. All participants confirmed the same amounts in Kainkordu.

Future programming should focus more on empowering women in the communities to become a voice for other women and for themselves, through understanding SGBV and initiating conversations around what justice means in their context and to the realities of their daily lives and experiences. A critical part of this process is building on the IRC's experience to create safe spaces where women can meet and have these conversations without fear of backlash. These spaces become areas where women mobilize, engage in economic activities, share advice, support survivors and break the stigma around SGBV in their communities. For women, improving their income is a core part of reducing their vulnerability to violence. In addition, rather than depending on training to create behaviour change, it should only be a catalyst for on-going dialogue and conversation on SGBV, conversation that focuses on understanding underlying causes of violence, including the cultural and economic drivers, and strengthens the informal networks and structures where women go to seek justice.

Furthermore, it is paramount to **continue working with the traditional chieftom structures and informal justice mechanisms that remain the most accessible and meaningful to most women and girls' realities and experiences**. Training and on-going support to chiefs and local court staff should be prioritised on how to translate national Gender Laws into by-laws so that they are accessible, understandable and meaningful to women and girls; this includes consolidating and strengthening those already existing by-laws. Part of this work going forward should be about, crucially, ensuring that the by-laws and their 'enactment' are always accountable to women, that the laws remain relevant and meaningful to women and girls and their protection. This will continue to contribute to creating communities that value and respect women and girls, as we have started to see emerge through the program in the areas of program implementation.

Finally, **the role of the FSU in improving access to timely and fairly justice for women in the formal sector cannot be overemphasized**. It is important to work with the FSU to identify the most critical challenges it is facing and advocate at both local and national level for ways to mitigate them. It is important to support them to establish and strengthen a culture of practice with the whole FSU system and structure that institutionalizes knowledge and understanding of protection, SGBV and appropriate responses, and promotes positive and supportive attitudes and behaviours towards women and girls survivors of violence across the unit at all levels. A separate assessment, led and informed by women and girls themselves, should be done to confirm and determine the most appropriate responses, and ways to promote that positive, understanding and supportive culture of practice, that keep women and girl's safety, dignity and protection at the centre.

2.0 Project Context

In 2010, Sierra Leone ranked the twelfth-lowest country on the United Nations Index of Human Development. In 2012, on the Gender Inequality Index, Sierra Leone ranked ninth lowest. Only

9.5% of adult women had reached a secondary or higher level education, compared to 20.4 percent of their male counterparts. In addition, 53.4% of the population lived below the poverty line while 53.2% lived in “severe poverty”⁹.

Entrenched in Sierra Leonean social and cultural fabric is patriarchy; from a young age, women are ‘groomed’ and socially trained to become ‘good’ wives and respect men’s authority. As a result, most women believe they have fewer rights than men¹⁰. In some areas in the Northern Province, women are still forbidden to stand for chieftaincy positions, since they are seen as incapable of holding these roles. These power imbalances reinforce violence against women and underpin the vulnerability that women face when seeking justice.

While there has been a steady increase in the number of reported incidents of VAWG since 2002¹¹, it is widely recognized that the number of formally reported incidents represent only a fraction of those actually occurring, and VAWG crimes continue to be regarded as civil matters to be resolved by traditional leaders rather than reported to the police. Prosecution rates for VAWG crimes remain alarmingly low, even in the most serious cases. Of cases serviced at Rainbo Centres, 84% of survivors sought legal remedy, but only 1% of those cases resulted in conviction, reinforcing social messages to women that they are not entitled to justice, and that perpetrators may act with impunity. One of the main findings of the Special Rapporteur to End Violence Against Women in 2001 was that “the failure to investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible for rape and other forms of VAWG has contributed to an environment of impunity that perpetuates violence against women in Sierra Leone, including rape and domestic violence.”¹² To this day, little has changed.

To improve access to fair and timely justice for women and girls in this context, the IRC worked with government and CSO partners to support the standardization of police investigation processes through the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), the development of a National Referral Protocol (NRP), and facilitated discussions at the national and grassroots community level on the impact of SGBV and how to manage and refer cases.

However, in 2014, project activities were disrupted and largely halted by the Ebola outbreak which begun in Guinea and spread to Liberia and Sierra Leone. Time and resources were diverted to respond to the urgent need to work with communities on how to prevent and respond to Ebola. At the time of this evaluation, in early June 2015, Sierra Leone had a total 8620 confirmed cases. Of these, 3546 had succumbed to the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)¹³. The state of Emergency

⁹ UNDP, United Nations Human Development Index. 2010,

¹⁰ Overseas Development Institute, *Violence Against Women in Sierra Leone*, p.5 2012

¹¹ The total number of cases reported to the FSU, increased from 292 in 2001 to 4466 in 2010

¹² Report by the Special Rapporteur to End Violence Against Women, 2001, source: project proposal

¹³ WHO Ebola Situation Report, source: <http://apps.who.int/ebola/en/current-situation/ebola-situation-report-3-june-2015>

effected on August, 1 2014 was still in force; all “public gatherings” and “Sunday markets”¹⁴ were still banned, although restrictions on movement and some commercial activities was lifted in June 2015¹⁵. Most of the women’s groups have been unable to meet, as they had done previously, since the beginning of the crisis.

As in all emergencies, the Ebola crisis exacerbated already existing gender inequalities, increased women and girls’ vulnerability to violence, reduced socially protective networks and decimated response services and institutions, with devastating consequences for women and girls. Unaccompanied and separated children were not systematically identified and followed up, and “restrictions on movement, including health check points and quarantine created opportunities for abuse of power and/or sexual abuse”¹⁶. In addition, due to the long closure of schools, girls became more vulnerable to sexual abuse. According to data from the FSU, during the height of the Ebola outbreak, between May and August 2014, the number of reported cases of child sexual abuse increased by 33% in the eastern province. The breakdown in services meant a reduction in opportunities for reporting and referral of SGBV cases.¹⁷ Women continued to face increased economic insecurity due to the ban on “Sunday markets”, which in turn increased their vulnerability to violence and exploitation. Women are also at potential risk of abuse by male Ebola survivors, despite a World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation of a three month abstinence from sex or correct and condom use¹⁸. The Ebola crisis severely disrupted an already weak health system, affecting women’s access to basic sexual and reproductive health services.

By July 2015, the districts visited during the evaluation had not had an Ebola case for over one hundred days¹⁹, but the lasting impact of the outbreak endure on in communities, including psychosocial trauma, a high number of orphans, increased levels of poverty for women and girls, further exacerbating the on-going risk of experiencing exploitation and other forms of SGBV that remains pervasive in Sierra Leone.

3.0 Project Description

The *Lets Promote Justice for Our Women and Girls in Sierra Leone* project was implemented by the IRC in collaboration with the MSWGA, the SLP, and a local partner, Timap. Over a three year period, (December 2012- November 2014), the project worked to combat impunity around SGBV

¹⁴ Sunday markets are large open markets in various towns where buyers and sellers come from other districts to trade.

¹⁵ Restriction on Some Commercial Activities 11/6/2015, source: <http://www.statehouse.gov.sl/index.php/presidents-speeches/1269-restriction-on-some-commercial-activities-1162015>

¹⁶ Humanitarian Exchange Magazine, issue 64, June 2015, source: <http://www.odihpn.org/humanitarian-exchange-magazine/issue-64/ebola-and-humanitarian-protection>

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ WHO update on Ebola transmission through semen, source:

<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/rtis/ebola-virus-semen/en/>

¹⁹ Government of Sierra Leone, Ministry of Health Ebola Situation Report, July, 2015, source: http://nerc.sl/sites/default/files/Sierra%20Leone%20EVD%20National%20Sit-Rep_Vol%20404.pdf

crimes and promote access to fair and timely justice for women and girls. The IRC implemented activities directly in the Eastern province in Kenema, Kono, Kailahun districts, while Timap implemented activities in the Northern Province, in Bombali and Tonkolili districts.

Project interventions focused on addressing two specific forms of VAWG - Intimate partner violence (IPV) and sexual violence by non-partners (rape/sexual assault) - in 27 chiefdoms across five districts. Targeted primary beneficiaries were 672,401 women/girl survivors of violence, while secondary beneficiaries included all women and girls in Sierra Leone, and other stakeholders especially in the five districts, who benefited from a change in attitudes around violence against women; reduced tolerance and more public support for survivors to pursue justice and receive appropriate services. A total of 42,547 secondary beneficiaries were targeted.

The project sought to improve access to fair and timely justice for survivors of sexual violence and/or IPV through the formal justice system, by;

- Strengthening national legislation and its implementation and enforcement,
- Improving the links between the formal and informal justice systems
- Increasing public awareness of the new laws through a wide range of training activities and radio programs
- Strengthening coordination and service delivery of key service providers.

The project had four objectives:

Objective 1: The Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs advocates for the passage of new legislation to combat violence against women and girls and mobilizes interagency efforts to develop and/or revise a Strategic Rollout Plan for each piece of legislation.

Objective 2: Key Administrative and traditional leaders at the district and chiefdom levels in five districts demonstrate an understanding of their responsibilities under the Gender and Sexual Offences Laws, and strengthen the connections between customary and formal justice systems in responding to incidents of sexual or domestic violence.

Objective 3: The capacity of local CSO and Women’s organizations in five districts is strengthened to provide education on the Gender Laws and Sexual Offences Law to local communities in their communities.

Objective 4: Police, Justice sector personnel and other direct service providers demonstrate an increased capacity to effectively apply the existing national standards for responding to incidents of sexual or domestic violence that are reported to their respective agencies in five districts.

Key project strategies used to accomplish the above objectives included: advocacy for legal reform, specifically for passing of the Sexual Offences and the Matrimonial Causes Bill, contribution to the implementation of Sierra Leone laws and policies, community mobilization and network building.

The above strategies were based on, inter alia, the assumption that; the passage of new laws would be free from legislative obstacles; the 2012 political campaign and general elections would not disrupt project activities; and the IRC would have the political will and support, especially from key government partners to effectively implement the project.

4.0 Evaluation Purpose

This is a mandatory final project evaluation required by UNTF. In addition, the evaluation is intended to provide an understanding of the extent to which project objectives were achieved, the effectiveness of the project methodology; and to identify lessons learned to inform future

programming. The evaluation takes into consideration the impact of the Ebola crisis on the project, its outcomes and target beneficiaries.

4.1 Evaluation Objectives:

The overall objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Evaluate the entire project in terms of effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, and impact with a strong focus on assessing the results at the outcome and project goals
- Generate lessons learned and identify promising practices for learning, both in Sierra Leone and in similar contexts
- Identify strategies and approaches that were less effective and suggest possible modifications or alternative strategies that can be more effective.

The evaluation results will be used by the IRC to improve its future programming approaches in the area of addressing violence against women, building on what approaches achieved results and modifying those that were less effective. IRC will determine which decisions need to be taken to adapt or modify its programming.

4.2 Evaluation Scope

- **Time Frame:** The evaluation covered the entire project duration, 1st December 2011 - 30th November 2014
- **Geographic Coverage:** Project interventions were carried out at national level (in Freetown) and in three districts where the IRC implemented activities directly (Kenema, Kono, Kailahun) and one district where Timap implemented activities (Bombali)
- **Target groups covered:** Survivors of violence and women and girls in the above districts. In addition, stakeholders such as traditional leaders, government agencies, community leaders and other service providers e.g. the Rainbo Centres participated in the evaluation.

4.3 Evaluation Context

Sierra Leone has been under a state of emergency since August 1, 2014, due to the Ebola outbreak. At the time of this evaluation, as highlighted above, some restrictions on movement and commercial activities e.g. Supermarkets had been eased. However restrictions on the Sunday open markets remain, and “public gatherings” continue to be enforced by the government, and numerous Ebola check points continue to operate throughout the country. The project team ensured all necessary clearances were done prior to the evaluation. In addition, the evaluator went through a security briefing in every district where the evaluation exercise took place, to understand each local context.

In the districts where the IRC implemented activities directly, most FGDs and KIs were organised at the IRC women’s centres to reduce the need to use multiple locations. In general, the

evaluation team kept the target number of FGD participants to between 5-10 people per group, in accordance with best practice in reducing the numbers of people meeting together.

The evaluation took into consideration the impact of Ebola on overall project goals, the activities of women's groups in the districts, and the emerging needs of women. In addition, the evaluation team was cognisant of the fact that some participants might have lost family and friends during the outbreak, and therefore facilitated group and individual conversations with respect, care and patience.

4.4 Evaluation Limitations

While the project engaged with various stakeholders, the evaluation focused mainly on women, their experiences with violence and their hopes for improved justice. As the primary beneficiaries of this project, the evaluation has intentionally privileged women's experiences and perspectives, seeking to understand how their needs for justice have been met, and the implications of these changes in women's lives. The voices of girls and other stakeholders are therefore not prioritised in this evaluation.

Although the planned target number for FGDs was 5-8 people, in some communities, there were more than 12 people who attended. To ensure fair participation, the evaluator focused on eliciting views and experiences of women on accessing justice.

Towards the end of the evaluation exercise, the Muslim fasting season of Ramadhan begun. This affected participant engagement in some areas. The evaluator reviewed the questions and focused on the core conversations that were important to answer the key evaluation questions, to avoid keeping participants for too long in recognition of the impact of fasting.

4.5 Evaluation Questions

In addition to a set of mandatory evaluation questions required by UNTF, the evaluator developed a set of guiding questions to facilitate conversations with the women's groups. The additional questions are annexed to this report as Annex 4

4.5.1 Mandatory Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Criteria	Mandatory Evaluation Questions
Effectiveness	<i>To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs achieved and how?</i>

	<p><i>To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal and outcome levels? How many beneficiaries have been reached?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent has this project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted (and untargeted) women and girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by this project? Why? What are the key changes in the lives of those women and/or girls? Please describe those changes.</i></p> <p><i>Which interventions were less effective than planned, and how might they be adapted or changed to improve their effectiveness?</i></p> <p><i>What internal and external factors contributed to the achievement and/or failure of the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs? How?</i></p> <p>Additional questions for interventions focusing at the policy level</p> <p><i>To what extent was the project successful in advocating for legal or policy change? If it was not successful, explain why.</i></p> <p><i>In case the project was successful in setting up new policies and/or laws, is the legal or policy change likely to be institutionalized and sustained?</i></p>
Relevance	<p><i>To what extent was the project strategy and activities implemented relevant in responding to the needs and priorities of women and girls?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent do achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?</i></p>
Efficiency	<p><i>How efficiently and timely has this project been implemented and managed in accordance with the Project Document?</i></p>
Sustainability	<p><i>How are the achieved results, especially the positive changes generated by the project in the lives of women and girls at the project goal level, going to be sustained after this project ends?</i></p>
Impact	<p><i>What are the unintended consequences (positive and negative) resulted from the project?</i></p>
Knowledge Generation	<p><i>What are the key lessons learned that can be shared with other practitioners on Ending Violence against Women and Girls?</i></p> <p><i>Are there any promising practices? If yes, what are they and how can these promising practices be replicated in other projects and/or in other countries?</i></p> <p><i>Which lessons learned can contribute to advocacy and influencing efforts at the national, regional, or international levels?</i></p>

5.0 Evaluation Methodology

Sub-sections	Inputs by Evaluator
<p>5.1 Description of evaluation design</p>	<p>A qualitative design, underpinned by appreciative inquiry, was used to conduct this evaluation. Although key partners such as the FSU, MSWGCA, traditional and religious leaders participated in the evaluation, the project team made a decision to focus mainly on understanding and documenting the experience of women and their interaction with the project.</p> <p>The focus of this evaluation on women is in line with the project’s overall goal to improve access to timely and fair justice for women and girls in Sierra Leone. Understanding how women view justice, what their experiences are with SGBV, what options are available and accessible in their context and how interacting with the project has improved their situation, will provide valuable information that will contribute to better programing.</p> <p>FGDs and KIs were the primary methods of data collection. While a set of evaluation questions was developed and shared with the project coordinator, the evaluator took a “purposeful conversation” approach with every discussion and interview, digging into participant’s values, hopes and dreams in regard to access to justice.</p> <p>The evaluator worked with two Community Engagement Officers²⁰ who provided valuable contextual information, translated, and ensured the entire process was successful.</p> <p>The evaluation exercise was conducted in the districts of Kenema, Kailahun, Kono in the Eastern Province and Bombali in the Northern Province.</p> <p>A total of 75 men and 293 women participated in the evaluation exercise.</p>
<p>5.2 Data sources</p>	<p>Key project documents reviewed include the project proposal, narrative reports, activity reports, project logical framework, mid-term evaluation report.</p>

²⁰ Community Engagement Officers work directly with communities to implement projects under the Women’s Protection & Empowerment program

	<p>Primary data sources include women’s groups, religious leaders, community groups, FSU, MSWGCA, Timap, traditional leaders, Rainbo Centres, a Magistrate, a Lead Prosecutor in the Magistrates Court and project staff. A complete list of individuals and groups that participated in the evaluation exercise is annexed to this report as Annex 2.</p>
<p>5.3 Description of data collection methods and analysis</p>	<p>FGDs and KIs were the primary means of data collection. Each FGD and KI took between 1.5 -2 hours, which provided ample time for all participants to engage in the discussion.</p> <p>To enable easy coding and analysis of data, the evaluator used a unique number to identify each participant.</p> <p>To establish trends, the evaluator observed and listened for the frequency with which an issue was referred to by all participants in different groups and communities.</p> <p>Data was triangulated across different women’s groups, communities and stakeholders.</p>
<p>5.4 Description of sampling</p>	<p>Purposive sampling was used to identify participants who had been targeted directly; including women’s groups, religious leaders, traditional leaders, local leaders, FSU, MSWGCA, CSO partners and Timap, on the ground.</p> <p>The project team made a decision to focus mainly on the women who had been engaged directly and indirectly through the life of the project. Understanding the experiences of women would help shape future programming.</p> <p>To understand and document the indirect impact of the project on women and girls in the community, over ten FGDs were conducted with women who had not participated in any training. Overall, 31 community women from Kailahun, Kenema and Kono, participated in the evaluation exercise.</p>
<p>5.5 Description of ethical considerations in the evaluation</p>	<p>The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators and the WHO Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Researching Domestic Violence Against Women.</p> <p>To ensure safety of respondents and the research team, prior clearance was obtained from relevant authorities at the</p>

	<p>community level. In addition, most FGDs were conducted at the women’s centres supported by the IRC. The women consider these centres safe spaces where they can speak about SGBV issues, without fear. In areas where there were no women’s centres, the evaluation team ensured the women felt comfortable to have a conversation on SGBV in each setting.</p> <p>Participants were informed of the evaluation objectives, and why their views and experiences were important for this process. Their consent was sought before the evaluation process and before taking photos, video or audio recording.</p> <p>Children were deliberately not included in this evaluation, because there were no direct activities that targeted children.</p> <p>However, in situations where there were under age mothers who had been invited to the FGD as “women”, the evaluator took extra care to make sure they felt safe and comfortable to discuss evaluation questions and worked with the project team to follow up after the discussions to make sure they were receiving the support they needed from the community.</p> <p>All information collected was stored safely and securely, and where the evaluator needed to do a follow up story on a participant, their consent was requested first.</p>
<p>5.6 Limitations of the evaluation methodology used</p>	<p>The evaluation methodology was primarily qualitative. This allowed participants to freely share their experiences, and opinions, it is subjective.</p> <p>To reduce bias, findings were triangulated across different groups, stakeholders and communities. The evaluator also used observation and probing techniques to understand underlying issues.</p>

6.0 Findings and Analysis per Evaluation Question

6.1 Effectiveness

<p>Evaluation Criteria</p>	<p>Effectiveness</p>
<p>Evaluation Question 1</p>	<p>To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs achieved and how?</p>

<p>Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team</p>	<p>Based on conversations with women, traditional leaders, religious leaders, government and CSO partners, and a review of project documents, to a great extent, the project was successful at achieving all four outcomes, highlighted in the project description.</p> <p>The project’s most notable success was at community level, where the Gender trainings sparked ongoing conversations among women on SGBV within their communities. For women who participated in the training, it provided an opportunity to learn about their rights, many for the very first time. It is this new knowledge that compelled them to speak out, for and with one other against SGBV.</p> <p>Training alone does not lead to behaviour change and transformation. It was the fact the training took place within already existing women’s groups that had been mobilised, and already had strong relationships and solidarity among themselves. This was ‘fertile ground’ for receiving and absorbing this new knowledge, building understanding and internalising that over time, enabled through the continued provision of on-going support and spaces where the women could continue to mobilize around, and learn, act, and grow together.</p> <p>It is these relationships that kept the conversations about SGBV alive long after the trainings had been completed. Utilizing the women’s centres constructed by IRC, the women’s groups in Kailahun, Kono and Kenema, created a safe space where women could meet and support each other morally, financially and socially. For survivors of violence, the centres became a place where they could find life-saving help; sometimes this meant staying away from their homes for a few days, and for others, the groups provided an opportunity to learn how to save and contribute to household income.</p> <p>In addition the women’s groups in the districts visited during the evaluation were recognized by the FSU, local and traditional leaders, most of whom had been trained as well. This network of individuals and groups, working together to reduce violence against women was critical in creating an environment in the communities where open dialogue about SGBV, can begin to take place.</p>
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	<p>In areas where one off trainings were conducted, e.g. in some areas in Bombali district, Timap partners were supported to conduct one day trainings on the Gender Laws in October 2014. It was evident, that these women’s groups never had the opportunity to understand SGBV, or begin to have honest and real conversations within and among themselves about its underlying causes and how they might reduce it. The difference in impact, as compared with the work with established women’s groups, was marked.</p> <p>In Bombali and Tonkolili districts, the IRC supported Timap for Justice to train partner CSOs to implement activities on the ground. The project built on Timap’s strength in working with paralegals to support training for women’s groups.</p> <p>Timap’s sensitization activities through paralegals reached at least 5,500 women. Timap also provided legal and mediation support to at least 148 women.</p> <p>FSU attributes the increase in number of GBV cases reported over the life of the project to increased awareness on the Gender Acts. Supporting the FSU to streamline and standardize its investigation processes contributed to a professional force that understands and supports SGBV victims</p>
<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above</p>	<p>The MSWGCA successfully advocated for the passage of the Sexual Offences Bill. Now the Sexual Offences Act 2012, it has provided a basis for criminalizing child sexual abuse, and rape. The Matrimonial Bill, still awaits parliamentary review. This was delayed due to the Ebola crisis.</p> <p>A Strategic Roll Out Plan (SROP) was developed to facilitate implementation at the district level, although while conversations with councillors and MSGWCA staff at the district level indicate awareness of the SROP, little has been done to support its implementation.</p> <p>Town chiefs and paramount chiefs who participated in the evaluation were able to name at least four SGBV cases that had become criminalized as a result of new laws. These included child marriage, aggravated domestic violence, sexual penetration,</p>

	<p>rape, and denial of property to women whose spouses had passed on.</p> <p>In addition, most chiefs also demonstrated understanding of the national referral protocol and gave examples of cases of aggravated domestic violence and sexual penetration that they'd referred to the FSU, fully aware that these were cases beyond their mandate. At least 170 traditional and 89 local leaders were trained during the course of the project.</p> <p>However the most common challenges cited by traditional leaders, were the fact that FSU's were many times too far away and too costly in terms of time, resources and social capital for victims to access. For victims who did make it to the FSU, most never returned for a follow up due to interference from extended family.</p> <p>Of the 48 cases reported to the Rainbo Centre in Kono, in May, 2015, only 8 had returned for a follow up visit.</p> <p>The Paramount Chief of Gorama chiefdom in Kono district, highlights some of these challenges:</p> <p><i>"For example, I have a recent case of a 15 year old girl who was sexually abused and made pregnant. When the case came to me, I took her to the FSU. I expressed concern and the need for the police to intervene. However I never heard back from the police and when I met the young girl in the village recently, I found out that the case had been withdrawn and mediated by her parents and the perpetrators relatives"</i></p> <p>Evaluation participants cited fear of backlash, poverty, charges for medical care at government hospitals, interference from family, and a real fear that women have of loss of relationships with spouses or extended family. These challenges were echoed by all stakeholders during the evaluation exercise. The referral focal person in Koindu village, Kailahun district, spoke to the challenges in accessing medical care for victims:</p> <p><i>"Most victims when wounded, ask for money for medical check-up; clinics charge at least 25,000 Leones, (~\$5), you can't say it's</i></p>
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the Act, that doesn't matter at that point, the hospital will charge them, there are no free services"

In areas where there are no Rainbo Centers, survivors seek for medical service from government hospitals, which do not offer free services

In spite of the challenges, traditional leaders believed the chiefdoms play a key role in administering justice and they should play a more central role. Many chiefdoms had established fines ranging from 30,000- 200,000 Leones against wife beating. In Gorama and Sowa chiefdoms in Kono district, women attributed the high fines to a reduction of cases of aggravated domestic violence.

While they believed in the formal justice system, and saw the Gender Laws as an integral part of improving justice, there was consensus that it was out of reach for the majority of women and girls in their communities.

Communities, including women, highlighted the need to train more chiefs, and support chiefdoms to develop bylaws that address SGBV issues. As the chiefdom structures will continue to play a key role in supporting justice for women, it is critical to empower chiefdoms on how to translate national laws into enforceable policies at the local level, and how to lead ongoing conversations that address deep rooted cultural drivers of SGBV in their communities.

Conversations with the FSU revealed a clear understanding of the Gender Laws and the SOP. With the exception of FSU staff who had not undergone any training, all staff understood the referral protocol and how to deal with cases of child sexual abuse, rape and aggravated domestic violence.

However, the lack of training was evident when some FSU staff in Kono and Bombali district who had not attended any training, suggested the need to include punishment for victims in the SOP, especially the girl child, since they seemed to be *"looking for trouble"*.

	Institutionalizing the training curriculum for the FSU into the SLP is crucial to develop and strengthen a culture that supports the protection of women.
Conclusions	<p>The Gender Laws were critical to initiate training and advocacy on improving access to fairly and timely justice for women and girls. However, the reality for most women and girls is that the formal justice process is costly, time consuming, inaccessible and still has a social stigma associated with it. It also does not provide protection for SGBV survivors as witnesses from the perpetrator, their families, and the perpetrators families, where there is high risk of retribution and case compromise.</p> <p>The FSUs cited examples of perpetrators who had been released and abused the same victims, while women cited examples of women who after reporting their husbands to the police, had been beaten more or lost their relationships.</p> <p>The majority of women continue to seek “justice” from women’s groups, and traditional systems. It is important that advocacy and training on the Gender laws continue to take place. At the same time, , it is paramount that the focus continues to be the women, to strengthen their voices and ensure systems that they work with and access, are knowledgeable and equipped to advocate for the rights of women and girls.</p>
Others	

Evaluation Criteria	Effectiveness
Evaluation Question 2	To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal and outcome levels? How many beneficiaries have been reached?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	The project was to a greater extent successful in ensuring that women and girls are made aware of their rights as provided by new legislation. Trainings on the Gender Laws provided an opportunity for women to initiate conversations at the community level on GBV and how to reduce it. However, training and awareness raising alone cannot be relied upon to lead to change in cultural and social systems that perpetuate violence against women. It is what happens after the trainings that is crucial, and how this information is processed, discussed and absorbed into dialogue and conversation, understanding of a social landscape, and a sense that this information speaks to

	<p>women in their daily lives. It is the opportunity and space for women to come together to improve their livelihoods and use that opportunity to speak out and ask questions around what is possible in regard to seeking justice in their context.</p> <p>Where it was successful, the trainings had leveraged already existing cohesion among women’s groups. Conversations about SGBV became part of their routine group activities, therefore breaking the stigma associated with SGBV and creating a space where women, even those who had not been targeted by the project directly, could come and seek advice, and support. Not least, these groups provided the space for women to name and articulate their own experiences and make sense of them together.</p> <p>Traditional leaders who were trained now view SGBV not just as a cultural issue that cannot go away, but see the opportunity to make a difference in their own culture. Chiefdom structures were working with women’s groups to identify and refer cases.</p>
<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above</p>	<p>Participants in the FGDs reported having no knowledge of their rights prior to receiving training. Understanding their rights had empowered them to begin to have conversations around SGBV, to believe that it’s wrong, unacceptable, and punishable by law. In addition, this new found knowledge enabled them to start having conversations about SGBV in their homes and communities. For some women, participating in the Gender Laws training had given them the courage to believe in themselves to seek leadership within their communities, for the very first time.</p> <p>Women like “Issata”, a member of the WAG from Kissy Teng chiefdom in Kailahun district said;</p> <p><i>“Before this training, we had always heard that only men can hold positions of leadership in the district council. But in 2012, I campaigned to become a district councilor. Even if I never won, it gave me the confidence to believe that women can do anything they set themselves to do. The fact that I tried, makes me very proud”.</i></p> <p>For “Kumba” in Mandu o chiefdom in Kailahun district, even if she could not find the courage to go to the police to report her husband after she had been beaten, she did find the courage to</p>

	<p>report it to the VSLA group she belongs to. With the support of the local chief, her husband and family were compelled to apologize before her and the entire group, and she has never been beaten again. She happily introduced the evaluator to the husband, saying <i>“this is him...come meet my husband, he doesn’t beat me anymore”</i>. What has been heard resoundingly from the women during this evaluation, is that their definition of justice was not a formal one, but one much more focused on effective community mechanisms²¹.</p> <p>On the other hand, in Kenema district, for “Mariama”, being part of the WAG, had given her the courage to report her husband to the FSU over denial of resources. Even if the police did not instigate an investigation, and her husband did not change, she found the courage to save, and construct her own house. She is currently putting a roof on it. It is with pride, and confidence that she speaks of being able to take care of herself and her child. Her experience, and sense of herself as valuable, enabled her to change her understanding of herself and find a way, with other women, to secure her future in spite of her husband.</p>
Conclusions	<p>The stories of the women reveal the complexity of improving justice for women and girls in Sierra Leone, but also the tremendous courage and strength that women at the community level have in advocating for themselves in a way that addresses their needs.</p>

Evaluation Criteria	Effectiveness
Evaluation Question 3	<p>To what extent has this project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted (and untargeted) women and girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by this project? Why?</p> <p>What are the key changes in the lives of those women and/or girls? Please describe those changes.</p>
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>The project addressed two forms of violence; IPV and sexual violence by non- partners (rape and sexual abuse).</p> <p>Conversations with women and records at the FSU show that the most common form of partner violence is still wife beating. By training women on their rights, and the referral protocol, the project had empowered women to begin to seek help. For most</p>

²¹ This is also echoed in the IRC domestic violence in West Africa research, highlighted in the *“Let me not die before my time”* report, the IRC, 2012

	<p>women however, the first and most “safe” place to seek “justice” was fellow women, elders, chiefs, and women leaders. This is consistent with what women do everywhere. The first step that women take is always local and informal.</p>
<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above</p>	<p>Women cited increased levels of confidence and belief in themselves, a belief that they had rights. For some women, this belief had encouraged them to speak up and become involved in community activities.</p> <p><i>“I’m a class seven drop out. But now am proud to speak in public , I’m so proud now I can write my name, and sign against it and take responsibility within the community, which I undertake frequently”</i> said a member of a WAG in Gorama chiefdom, Kono district</p> <p>For other women, having the courage to speak up and seek help was a step they would not have taken before. Even if this help was sought from traditional structures, initially, they used to suffer in silently.</p> <p>Other women, saw changes in their spouses, as a result of participating in trainings with them.</p> <p><i>“My husband was so wild, arrogant and always called me a prostitute. Now he’s the one who encourages me to attend meetings”</i>- WAG member, Nimikoro chiefdom, Kono district</p> <p>When asked if they could report their spouses to the FSU, if they had been beaten, participants in a FGD in Small Bo chiefdom in Kenema district, unanimously said “no”. This response was echoed by most women across all the districts. While formal justice was desirable, it was out of reach, and had too many “unintended” and negative consequences, meaning that most women were hesitant to pursue it. What is noticeable through the women’s stories, is how they fully understand the risks they face and balance this up against formal reporting. It is a formal justice system which does not recognise the wider risks women face if they report, and does not focus on or prioritise women’s safety as witnesses when they report, or the practical consequences for them when they make a formal complaint.</p>

	<p>These risks include among others societal retribution and the “shame” associated with reporting an SGBV case to the FSU. The WAG in Pendemu village Kailahun district, reiterates this view.</p> <p><i>“communities say when you take your husband to police, you’ve put your family to shame, most women fear to report their husbands”</i></p> <p>In addition, most women had a real fear of losing their relationships. For example “Zainab” from Bombali district said;</p> <p><i>“I’m afraid to report any cases to the FSU, if I do, then the relationship is over”</i></p> <p>For “Finda” from Kailahun district, it was the fear that something “bad” might happen to her children that kept her away from the FSU. She said,</p> <p><i>“My husband just left- I lost everything, I was married with five children and he never cared for the children. He took all the property, I was asked to take him to the police but I thought if I did, my children would not be blessed and so I decided to take care of the children myself”</i></p> <p>This fear was reiterated by most women across all the districts. Women are fully aware of the risks involved in pursuing formal justice, and therefore do everything within their power to avoid those risks. This contributes to their preference for community systems that in some ways have mechanisms to mitigate those risks. The formal system on the other hand, has not internalized nor made provisions to reduce the risks that women and girls have to face to pursue justice.</p> <p>For survivors, support from fellow women came at no cost, compared to the FSU, which in some areas were too far and had “too many” processes. Some participants also reported that, in some villages, section chiefs charged a fee to hear a case, therefore making the women’s groups the most immediately accessible and meaningful.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>While the training on the Gender Laws provided an opportunity for open dialogue about GBV to be initiated among women at the</p>

	community level, it is the continuation of this conversation that digs into underlying fears and risks, and the cultural barriers that keep women from seeking justice that is critical. It's these conversations that the women's groups have had, and continue to have, that compels them to advocate for and with each other.
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Evaluation Criteria	Effectiveness
Evaluation Question 4	Which interventions were less effective than planned, and how might they be adapted or changed to improve their effectiveness?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>While the Gender Laws provide an excellent legal framework for improving justice for women and girls in the formal justice system, there are still many challenges that make the laws hard to implement.</p> <p>Focusing on strengthening the formal justice system did not necessarily lead to a drastic increase in SGBV cases convicted.</p>
Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above	<p>In Kailahun district, there is no resident magistrate, and so all SGBV cases are forwarded to Kenema district, which is out of reach for most victims. In Kono district, while there is a resident magistrate and judge, the high court is only in session every six months and the judge is rotated among other districts. In Bombali district, the magistrate is doing an excellent job under difficult circumstances of ensuring that SGBV cases are investigated and heard within a week and then forwarded to the high court. However, he is not sure how many of those cases have led to convictions.</p> <p>Conversations with the FSU in Bombali district indicate numerous challenges with the court processes e.g. no special sessions for SGBV cases, continuous adjournment of cases, interference from relatives and extended family, lack of witness protection, lack of a juvenile detention centre, poverty and the withdrawal of statements by survivors/victims as witnesses due to fear of loss of spousal relationships. Given that their statement is the crux of a prosecution, and the case is rarely investigated properly and thoroughly, withdrawal of the statement means the case collapses. These challenges are shared across all districts.</p> <p>The magistrate in Bombali district reiterated the challenge of survivors/victims not coming to court as witnesses after cases have been charged by the FSU.</p>

	<p><i>“Just yesterday, I adjourned a case for the third time because the victim is nowhere to be seen. So I had to adjourn it again”</i> Alhaji Stevens, Resident Magistrate, Makeni Magistrates Court.</p> <p>Timap staff, Vivette Mustapha, a Paralegal, narrates the complexity of accessing formal justice through the case of a 28 year old mother of four children in Bombali district:</p> <p><i>“The youngest was just 40 days old, when the husband demanded for sex four times a day even if she had just delivered. When she kept denying him, he cut off her half of her nose. When the case appeared in court, the wife cried, and begged the magistrate not to imprison him because she was solely dependent on him for her survival. At a cross roads, the magistrate sent him to jail for just one night, and he was released”.</i></p> <p>The above story, highlights the inextricable linkage between women’s poverty, the continued power of men over women and the difficult challenge for survivors to break free from the cycle of violence. Empowering women economically is critical to breaking this cycle.</p> <p>In Kailahun district, due to the lack of a resident magistrate, and limited space, perpetrators are released on bail as soon as the cases are charged to court -</p> <p><i>“Without a resident magistrate, perpetrators are staying longer in the police cell than they are in the court jail. I just got a perpetrator who passed by and threatened me”</i> said Selesie Suley, FSU Officer, Pendemu village, Kailahun district.</p> <p>In Kono district, the Rainbo Centre staff reported facing threats from perpetrators who had been released on bail.</p> <p>This is common behavior when perpetrators feel like their sense of entitlement has been challenged.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>While the laws are crucial, building a judicial system that facilitates justice for women will take a much longer term. It is important to recognize what works for women in this context. It is clear that for now, supporting the formal justice process, while having a core focus on facilitating conversations at the grass</p>

	<p>roots level with women and for women on SGBV, its underlying causes, and both reinforcing and strengthening systems that women consider accessible and meaningful will lead to more lasting changes. It is essential that women’s need for informal support is recognized as well as formal systems of justice. Formal justice systems can only look at the criminal side to the case, the informal networks and community-based support systems that help women manage risks and build protective networks are absolutely critical as well. It is not a case of either /or, both are essential. For women at the grass roots level, these informal networks exist within their communities. It is fellow women, elders and the chiefdom structures.</p>
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Evaluation Criteria	Effectiveness
Evaluation Question 5	What internal and external factors contributed to the achievement and/or failure of the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs? How?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>The project was designed and implemented by a team that is passionate about improving justice for women. Having a clear management structure that stipulated the roles of each team member also helped to ensure the successful implementation of the project.</p> <p>The project built on previous initiatives of the IRC’s Women’s Protection and Empowerment programme which constructed women’s centres in the communities and continued to support them with their initiatives and mobilisation. These centres provided a safe space where women can discuss SGBV issues, find support, solidarity and get access to services. In addition, the project built on Timap’s strength in working with paralegals at community level.</p> <p>It was evident that the IRC had the good will and support of all key stakeholders. From communities to CSOs and government partners, everyone spoke highly about the IRC’s work and the cordial relationships that they enjoyed. This contributed significantly to the smooth implementation of activities</p> <p>Timap, worked with limited resources to ensure women and key partners were trained in Bombali district</p>

	<p>However, the Ebola crisis led to the death of many women and key leaders in some of the communities. Due to the state of emergency, activities were disrupted and some of the women’s groups were re-directed to carry out Ebola sensitizations in their communities.</p> <p>In addition, the Ebola outbreak continued to have a negative impact on women’s livelihoods and health. Due to the ban on “Sunday markets”, women are forced to sell their produce only within their villages, thereby fetching much lower prices and as a result reducing their income. For those who belong to VSLA groups, this has affected their ability to pay back their loans. Such reduced income also contributes to higher exposure to sexual exploitation and to domestic violence. Furthermore, the long break from school left girls vulnerable to sexual abuse; participants reported an increase in the rate of teenage pregnancy in their communities, perpetrated by mostly teenage boys, according to sources in this evaluation.</p> <p>On the other hand, in Blama village in Kenema, the WAG associates the fact the village had no Ebola cases to their involvement early on when the outbreak had just started. They attribute the successful management of Ebola to their cohesion and speedy mobilisation of their networks and credibility. In Bombali district, the outbreak contributed to a delay of training activities until October 2014.</p>
<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above</p>	<p>In Tongo Field village, Kenema district, community women who were not targeted directly by project interventions spoke of the centre as their own, a place where they would come to find fellow women who could hear, understand, refer and sometimes mediate when they were facing violence at home. In addition, they attributed the changes in their communities to the WAG.</p> <p><i>“Thank you for forming the women’s group. Before this group existed, underage girls were being married off a lot. But now, it is much less, the WAGs have worked hard to reduce it”</i> said a community member from, Tongo Field.</p> <p>In Beudo village, Kailahun district, the WAG describes how vital the centres have become in reducing the humiliation and shame that survivors feel. The safe spaces have enabled the women to</p>

	<p>stand with and for each other, covering those that need it the most.</p> <p><i>“Sometimes women come to the centre when they don’t have any clothing....”</i>The importance of the centre is reiterated by another WAG member who said -</p> <p><i>“Just a few days ago, a lady came running to the Center in just her underwear, she’d been beaten and the clothes torn off her body. I run and meet her and covered her shame by walking before her and covering her”</i> - WAG member, Kailahun district</p> <p>For some women, as highlighted above, this shame is first physical then psychological. Some women’s groups recognize this need and the critical role that they play in ensuring that this cycle of feeling ashamed and humiliated is broken and women’s dignity is restored, and that they recognise that they are not to blame, that this is something the perpetrator has done to her.</p>
Conclusions	<p>A combination of skilled and passionate staff and political support for the project ensured most activities were implemented on time. Staff of both the IRC and Timap, who implemented the project in all districts, understood local contexts including local cultures and languages, and were able to easily build relationships with both local and traditional leaders and communities. However the impact of Ebola presents new challenge to women and girls that will need to be addressed in future programs. These challenges, as highlighted earlier and especially in areas that had a high number of Ebola cases, include increased number of widows, orphans and vulnerable children and a sharp reduction in household income.</p>

Interventions focusing at policy level –

Evaluation Criteria	Effectiveness
Evaluation Question 6	To what extent was the project successful in advocating for legal or policy change? If it was not successful, explain why.
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	The MSWGCA successfully advocated for the passing of the Sexual Offences Act, 2012. The Matrimonial bill is currently awaiting parliamentary approval.
Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence	Passing of the Matrimonial Causes Bill was delayed by the Ebola crisis, as parliament was adjourned until further notice.

gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above	
Conclusions	<p>The Sexual Offences Act criminalized child sexual abuse and rape. It provided a language and an opportunity for women to begin to speak about SGBV.</p> <p>Although the Matrimonial Causes Bill is not yet approved, the current laws, provided a legal framework that was sufficient to continue training, advocacy and dialogue on access to justice for women and girls.</p>

Evaluation Criteria	Effectiveness
Evaluation Question 7	In case the project was successful in setting up new policies and/or laws, is the legal or policy change likely to be institutionalized and sustained?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>The SOP was adopted and institutionalized by the SLP as a guiding document for the FSU. Every FSU visited, had a copy of the SOP and referred to it as their own document. FSU staff valued the standardized guidelines, its simplicity and accessibility made it easy for them to use and refer to.</p> <p>For the FSU’s, where staff were trained on the SOP it was clear that they understood what steps they would take if presented with a SGBV case. However it was evident that FSU staff who had not been trained lacked basic understanding of SGBV, and the procedures that needed to be taken to ensure safety of survivors and how to ethically investigate cases.</p> <p>It was also noted during the evaluation that staff transfers are common within the FSU. In addition, there were new staff who had not undergone any training, but were investigating SGBV cases. This reinforces the need to work at institutional level as well, so that processes and procedures are established and new staff come into an environment where good practice is standard. Relying on training individuals can never lead to standard good practice and means individuals are constantly working in a space that does not support their training and development. The result of that is training individuals over and over again with little affect.</p>

	<p>In Kono and Bombali districts, some FSU staff who had not been trained highlighted the need to incorporate a process to punish survivors of child sexual abuse, since they were <i>“looking for trouble”</i>. When probed further, it became clear that they thought teenage girls were more responsible for their predicament than the perpetrators who were mostly teenage boys.</p> <p><i>“Consider the fact that young girls sometimes have been warned by their parents, but still go and look for trouble. There should be punishment for them in the SOP”</i> staff, Tankoro FSU</p> <p>These views underscore the need to institutionalize and socialize a solid understanding of SGBV into the SLP culture and the training curriculum for all police staff.</p>
<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above</p>	<p>For Moriba John- FSU officer- Buedu Police Station, although he had never received any training on the Gender Acts, nor any orientation on the SOP, he found the SOP useful in helping him understand the basics of investigating SGBV cases -</p> <p><i>“It’s in the SOP, that I learned how to do interviews while protecting confidentiality in a private room”</i></p> <p>For Samuel Dauda Sesay, an FSU Officer, in Pendemu village, participating in training has enabled him understand how to do his work:</p> <p><i>“I’m not saying this because you are here. When I was transferred from investigation to FSU, I was in pitch darkness because I never knew how to identify offences. But with training from IRC, I feel like I’ve received an education. I’m so thankful”</i></p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>While the SOP has been institutionalized and used by the FSU, the challenge of transfers and new recruitment means new staff are working with the FSU without prior training on the Gender Acts or an understanding of the SOP and how it works. There is a strong and urgent need to work towards institutionalizing change within the FSU so that the focus is not always on the individual, but on a structural and systemic change, which could start with including it into the training curriculum for the FSU.</p>
<p>Other</p>	

6.2 Relevance

Evaluation Criteria	Relevance
Evaluation Question 1	To what extent was the project strategy and activities implemented relevant in responding to the needs and priorities of women and girls?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>Capacity building of various stakeholders e.g. women, the SLP, traditional leaders, CSO partners and religious leaders was important to ensure communities began to have conversations around SGBV and know where and how to refer cases. Training of the FSU has contributed to a force that understands SGBV issues and better knows how to work with victims to investigate cases. In addition, the SOP provides consistent guidelines for the entire FSU.</p> <p>Training women groups on the Gender Laws created awareness and enabled women to believe in the possibility of a life free from violence. For the women’s groups, understanding their rights had empowered them to advocate for their rights and those of other women in the community, as well as supporting them to make sense of their experiences and be equipped with the language to name those experiences.</p> <p>The involvement of strategic partners e.g. the MSGWCA, MoJ, NAC-GBV, CSOs and chiefdom structures at the national and district level ensured the project had the political will and support of all stakeholders. Project activities were welcomed as a critical need for communities.</p> <p>However, the project focused mainly on training on the Gender Laws without facilitating the critical conversations around the underlying causes of SGBV, community perceptions on gender based violence, the challenges of accessing the formal justice system, cultural drivers of violence, what justice means for survivors, and sustainability mechanisms for the various groups.</p>
Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above	For the women’s group in Bombali district, the women who attended the training with their spouse, spoke of a change in their marital relationships and a willingness of the men to contribute more financially to family responsibilities.

Conclusions	The strategies and activities highlighted above increased access to information on the Gender Laws among women and key religious and traditional leaders.
Other	

Evaluation Criteria	Relevance
Evaluation Question 2	To what extent do achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>Although women in many communities report a reduction of domestic violence, women and girls in Sierra Leone continue to be at risk of SGBV. Wife beating, child sexual abuse, rape, child marriage and neglect are some of the most common forms of violence highlighted by evaluation participants, and key partners such as the FSU and the Rainbo centres.</p> <p>For the women who participated in the training, the knowledge continues to empower them to speak out for their own rights and those of other women within the community.</p> <p>The community women continue to find moral and social support from the women’s groups and existing structures within the communities to deal with SGBV.</p> <p>The FSU continues to work tirelessly to investigate and charge SGBV cases to court despite the numerous challenges.</p>
Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above	<p>Due to the Ebola crisis, most of the women’s groups had not been able to meet for over ten months. At the time of this evaluation, restrictions on public gathering still prevented women’s groups from continuing their activities. However, all the women’s groups that participated in the evaluation had not lost any members except to Ebola and natural causes. The strong cohesion and solidarity in their relationships kept the groups together despite being unable to meet, as prior, during the crisis. Most women still remembered most of what they learned in regard to the Gender Laws and continued to advocate for the rights of fellow women</p> <p>Although the FSU is affected by transfers staff still moved on with their knowledge and were effective in their new postings, working hard to investigate SGBV cases.</p>

Conclusions	<p>Equipping women with information on their rights, is a first step to improving their ability and courage to access justice. This provision of information should be carried out alongside creating a safe space where women can continue to come together, internalize and share what they have learned through the lens of their daily experiences with SGBV. It is their daily experiences, and the spaces for them to talk these through together and gather information, knowledge and understanding, that enables women to find the words to name their experiences of violence and to raise their critical consciousness, that this is not inevitable or essential, to understand their oppression and the violence they face, and stand up to that and “push back” with the support of the women behind them and standing with them.</p> <p>Once women develop this consciousness, understand their rights, and can situate their experiences within an understanding of rights, it is the supportive environment that they find within their communities that makes the difference between whether they continue to suffer in silence or speak out and seek help.</p> <p>These supportive structures, as highlighted earlier, are the women’s groups and chieftom structures. These are accessible and familiar within the context of women’s lives, and where most VAWG happens. This supportive environment does not happen immediately after the training, but rather is developed by a series of conversations and dialogue that starts with women themselves and expands to key stakeholders such as chiefs and the local courts.</p>
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6.3 Sustainability

Evaluation Criteria	Sustainability
Evaluation Question 1	How are the achieved results, especially the positive changes generated by the project in the lives of women and girls at the project goal level, going to be sustained after this project ends?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	This evaluation was conducted seven months after the project was closed. Due to the Ebola outbreak, and the current state of emergency, most groups had not been able to meet since the crisis began over a year ago. Some groups, had also lost key members to Ebola and other natural causes

	<p>However, despite their inability to meet and the loss of some members, most women groups had retained the knowledge on the Gender Laws, were still actively having one on one conversations with each other on SGBV, and doing their best to refer any criminal cases to the FSU.</p> <p>In addition, most women’s groups self-initiated VSLA as part of their activities. During the outbreak, some groups would “hide” and meet in smaller numbers to enable them make their individual contributions to the revolving fund. These “illegal” meetings kept group cohesion and allowed the women to keep conversations on SGBV going, as well as their support for each other. This cohesion was noticeable, during the FGDs. All groups had not lost any members, except those lost to Ebola and natural causes.</p> <p>The chieftdom structures that became vital in sensitizing communities and implementing Ebola bylaws during the height of the outbreak, are now beginning to function “normally” again.</p> <p>Conversations with local court staff, paramount chiefs and town chiefs, indicate that more SGBV cases are now being referred. Over the last six months, most chieftdoms have seen an increase in cases of teenage pregnancy and chiefs who participated in trainings showed awareness of the referral protocol, although they highlighted challenges in implementation.</p> <p>Despite enormous challenges, the FSU and magistrates courts continue to investigate and charge cases, beyond the end of the project. The SOP still remains core to the FSU’s investigation of SGBV cases. Each FSU visited by the evaluation team had a copy of the SOP.</p> <p>However, as a result of the outbreak and the state of emergency, women groups face new challenges that future programs will need to address. Not only were women the most affected group, in some villages, many women died, and those who are alive, are taking care of a large number of orphans and vulnerable children. In addition, a ban on all Sunday public markets, means most women cannot sell their produce (pepper, okra, sweet potatoes e.tc.) to a larger number of buyers. They are confined to their local market, where everyone produces the same food. All the</p>
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	<p>women complained of low prices, rising poverty, and an inability to meet basic needs. Some groups are struggling with a high number of members who have defaulted on their loans. All of this, contributes to women and girls’ greater exposure to SGBV.</p>
<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above</p>	<p>In Gorama chiefdom, Kono district, the WAG still has all 25 initial members. During the crisis they ensured they met in smaller numbers to make individual contributions to their loans association for those engaged in VSLA groups</p> <p>On the other hand, in Koindu village, the WAG lost 10 group members to Ebola and had not been able to meet at all for over ten months. Koindu village is at the border with Guinea and Liberia, where Ebola was first noticed before it spread to other parts of Kailahun district, and later to the rest of the country.</p> <p>Conversations with the women reveal a resilient group that is aware of the Gender Laws, and is eager to get back to their weekly meetings, but also one that acknowledges new challenges of psychosocial trauma, poverty, teenage pregnancy and a high number of orphans and vulnerable children.</p> <p>Conversations with the VSLA group in Koindu, revealed that out of 25 members, 18 were unable to pay back their loans.</p> <p>To reiterate the impact of Ebola on women, the Secretary General of the Inter-religious Council in Kailahun, Musa Konteh, said,</p> <p><i>“Currently women are eating all their “head money”²² and therefore will have no money left to start their small businesses when Ebola is over”.</i></p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>All women’s groups visited never lost any members except to Ebola or natural reasons. It’s admirable that without meeting for over ten months, the groups had been able to stick together and sustain their relationships with each other and trust in each other. What motivates the groups to keep going is, among other things, the desire to see change in their communities and the real need to improve their incomes through their self-initiated VSLAs. Women’s groups consider economic empowerment pivotal to reducing VAWG.</p>

²² “Head money” is a term used to refer to “working capital”

6.3 Impact

Evaluation Criteria	Impact
Evaluation Question 1	What are the unintended consequences (positive and negative) resulted from the project?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>Overall, the most observable and significant impact of the project is the confidence that women have in speaking about SGBV, and acknowledging that it is not acceptable. This confidence resulted from ongoing conversations among women on SGBV and their role in reducing it in their communities.</p> <p>Most women spoke of having the confidence to speak in public, for the very first time. A few women, spoke of having the courage to go to the FSU, if only to demonstrate their strength to their spouses and not necessarily follow the full course of justice and others spoke with pride for having supported fellow women to find “justice”.</p> <p>In the groups, women found social support, for not only SGBV issues but other life challenges. In addition, they found the opportunity to improve their household income, through the VSLA initiatives, some of which were self- initiated. For women who participated in trainings with their spouses, there was a “marked” difference in their spouse’s behaviour.</p> <p>However, the existence of the groups had led some men in the communities to ignore their financial obligations and responsibility to their families. While neglect was rampant before the groups were formed, the women report a higher number of men ignoring their responsibility as a result of the women’s groups. Although the groups may not be the cause of men neglecting their responsibilities, there is consensus that they have exacerbated the situation, with most men are abdicating their responsibilities as a way of protesting the empowerment and increased independence of women. Participants suggested increased male involvement in SGBV dialogue and conversation as a way of reducing the backlash. Some women who participated in a “discussion series”²³ with their spouses reported</p>

²³ The gender discussion group series where women attended with their spouses is a component of the IRC EASE program in which the VSLA groups are a component. Resources and information: <http://gbvresponders.org/empowerment/>

	<p>a fairer sharing of household responsibilities, compared to their counterparts who attended trainings alone. This kind of male engagement to promote more gender equitable and positive male behaviours is strongly encouraged, and is seen as an essential component in the IRC’s EAŞE (Economic and Social Empowerment) program²⁴, where the VSLA groups form part of three core components which are intended to mitigate potential backlash as women have greater access to resources, opportunities and power. Women are engaged in the Discussion Group Series with their spouses, which is intended to strengthen the men’s role in taking care of household needs, and to support more equitable decision-making about the use of resources.</p> <p>Finally, due to the support that FSU has received from the IRC, and other partners, within the SLP, the FSU is regarded as the “NGO Police” by other departments within the SLP. There’s a misconception that the FSU’s interaction with NGO’s has led to increased funding. This has allegedly contributed to a reduction in funding for basic office items such as computers, paper and office space. This view was reiterated by the Superintendent of the FSU and all FSU’s visited during the evaluation. The evaluator was unable to confirm this view with non-FSU staff of the SLP. However it is important to follow up and work with the FSU leadership to identify ways of mitigating this risk.</p>
<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above</p>	<p>Speaking to the social cohesion and support that she has felt in the women’s group that she belongs to, “Hawa”, a member of the Blama WAG in Kenema district said,</p> <p><i>“I’m so proud of this group for the love they showed me. Last year, I lost my child. They all came as a group, slept at my home, and encouraged me to move on. I could have left this village, if it had not been for this group, but I’m still here.”</i></p> <p>On the other hand, in Sandor chiefdom, Kono district, conversations with women, revealed that while the men do not beat anymore, they ignore all their financial responsibilities:</p> <p><i>“No there’s no beating, but now they give you the silent treatment, and let you take care of all the responsibility” - Masunduwa WAG</i></p>

²⁴ The IRC’s EAŞE program

	<p>The above view was confirmed in conversations with men in the Gender Working Team (GWT) who said most men in the community, were telling their wives to loan from the groups for every basic need.</p> <p>Neglect was echoed by all the women’s groups and stakeholders that participated in the evaluation. Some participants, attributed it to poverty and the lack of resources for men. In areas where the main source of livelihood is mining, communities attributed the closure of most diamond mines to the rampant rates of wife and child neglect.</p>
Conclusions	<p>Empowering women with information and resources will continue to be pivotal in reducing SGBV cases. However, to reduce negative unintended consequences, there is a need to involve more men in continuous dialogue and behaviour change on SGBV.</p>

6.4 Knowledge Generation

Evaluation Criteria	Knowledge generation
Evaluation Question 1	What are the key lessons learned that can be shared with other practitioners on Ending Violence against Women and Girls?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>It is critical to recognise where the women are going to seek for justice in this context. It was clear from the conversations in the field that the most accessible places are fellow women, WAGs, traditional leaders and the chiefdom structures e.g. the “Mammy Queens”²⁵, the chiefdom court etc. Initiatives should focus on ensuring that these structures are aware of the Gender Laws, and their roles in supporting justice for women. Interventions must focus on the women and works for them, which means an understanding of the wider social protection and social justice issues.</p> <p>Conversations with women should focus not only on promoting the Gender Laws but understanding the underlying issues that exacerbate SGBV, and encouraging critical engagement in exposing the most common cultural narratives that justify men’s behaviour; for example, the most common reason that women gave for wife beating was “denial” of sex.</p>

²⁵ The Mama Queen is the women’s representative at the chiefdom level.

	<p>Cultures and cultural narratives that perpetuate the power of men over women must be addressed not in one-off trainings but as part of ongoing conversations and interventions focused on male behaviour change and transforming harmful socially constructed gender roles into gender equal ones. There is a need for women to have time and space to develop critical consciousness on their experiences and situations with each other and feel empowered to take action; and there is also a need for men to engage with what women are talking about, and to be accountable to them.</p> <p>Women who participated in the gender discussion group series (part of the IRC’s EAŞE program) with their spouses (as mentioned above), noted a “significant” reduction in gender based violence perpetrated by their spouses. The involvement of men is a critical part of ending the cycle of violence against women.</p> <p>Conversations with women in all districts indicate a need for economic empowerment and the inextricable link that they see with a reduction in violence. For many WAGs, that need explains the self-initiated VSLA.</p>
<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above</p>	<p>Timap’s experience in Tonkolili district, underscores the need to recognise the underlying issues causing VAWG. In Yoni chiefdom, Timap received six cases of child sexual abuse that resulted in teenage pregnancy in a month. While investigating the six cases and working to find legal redress, Timap decided to investigate and find out what the underlying causes were, and what could be done about it. Their investigation revealed, that there was only one primary school, and no primary schools in eleven other villages within the chiefdom. The nearest secondary school was twenty miles away, therefore parents were afraid to send their girls far away for fear that they might become “prostitutes”. Through a series of community meetings with local leaders and advocacy with national government, a secondary school was constructed in Yoni chiefdom. In the last two years, Timap has not received any cases of so-called “teenage pregnancy”. In Yoni chiefdom, like in many other communities, cases of rape of teenage girls were mostly reported when they resulted in pregnancy, rather than when the act occurred. This follow up and investigation, allowed Timap to facilitate conversations around</p>

	<p>cultural drivers of rape of young girls and root causes of this violence, beyond the fact that school was more or less accessible.</p> <p>For Timap it is clear that child sexual abuse is a criminal case, but while pursuing formal justice, it is important to address the root causes that continue to make girls vulnerable to abuse, and to work within communities at addresses this too. In Yoni chiefdom, a lack of education was contributing to girls’ vulnerability, to early marriage and abuse, perpetuated by a culture that considers girls as transferable resources between men.</p>
Conclusions	<p>While national level interventions are important, it is at the grassroots community-level where efforts that seek to recognise and address the root causes of VAWG and the factors that exacerbate it should be focused, in order to make a lasting difference.</p>

Evaluation Criteria	Knowledge generation
Evaluation Question 2	Are there any promising practices? If yes, what are they and how can these promising practices be replicated in other projects and/or in other countries?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>The success of the WAGs participating in this project can be attributed to the fact that there was a “physical” place where they could meet, a place the community referred to as “the women’s centre”.</p> <p>The women’s centres, constructed by the IRC under Its Women’s Empowerment Program in areas where IRC implemented activities directly, provided a safe space for women to have conversations around SGBV and shelter those in the community who became victims. For other women who never participated in the trainings, knowing they could come to the centre and find fellow women to seek advice and support gave them extra impetus to seek help.</p> <p>In addition, women’s groups that initiated VSLA were more motivated to meet in spite of the challenges during the Ebola crisis. SGBV conversations became integrated into their monthly contribution meetings. This is a sustainable way of keeping the groups functional. Economic empowerment while valuable in itself, is also a vehicle for other conversations that are profoundly</p>

	<p>empowering for women, and the protection that comes from being in a group.</p> <p>Working with the chiefdom structures ensured that the women’s groups had the support of the traditional leaders, and therefore could meet without fear of retribution for challenging cultural norms and values. In areas where the chiefs had participated in training, both the chiefs and women spoke of cordial working relationships and a support for women’s activities.</p> <p>Finally, women who participated in trainings with their spouses, reported a marked difference in their spouse’s behaviour. Most women recommended an increased involvement of men in trainings.</p>
<p>Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above</p>	<p>A community woman who never participated in any training, but has benefited from the existence of the WAGs and the women’s center said;</p> <p><i>“I’m a housewife and my husband used to beat me every time. I never got any support from him, my colleagues kept me here at the Centre for 3 days with my children. I was powerless without my own money, FSU intervened and mediated. He apologized and promised never to do it again. He’s not beaten me again”</i></p> <p>The WAG in Beudo reiterates the key role that economic empowerment plays in reducing violence -</p> <p><i>“When only men provide for you, clothe you as a woman, if you are not engaged in anything, you are always violated, but economic empowerment can reduce violence. It may not eradicate violence against women, but it will reduce it, because your opinion will be considered”.</i></p> <p>And finally, Tamba Selu, the Court Chairperson at the Kissy Teng chiefdom court in Kailahun district, highlights the need for the increased involvement of men -</p> <p><i>“I never valued my wife before the training, now I value my wife. I never beat her again until she died last year on August 7. Thankfully she died of High Blood Pressure and not Ebola. I miss her so much,.....I wish I had more time”</i></p>

Conclusions	Economic empowerment of women, should be integral to the overall program strategy to improve justice for women and girls. While the focus should be on strengthening women’s economic position, working with men is also important, to reduce the threats and retribution that is associated with increased incomes for women. Activities that focus on inclusion of men as key agents in creating households and a culture that respects women as valuable members of society should be included.
Other	

Evaluation Criteria	Knowledge generation
Evaluation Question 3	Which lessons learned can contribute to advocacy and influencing efforts at the national, regional, or international levels?
Response to the evaluation question with analysis of key findings by the evaluation team	<p>The most frequent appeal by all women was a lift of the ban on “Sunday open markets” and “public gatherings”. Because their survival depends on being able to sell their produce, the Sunday market provided an opportunity to sell more, at a higher price to buyers from different parts of the country.</p> <p>Conversations with the MSWGCA, the FSU and magistrate court staff indicated the need to have translators in court, improve witness protection and establish correctional centres for juvenile offenders. According to data from the FSU and conversations with the MSWGCA and communities, the highest number of child sexual abuse cases in 2014, were perpetrated by teenage boys.</p> <p>Finally, there is need to find creative ways to support victims who do report to the FSU, but are unable to follow through the whole course of the legal process due to poverty and fear, by strengthening community level support systems that women continue to access.</p>
Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence gathered by the evaluation team to support the response and analysis above	<p>The Lead Prosecutor, Makeni Magistrates Court, Dominic Konteh, highlighted the challenges below. These challenges were reiterated by the Rainbo Centre staff, and the FSU.</p> <p>Witness protection: All over the country, there is need to go an extra mile to protect witnesses. There is so much room for interference, most people go and do not return to court, because many are threatened and are forced to seek ‘compromise’ within</p>

	<p>the village. In addition, victims appear in court and are forced to have eye to eye contact with the perpetrators</p> <p>Language barriers: Many survivors come to court without any understanding of Krio. Local people in Makeni, in Bombali district e.g. only speak “Timni”²⁶ while the language of the court is English. Therefore, a lot of time is wasted on one witness. Because there are no formal interpreters prescribed by law, courts use the police. For very particular tribes, it becomes very difficult for the police to support victims, and there is also the risk of inaccurate or ‘weighted’ translation.</p> <p>Remand home for juvenile offenders: Juvenile offenders are not supposed to be taken to prison by law, however there are no remand homes. In Makeni, Bombali district, there is a “gentleman’s” understanding to keep juvenile offenders in police cells.</p>
Conclusions	<p>At the local level, the immediate need for women is access to information and financial resources. It is evident that more information, in conjunction with opportunities to process and internalise that information, leads to increased confidence and a belief that they could reduce violence against women and girls. Being together increases their protection as they start to publicly challenge SGBV. At the same time, , improved incomes not only increases their choices when they are abused, and gives them opportunities to make decisions in their own best interests, it also increases their ability to negotiate for fairer treatment from their spouses, which is protective in itself.</p> <p>Advocacy around the above issues might contribute to an increase in the number of cases that get charged to court and eventually get convicted.</p>
Other	

7.0 Conclusions

Evaluation Criteria	Conclusions
Overall	The most significant success of the project is at the chiefdom level, with the women who now believe in the possibility of a violence free

²⁶ “Timni” is the local language spoken by most people in the Makeni area.

	<p>community and are working to lead those conversations among fellow women and community leaders. Although enormous challenges still keep survivors away from accessing and pursuing justice in the formal system, it is evident that access to information, when provided in a context that supports on-going conversations and dialogue among women around SGBV, and the possibility of changing deeply entrenched cultures and values that are harmful to women and girls, and male abuse of power over women, enables survivors to seek help when facing violence at home or in the community. This help might not be the formal justice system, but seeking help, for most women is the first courageous step towards dreaming of a life free of violence.</p> <p>Justice is more than the formal system. The formal justice system is not the answer, rather it is and should be one piece of a holistic response that addresses the protection needs of women and girls first from systems and structures within their local context.</p>
Effectiveness	<p>The Gender Laws were central to the success of the project. They provided a legal framework that supports the prosecution of SGBV cases. Training on the Gender Laws and referral protocols ensured all stakeholders understood their responsibilities in improving access to justice for women and girls. However, one off training alone is insufficient to create lasting change in attitudes and behavior. Training must be accompanied by on-going support that facilitates dialogue and empowers women to be self-sustaining.</p>
Relevance	<p>The trainings addressed a real need; in igniting the dialogue around SGBV, women had space to reflect on their experiences and to question the cultural narratives and discourses that normalize and justify violence against women. Most women acknowledged they would have never known about their rights, nor had the courage to think, or speak about it, if they had not been taught initially. The foundation was laid by forming women’s groups early; some groups had been formed in 2008, and allowing them the time to foster a sense of solidarity and camaraderie meant that they had the emotional and relational security that made SGBV a subject they could have ongoing conversations about. They could talk about their own experiences and fears of shame and humiliation in an environment of trust. It is this solidarity that women relied on/and continue to rely on, when faced with situations of violence, specifically IPV.</p>
Efficiency	<p>Using minimal resources, the project reached isolated communities, which are hard to reach due to poor infrastructure. The IRC and Timap utilized the good will and political support that they have to implement</p>

	project activities without any interference from local or national authorities.
Sustainability	<p>Despite the impact of the Ebola outbreak on community groups, most groups visited exhibited a high level of social cohesion and a real interest in keeping up with group activities. Besides an interest in SGBV, most women’s groups were making monthly contributions to a self-initiated loaning scheme. It is important to support the groups to sustain the VSLA initiatives.</p> <p>For the FSU, It is critical to institutionalize training by incorporating SGBV into the SLP curriculum to deal with the chronic transfers and new recruits.</p>
Impact	<p>The stories of the women highlighted in this report, reveal increased levels of confidence among women to speak up in public, to seek electoral positions, to seek for help when violated and to support fellow women to access justice, in their context.</p> <p>The women’s groups have become a place where the possibility of justice can be reinforced, where survivors can find immediate support and strength to speak out against SGBV, and where cultural drivers can continue to be challenged. It is the women, becoming a “wall” that stands with and for each other against violence, transforming the wall of violence women face into a wall of advocacy, protection and support.</p>
Knowledge Generation	National level laws are important, but their implementation is detached from the reality of most women and girls in Sierra Leone. It is important to work with structures and organizations within the community that are accessible, and support women’s issues.
Others (if any)	

8.0 Key Recommendations

Evaluation Criteria	Recommendations	Relevant Stakeholders (Recommendation made to whom)	Suggested timeline (if relevant)
Overall	Focus activities at the grassroots community level, on women and where they are seeking justice and feel safe to do so. While the formal justice system is an	IRC and partners	

	<p>ideal component, the majority of survivors continue to find support from fellow women, elders, chiefs and extended family, based on their experiences of being able to ‘wield’ their rights at these levels more safely and with more success. Activities focused on supporting these areas, should be accountable to women, and led and informed by the women, their realities and experiences.</p> <p>In addition, activities should focus on the long term, by supporting women and the structures in the communities that support women, and better enable the ongoing dialogue around the underlying causes of VAWG, how to address them, and how they might foster communities that respect and value women and girls.</p>		
Effectiveness	<p>Instead of developing new laws, support the review and harmonization of existing laws, filtering down to the chieftom level (specifically through the by-laws), and focus on developing a realistic implementation plan that takes into consideration the challenges faced by key partners such as the FSU, MSWGCA and the MoJ in administering formal justice.</p>	<p>IRC and CSO partners</p>	
	<p>Support traditional leaders, to learn how to make, support, and ‘enact’ by-laws that effectively translate the national Gender Laws in ways that are accessible and easy to understand and access for people at the community level.</p> <p>There is evidence that paramount chiefs who believed in reducing violence against women, used their power and authority to facilitate conversations about the possibility of changing deeply entrenched</p>	<p>IRC & CSO partners</p>	

	<p>cultures that perpetuate male abuse power over women, and developed by-laws that addressed SGBV issues in their communities.</p> <p>The traditional chiefdom structures will continue to be central to Sierra Leonean culture. In spite of their challenges, they remain more accessible and continue to play a critical role in women’s pursuit of meaningful and safe(r) justice.</p>		
Relevance	<p>Expand to other communities that have not been reached to support and facilitate grassroots women’s organising and mobilisation around safe spaces; where they can identify and initiate conversations on SGBV and build solidarity with other women, believe in themselves, and in the possibility of a life free from violence. Most WAG’s spoke of the need to form more groups in other communities that have not been reached, to expand the network of safe women-only spaces, where women can develop their critical consciousness, and have the support and backing of their groups to act against violence. This strengthening of women’s connections with each other between communities as well as within the groups is absolutely critical in any justice or SGBV initiative.</p>	UNTF, IRC	
	<p>Training in itself is not enough. Training can only form part of a holistic approach to access to justice and addressing SGBV and women’s empowerment. It is part of the longer-term conversations and strategic, women-centred actions around tackling the underlying causes of SGBV, the social, cultural and structural drivers, and the opportunities in each context to reduce VAWG.</p>	IRC	

	<p>Work with government partners to continue to advocate for free medical care for survivors of SGBV as stipulated by the law. In addition, find creative ways to support health centres provide that service e.g. strengthening a culture of practice within the health structure that provides training and on-going practice mentoring for clinicians on SGBV to enable them better work with survivors, and in the interim, work with partners to provide a medical kit for survivors while advocating for an inclusion of medical support for survivors in hospital budgets. In addition, due to the small number of trained doctors in Sierra Leone, there should be continued advocacy for medical certificates to be signed by other health care professionals other than a medical doctor.</p>	IRC	
Efficiency	<p>Equip staff to support and monitor communities where services are hard to reach; and conversely ensure that support services for survivors become more accessible to communities, especially women and girls.</p>		
Sustainability	<p>Strengthening women's economic position at the family level, increases her negotiating power and reduces her vulnerability to violence. It is critical to support economic empowerment activities for the women groups, by building on existing initiatives, such as the IRC's EA\$E program which has facilitated the formation of VSLA groups in various districts across Sierra Leone. In addition, support urgent financial and material needs for women groups in areas that were highly impacted by Ebola.</p>	UNTF, IRC	
	<p>Determine a sustainable way of supporting the FSU to follow up and investigate cases. The IRC could partner</p>	IRC	

	<p>with other organisations, to ensure the FSU has adequate and appropriate mobility; but the priority should be internal advocacy with the wider SLP and SL Govt. to ensure the FSU has the resources and capacity it needs to function. To avoid the reinforcement of the view that the FSU is the “NGO police”, the IRC can engage other key leaders within the SLP to understand underlying issues affecting budgetary allocations to the FSU.</p>		
<p>Impact</p>	<p>Keep a keen focus on the women and girls and what continues to make sense in their context and how that might change with time.</p> <p>The project had a heavy focus on national and structural level interventions such as the development of the Gender Laws and the implementation of the SOP, without much systemic changes. The role of the FSU in improving access to timely and fairly justice for women in the formal sector cannot be overemphasized. It is important to work with the FSU to identify the most critical challenges it is facing and advocate at both local and national level for ways to mitigate them. It is important to support them to establish and strengthen a culture of practice with the whole FSU system and structure that institutionalizes knowledge and understanding of protection, SGBV and appropriate responses, and promotes positive and supportive attitudes and behaviours towards women and girls survivors of violence across the unit at all levels. A separate assessment, led and informed by women and girls themselves, should be done to confirm and determine</p>	<p>UNTF, IRC</p>	

	<p>the most appropriate responses, and ways to promote that positive, understanding and supportive culture of practice, that keep women and girl’s safety, dignity and protection at the centre.</p> <p>While the laws are a critical part of promoting access to justice, building a judicial system that is equipped to provide justice for women and girls, will take a much longer term.</p> <p>It is at the community level, with the women’s groups, where there was most notable success. This was mainly due to the fact that the “fertile” ground had been sown by previous work, forming women’s groups that at the time of training, were open to have conversations around SGBV.</p> <p>Such groups, allow women to hear and engage with individual experiences with SGBV, family and cultural barriers that women continue to face and for the first time, where women can start thinking of the possibility of reducing VAWG in their communities.</p> <p>It these women’s groups that survivors turn to, and find accessible and meaningful in their context.</p> <p>It is these women’s voices that must continue to guide programming from the outset. Future work should facilitate ongoing conversations among women that dig into the complex and multi-layered issues around access to justice for women and girls, strengthens systems and structures in the communities, and support and develop a movement(s) and network(s) of community and other</p>		
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	<p>women who understand their rights and work with and for each other to access those rights in their context.</p> <p>The women's groups should be strengthened, expanded and supported to reach more women in more communities.</p>		
Knowledge Generation	<p>Work with the women to follow up, document and share individual and group stories of change. These stories will serve as a reminder to all stakeholders of what matters for women and girls in terms of protection, where survivors continue to seek help, and the possibility of improving access to justice, in their context, based on their realities.</p> <p>As confirmed by previous research done by the IRC²⁷, women reinforced the need to focus at the community level rather than assuming the formal legal systems will be enough to bring about change. Learning should focus on understanding the context that women and girls continue to live in and how that influences their choices of "justice".</p>	IRC	
Others (if any)			

²⁷ International Rescue Committee, "Let Me Not Die Before My Time", 2012

9.0 Annexes

9.1 Annex 1: Final Version of Terms of Reference (TOR) of the evaluation

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.1 Description of the Project that is being evaluated:

Name of Project: *Let's Promote Justice for Our Women and Girls of Sierra Leone*

Name of Organization: International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Sierra Leone

Project Start Date: 01st December 2014

Project End Date: 30th November 2014

Current Project Implementation Status: The project was completed on 30th November, 2014. Due to the considerable constraints faced under this project due to the Ebola crisis, the external evaluation was postponed until the situation had improved to enable to an evaluation to take place.

Specific forms of violence addressed by the project:

Intimate Partner Violence: This project seeks to reduce barriers and improve access to justice for survivors of intimate partner violence.

Sexual violence by non-partners (rape / sexual assault): This project seeks to reduce barriers and improve access to justice for survivors of sexual violence by non-partners.

Overall Goal of the Project: Survivors of sexual and/or domestic violence will have improved access to effective and timely justice mechanisms in the formal justice system, thereby improving their options for holding perpetrators accountable for their crimes in five districts of Sierra Leone.

Targeted Primary and Secondary Beneficiaries:

Primary Beneficiaries comprise women/girl survivors of violence (of the types previously mentioned), who will benefit from an improved response and service delivery system.

Secondary Beneficiaries comprise all women and girls of Sierra Leone (with a focus on the five targeted districts) who will benefit from a change in attitudes around violence against women: reduced tolerance and more public support for survivors of such crimes to pursue justice and receive appropriate services. Secondary beneficiaries may also include national and local leaders, key stakeholders, and service providers who will benefit from an increased capacity to provide an appropriate response and services.

Strategy and Results Chain of the Project:

The project seeks to improve access to justice for survivors of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence through the formal justice system, and by strengthening links between the formal and informal

justice systems. The project seeks to improve access to justice through four key components, with some are focused on the national level and others are focused on the five districts targeted for this project:

- Strengthening national legislation and its application / enforcement
- Improving the links between the informal/customary and formal justice systems by training and mentoring chiefs and local authorities in five districts to implement their roles and responsibilities.
- Increasing public understanding of the relevant legislation in five districts through a range of community education activities, training activities, and radio programs.
- Strengthening response, coordination, and service delivery of key service providers and agencies in five districts, including the Sierra Leone Police.

The project covers five districts of Sierra Leone: The IRC implements activities directly in Kenema, Kono, and Kailahun districts, while the IRC's implementing partner in this project, Timap for Justice, implements project activities in Bombali and Tonkolili Districts (and paralegal services in all of the 5 districts).

There are four (4) Objectives or Intended Outcomes of this Project:

Objective One: The Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs advocates for the passage of new legislation to combat violence against women and girls, and mobilizes interagency efforts to develop and/or revise a Strategic Rollout Plan for each piece of legislation.

Key Outputs:

- The Sexual Offences Bill is finalized and passed into law by national parliament.
- The Matrimonial Causes Bill is finalized and passed into law by national parliament.
- A roll out plan for each piece of legislation is developed, validated, and launched.
- The national roll-out plan is adapted by each of 5 districts into a district level implementation plan.
- IRC Activities under this objective have included the provision of training, consultation meetings, workshops to develop draft plans, technical and financial support for advocacy activities, and printing of documents.

Objective Two: Key administrative and traditional leaders at the District and Chiefdom levels in five districts demonstrate an understanding of their responsibilities under the Gender and Sexual Offences Laws, and strengthen the connections between the customary and formal justice systems in responding to incidents of sexual or domestic violence.

Key Outputs:

- Administrative and traditional leaders in five districts demonstrate an improved understanding of the Gender Laws, Sexual Offences Law, and their roles and responsibilities under each law.
- Traditional leaders in 5 districts increase the links between customary and formal justice practices by referring at least 50% of all sexual and aggravated domestic violence cases to the police.
- IRC Activities under this objective have included the provision of training for 180 administrative and traditional leaders across five districts on GBV concepts, the Gender Laws, Sexual Offences Law, and the National Referral Protocols. Following the trainings, the IRC has provided basic documentation tools for the leaders, conducted follow up visits and convened experience-sharing meetings.

Objective Three: The capacity of local CSOs and Women's organizations in five districts is strengthened to provide education on the Gender Laws and Sexual Offences Law to local communities in their districts.

Key Outputs:

- Members of at least 5 local civil society organizations demonstrate an understanding of the Gender Laws, Sexual Offences Law, National Referral Protocols, and basic GBV concepts.
- The trained CSOs conduct community education activities on the above topics in at least three target communities across the 5 districts, using locally adapted community dialogue approaches.
- Timap for Justice (Timap) demonstrates basic capacity to integrate gender focused and survivor-centered services into their normal paralegal services.
- IRC Activities under this objective have included identifying three civil society organizations (the other two were recruited by Timap). Training was provided to 4-5 members of each CSO on the above mentioned topics, and each CSO was given a small grant to conduct community education activities. Training was provided to all Timap paralegals on basic gender and GBV issues, and principles of engaging with survivors.

Objective Four: Police, justice sector personnel and other direct service providers demonstrate an increased capacity to effectively apply the existing national standards for responding to incidents of sexual or domestic violence that are reported to their respective agencies in five districts.

Key Outputs:

- The Standard Operational Procedures for the Sierra Leone Police in responding to sexual and domestic violence crimes is completed and launched; at least 300 police nationwide are trained.
- A monitoring framework for assessing compliance with the SOP is agreed and rolled out.
- The National Referral Protocols are disseminated to key service providers in three districts, with a gradual increase in cross-referrals.
- Activities under this objective have included the launch of the SOP in 2012 and its revision in 2013 to include the 2012 Sexual Offences Law; co-facilitation of trainings with SLP personnel; technical support for developing the monitoring framework; and training for service providers on the National Referral Protocols.

Geographic Context

This project is implemented in Sierra Leone, at the national level and in **five (5) districts: Kenema, Kono, Kailahun, Bombali, and Tonkolili**. Some components are focused on national legislation, policy and practice, while other components are focused on district level structures for responding to GBV issues and providing justices. One component is focused on specific targeted communities in each of the five targeted district.

Total Resources Allocated for this Project

Total Budget from UN Trust Fund = \$750,000 (Seven Hundred and Fifty Thousand US Dollars)
Matching Contribution from the IRC = \$17,908 (Seventeen Thousand Nine Hundred and Eight US Dollars); this includes funding from other donor sources, such as Novo Foundation and Irish Aid.
Total Budget = \$922,908 (Nine Hundred and Twenty-Two Thousand Nine Hundred and Eight Dollars)

Key Partners involved in the Project:

Implementing Partners:

- Timap for Justice: implementing key activities under Objectives two and three, through a sub-grant.
- Three local civil society organizations (through mini-grants):
- Women's Empowerment Association for Progress (WEAP)
- Women in Need of Development (WIND)
- Movement for Resettlement and Development (MoRRD)

Other Implementing Partners and Key Stakeholders

- Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA) at national and district level
- Sierra Leone Police (including the Family Support Unit (FSU) but not limited to the FSU)
- Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Magistrate/High Courts, Local Courts
- District Councils and other local authorities
- Paramount, section, and town chiefs and other traditional authorities

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

2.1 Why the Evaluation needs to be done:

This is a mandatory final project evaluation required by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women. In addition, the evaluation will provide an understanding of the extent to which the project objectives were achieved, and will take into consideration the impact that the Ebola crisis has on the project, its outcomes and other areas; the effectiveness of the project methodology; and lessons learned to inform future programming.

2.2 How the Evaluation Results will be used, by whom, and when:

The evaluation results will be used by the IRC to improve its future programming approaches in the area of addressing violence against women, building on what approaches achieved results and modifying those that were less effective. Evaluation results will be used to influence IRC's programming in other sectors as well. Results will be shared with key stakeholders including government agencies and implementing partners in the project, and with other organizations and agencies involved in programming to address violence against women. Results will contribute to advocacy focusing on legislation, policy, and services.

2.3 What decisions will be taken after the evaluation is completed?

This will depend on the results of the evaluation, but decisions to adapt and modify the IRC's programming in line with some of the key evaluation findings (and included in future program strategies and proposals), will be the most critical.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

3.1 Scope of Evaluation

Timeframe: The evaluation will cover the entire project duration, 01st December 2011 – 30th November 2014 (or as close as possible, depending on the date of the evaluation).

Geographical Coverage: The evaluation will cover project interventions at national level (in Freetown) and in at least three (3) districts: two where IRC is implementing directly, and one where the partner, Timap, is implementing activities.

Target Groups to be Covered: This evaluation will cover the targeted beneficiaries (survivors of violence and women/girls in general) in the above-mentioned areas. The evaluation will also cover key stakeholders participating in the project (such as government agencies, traditional leaders, community leaders, and other service providers).

3.2 Objectives of Evaluation

The overall objectives of this evaluation are to:

- To evaluate the entire project in terms of effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, with a strong focus on assessing results at the outcome and project goals.
- To generate lessons learned and identify promising practices for learning, both in Sierra Leone and in similar contexts.
- To identify strategies and approaches that were less effective and suggest possible modifications or alternative strategies that can be more effective.
- To evaluate how the different levels of project interventions (national, district, and community) complemented and enhanced each other (or in what ways they did not).

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Important to note: While there is no specific mention of Ebola within the questions outlined below, it will be factored in as a critical part of the context to take into consideration as part of the questions asked and the information sought after and received.

Evaluation Criteria	Mandatory Evaluation Questions
Effectiveness	<p><i>To what extent were the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs achieved and how?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent did the project reach the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal and outcome levels? How many beneficiaries have been reached?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent has this project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted (and untargeted) women and girls in relation to the specific forms of violence addressed by this project? Why? What are the key changes in the lives of those women and/or girls? Please describe those changes.</i></p> <p><i>Which interventions were less effective than planned, and how might they be adapted or changed to improve their effectiveness?</i></p> <p><i>What internal and external factors contributed to the achievement and/or failure of the intended project goal, outcomes and outputs? How?</i></p> <p>Additional questions for interventions focusing at the policy level</p>

	<i>To what extent was the project successful in advocating for legal or policy change? If it was not successful, explain why. In case the project was successful in setting up new policies and/or laws, is the legal or policy change likely to be institutionalized and sustained?</i>
Relevance	<i>To what extent was the project strategy and activities implemented relevant in responding to the needs and priorities of women and girls? To what extent do achieved results (project goal, outcomes and outputs) continue to be relevant to the needs of women and girls?</i>
Efficiency	<i>How efficiently and timely has this project been implemented and managed in accordance with the Project Document?</i>
Sustainability	<i>How are the achieved results, especially the positive changes generated by the project in the lives of women and girls at the project goal level, going to be sustained after this project ends?</i>
Impact	<i>What are the unintended consequences (positive and negative) resulted from the project?</i>
Knowledge Generation	<i>What are the key lessons learned that can be shared with other practitioners on Ending Violence against Women and Girls? Are there any promising practices? If yes, what are they and how can these promising practices be replicated in other projects and/or in other countries? Which lessons learned can contribute to advocacy and influencing efforts at the national, regional, or international levels?</i>

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach to this evaluation will be underpinned by empowerment and feminist based-approaches²⁸ - Where participants, including beneficiaries and stakeholders, are directly involved in the evaluation process itself and take lead in defining their own experiences of participation and in the evaluation process itself through basic capacity development; and where the process prioritizes the experiences, voices and priorities of women and girls, and measures progress within the context of deeply entrenched gender inequalities and social injustice, and analyses where and why transformation, change and/or backlash²⁹ has occurred.

Evaluation Design:

The evaluation will include a mix of quantitative (primarily) and qualitative (where possible) methods, including reviews of existing data; interviews with service users (GBV survivors); interviews with service providers and key stakeholders; focus group discussions with communities. It will largely be grounded on a post-test only without comparison group design, due to time and resource constraints. There will be

²⁸ UN Women, *Evaluation Manual*, p.31 source:

http://www.unifem.org/evaluation_manual/unifem.org/evaluation_manual/wp-content/uploads/evaluation_manual.pdf

²⁹ Batliwala, S., Pittman, A., *Capturing Change in Women's Realities*, Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), December 2010

some reference to the baseline that was used for this project, the Access to Justice Study that Caroline Roseveare conducted in November 2011. However, while this study produced some very rich qualitative information, quantitative data was nearly impossible to obtain, for reasons given in the study. It may not be possible within the scope of this evaluation, but if it becomes possible, the IRC would work with the Evaluator to access communities where the project (or any other project) did not intervene, to enable some comparison on their level of knowledge of the Gender Laws, etc. Whether this will be feasible will be decided when the final evaluation design and methods and field visit schedule are finalized with the Evaluator, and whether the context (Ebola) will allow.

Data Sources: To include the following primary and secondary sources-

Focus group discussions with community members (men and women separately) in those communities that were targeted for training and/or education activities.

- Case studies, most significant change stories, and key informant interviews conducted using the appreciative enquiry approach
- Interviews with other NGOs providing GBV services
- Interviews with local and traditional leaders (those who were trained)
- Interviews with service users (police, health, Rainbo Centers, etc.) – in line with informed consent procedures.
- Interviews with key government agencies: MSWGCA, SLP-FSU, MoHS, Local Courts, Justice Sector Coordinating Unit, Prosecutors; Judiciary
- Sierra Leone Police / Family Support Unit Data
- Court Records (Magistrate and High Courts)
- District level and national GBV coordination meeting reports
- A quick survey or sampling of community members on their level of knowledge/understanding of the Gender Laws, Sexual Offences Law, National Referral Protocols

Proposed sampling methods: The evaluation will employ a mixture of sampling methods, combining both qualitative and quantitative data; non-random sampling where the population will be defined as the target groups (as above) only - a broader total population catchment and data collection will not be feasible within the scope, timeframe and cost of this evaluation; non-random sampling (such as quota and convenience) will be primarily used.

The final list of data sources and sampling methods to be used will be finalized with the Evaluator and Evaluation Task Manager prior to the technical mission and completing the agenda for this, and will be responsive to the context.

Field Visits: It is suggested that data is collected at Freetown level and in at least three districts: one where Timap is implementing the project and two where the IRC is implementing the project. Field visits would include data collection (as described above) at the district and community levels. The field visits will be led by the Evaluator with support from the field support team (as described above).

EVALUATION ETHICS

The evaluation must be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation' <http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines>.

It is imperative for the evaluator(s) to:

- Guarantee the safety of respondents and the research team.
- Apply protocols to obtain informed consent of the respondents and options for discontinuing the process at any time
- Apply protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of respondents.
- Select and train the research team on ethical issues.
- Provide referrals to local services and sources of support for women that might ask for them.
- Ensure compliance with legal codes governing areas such as provisions to collect and report data, particularly permissions needed to interview or obtain information about children and youth.
- Store securely the collected information.

The evaluator(s) must consult with the relevant documents prior to development and finalization of data collection methods and instruments. The key documents include (but not limited to) the following:

- World Health Organization (2003). *Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women*. www.who.int/gender/documents/violence/who_fch_gwh_01.1/en/index.html
- Jewkes, R., E. Dartnall and Y. Sikweyiya (2012). *Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on the Perpetration of Sexual Violence*. Sexual Violence Research Initiative. Pretoria, South Africa, Medical Research Council. Available from www.svri.org/EthicalRecommendations.pdf
- Researching violence against women: A practical guide for researchers and activists November 2005
- http://www.path.org/publications/files/GBV_rvaw_complete.pdf
- World Health Organization (WHO), 'Ethical and safety recommendations for researching documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies' 2007, http://www.who.int/gender/documents/OMS_Ethics&Safety10Aug07.pdf

KEY DELIVERABLES OF EVALUATORS AND TIMEFRAME

	Deliverables	Description of Expected Deliverables	Timeline of each deliverable (date/month/year)
1	Draft evaluation report Language of Report: English	The Evaluator must submit draft report for review and comments. The grantee and key stakeholders in the evaluation must review the draft evaluation report to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria.	Within one week of completing the evaluation technical mission for data.
2	Final evaluation report	Relevant comments from key stakeholders must be well integrated in the final version.	Within 1 ½ weeks after the

	Language of Report: English	The final report must be disseminated widely to the relevant stakeholders and the general public.	submission of the draft report
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EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION AND REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

8.1. Evaluation Staff Composition and Roles and Responsibilities

There will be **one (1) international consultant** who will take on the project Evaluator position.

The Evaluator will be responsible for: undertaking the evaluation from start to finish; managing the evaluation team under the supervision of the Evaluation Task Manager from the IRC; data collection and analysis; and report drafting and finalization.

Evaluator Requirements

- Must have at least 3 years’ total experience in conducting external evaluations, with mixed-methods evaluation skills and preferably in a West African setting or similar.
- Must have experience and flexibility in using non-traditional and innovative evaluation methods.
- Specific evaluation experiences in the areas of ending violence against women and girls
- Expertise in gender and human-rights based approaches to evaluation and issues of violence against women and girls
- In-depth knowledge and understanding of survivor-centred, feminist, rights-based principles and women’s protection and empowerment and gender equality.
- Must have experience or understanding of the sensitivities involved in interviewing or collecting information from survivors of violence.
- Experience in collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data.
- A strong commitment to delivering timely and high-quality results, i.e. credible evaluation and a report that can be used by the grantee organization and by others.
- A strong team leadership and management track record, as well as interpersonal and communication skills to help ensure that the evaluation is understood and used.
- Ability to communicate effectively with various stakeholders at all levels, and to express ideas and concepts concisely and clearly
- Patience and flexibility in working in an environment with logistical and operational challenges.
- Experience and knowledge: in-depth knowledge of West Africa, preferably Sierra Leone.
- Language proficiency: fluency in English is mandatory; good command of Crio is helpful.

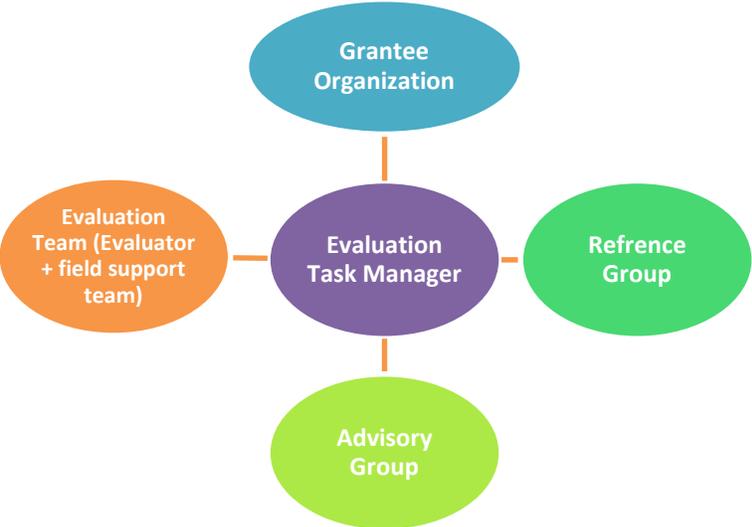
Technical mission and data collection field support team: This will consist of a team who will provide data collection support to the Evaluator to best ensure coverage and reach of the tasks to be completed over the 20 day duration of the mission, access to the communities to be engaged with as part of the evaluation.

This team will include individuals who were not previously directly involved into this project, such as staff from: the IRC, local partners (Timap) and others who IRC works with (MUWODA, CHIDO, etc.) and MSWGCA personnel.

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT OF THE EVALUATION

Name of Group	Role and responsibilities	Actual name of staff responsible
Evaluation Staff	External evaluator to conduct an external evaluation based on the contractual agreement and the Terms of Reference, and under the day-to-day supervision of the Evaluation Task Manager.	External evaluator
	The field support team will provide data collection support to the Evaluator during their technical mission	Field support team, supported by the WPE Coordinator.
Evaluation Task Manager	Someone from the grantee organization, such as project manager and/or M&E officer to manage the entire evaluation process under the overall guidance of the senior management, to: lead development and finalization of the evaluation TOR in consultation with key stakeholders and the senior management; manage recruitment of the external evaluators; lead the collection of the key documents and data to be share with the evaluators at the beginning of the inception stage; liaise and coordinate with the evaluation team, the reference group, commissioning organization and advisory group throughout the process to ensure effective communication and collaboration; provide administrative and technical support to the evaluation team; work closely with the evaluation team throughout the evaluation; lead the dissemination of the report and follow-up activities after finalization of the report	Women’s Protection and Empowerment (WPE) Coordinator
Commissioning Organization	Senior management of the organization who commissions the evaluation (grantee) – responsible for: 1) allocating adequate human and financial resources for the evaluation; 2) guiding the evaluation manager; 3) preparing responses to the recommendations generated by the evaluation.	Senior Management of Grantee Organization: Saffea Senessie, IRC Sierra Leone Country Director
Reference Group	Include primary and secondary beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders of the project who provide necessary information to the evaluation team and to review the draft report for quality assurance	Timap for Justice, MSWGCA, Sierra Leone Police, representatives from District /local/traditional leaders;

		representatives (2) from community women’s groups; client representative
Advisory Group	Must include a focal point from the UN Women Regional Office and the UN Trust Fund Portfolio Manager	UN Trust Fund Portfolio Manager: Veronica Alicia Zebadua Yanez UN Women Country Office Representative in SL: Mary Okumu



TIMELINE OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Stage of Evaluation	Key Task	Responsible	Number of working days required	Timeframe
Preparation stage	Evaluation preparation – Prepare and finalize the TOR with key stakeholders; Compiling key documents and existing data; hiring of external evaluator	Evaluation task manager	1 month, 7 days	1 st April – 7 th May
	Briefings of evaluator to orient the evaluator	Evaluation task manager	1	8 th May
	Review of key documents	Evaluator (distance)	2	11 th – 12 th May
	Evaluator comes in-country			
	Finalizing the evaluation design and methods based on TOR	Evaluator w/support from Evaluation Task Team manager	2	15 th – 16 th May

Data collection and analysis stage	Desk research	Evaluator	3	18 th – 20 th May
	Technical mission for data collection (visits to field, interviews, questionnaires, etc.) with a field support team from IRC and partners	Evaluator(s)	20	21 st May – 10 th June
Synthesis and reporting stage	Analysis and interpretation of findings and preparing a draft report and sending out	Evaluator	6	11 th – 16 th June
	Review of the draft report with key stakeholders for quality assurance	Evaluation task manager; IRC HQ; Reference group (stakeholders, partners); Advisory group (UNTF/UN Women)	3	17 th – 19 th June
	Consolidate comments from all the groups and submit the consolidated comments to evaluation team	Evaluation task manager	1	20 th June
	Incorporating comments and revising the evaluation report + submission of the final report	Evaluator	4	21 st – 24 th June
	Final review and approval of report	Evaluation Task Manager; Reference Group; Commissioning Organization Senior Management; and Advisory Group	4	25 th – 28 th June
Submission and Dissemination	Submitting to UNTF	Evaluation task manager / HQ	30th June	
	Publishing and Distributing the final report to wider stakeholders	Evaluation task manager	ongoing	

BUDGET

The total budget for this evaluation is **USD \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand US Dollars)**.

9.2 Annex 2: List of Communities Visited

KAILAHUN DISTRICT					
No	Communities Visited	Chiefdom	Number of Men	Number of Women	Date
1	Kailahun	Luawa	3	10	3 & 7/6/15
2	Buedu	Kissi Tongi	7	20	4/6/15
3	Koindu	Kissi Teng	3	21	5/6/15
4	Levuma	Mandu	0	7	6/6/15
5	Pendembu	Upper Bambara	3	14	6/6/15
KONO DISTRICT					
6	Kangama	Gorama	7	20	8/6/15
7	Ngaiya	Nimikoro	3	20	9/6/15
8	Yengema	Joe Town	4	2	9/6/15
9	Motema	Nimikoro	2	0	10/6/15
10	Koidu	Tankoro	7	13	10/6/15
11	Mansuduwa	Sandor	8	26	11/6/15
12	Kainkordu	Sowa	7	29	12/6/15
13	Waima	Fiama	4	14	13/6/15
BOMBALI DISTRICT					
14	Makeni	Baishebora	4	7	15/6
15	Binkoro	Sankoro Limba	2	0	15/6/15
16	Makari	Gbanti	0	14	15/6/15
17	Mafonkay	Makrie Gbanti	0	8	15/6/15
18	Masimra	Makrie Gbanti	0	8	16/6/15
19	Matotoka	Teneh	0	5	17/6/15
20	Magburoka	Kohlshrowa	1	4	17/6/15
KENEMA DISTRICT					
21	Tongo Field	Lower Bambara	1	23	23/6/15
22	Blama	Small Bo	0	9	24/6/15
23	Mateo	Small Bo	0	8	24/06/15
24	Levuma	Kappiam	1	0	24/06/2015
25	Kenema	Kenema district	2	7	24/06/2015
	TOTAL		69	289	Total =307 participants

9.3 National Level Interviews

No	Name	Sex	Position	Organization
1	Simeon Koroma	M	Executive Director Timap for Justice	Timap for Justice
2	Spt. Mira Koroma	F	Superintendent of the FSU	Sierra Leone Police- FSU
3	Kadiatu Bachalle Tayler	F	Former Project Manager	N/A

9.4 List of IRC Women’s Empowerment Program Staff consulted

1	Theresa Finda James	F	GBV Site Manager	Kailahun Field Office
2	Hawa Demson	F	Community Engagement Officer	Kailahun Field Office
3	Mariama Sengu	F	Community Engagement Officer	Kailahun Field Office
4	Dominic Boima	M	GBV Site Manager	Kono Field Office
5	Brima Yorpoi	M	Community Engagement Officer	Kono Field Office
6	Mahmoud Mansaray	M	Community Engagement Officer	Kono Field Office
7	Theresa Jalloh	M	Community Engagement Officer	Kono Field Office
8	Joseph Lahai	M	Community Engagement Officer	Kono Field Office
9	Amy Greenbank	F	Program Coordinator- Women’s Protection and Empowerment Program	Freetown- Country Office

9.5 Annex 3: List of Documents Reviewed

No	Title of book, report/publication
1	Access to Justice Baseline Study, Caroline Rooseveare
2	Activity Reports
3	Compendium of the Gender Laws in Sierra Leone
4	Executive Summary to Report of Sierra Leone Access to Justice for Survivors of Sexual and Domestic Violence, September 2012
5	National Referral Protocol on Gender Based Violence, Pathways to Service Provision for victims /survivors of GBV
6	National Gender Strategy Plan, 2012
7	Let Me Not Die Before My Time, 2012 IRC Case Study
8	Project Proposal; <i>Lets Promote Justice for Our Women and Girls of Sierra Leone</i>
9	Project Logical framework; <i>Lets Promote Justice for Our Women and Girls of Sierra Leone</i>
10	Project Final Activity Report
11	Project Final Narrative Report
12	The Sexual Offences Act, 2012

9.6 Annex 4: Additional Evaluation Questions

In addition to the mandatory evaluation questions, the evaluator developed a set of questions to guide the conversations with the women's groups.

Values (These questions would explore what they consider valuable about their experiences, culture and what they've learned through the life of the project)

- What are you most proud of as a woman, or a group (check to hear what they value about the group- is it helpful?)
- Over the last three years, is there anything that has happened that supports the protection of women and girls in your community? What about at the national level? (Probe to check if they know about national laws that have been passed and how those have been helpful, and if FSU's are mentioned as important)
- What do you know now that you consider valuable to you as a woman? Why? How did you learn it? (Probe to see if they know more about their rights and this is attributed to the project)
- What challenges have you overcome as an individual or group?
- How different is what you know now compared to 8 years ago? (Listen to hear if they mention their confidence in seeking justice, if they know the existing laws, if they mention the roles of the different state and community actors)
- If you were to pick one thing in your culture that helps to protect women and girls, what would that be?

What is the reality for women now?

- Is there a time when you've ever felt safe as a woman in your village (where, why, when, how, what time? Has that changed from three years ago? (Explore to check if certain times and

places were safe pre-Ebola and are now considered unsafe, or if women have any faith in the justice system)

- On a scale of 1-10 where would you rank the situation of women and girls now compared to three years ago? Explore what, why, when, who- (Listen to check if the Ebola outbreak is mentioned as a factor for increased risk for women). What new risks if any are emerging as a result of Ebola?
- If I lived here what advice would you give me to protect myself from violence? What forms of violence would I have to be aware of? Where? Would you have given me the same advice three years ago?
- What advice would you give me if I were a victim of violence (check if they are aware of how and where to refer, what support systems they would rely on, if they are confident in the justice system or what alternative forms of justice they'd rather recommend).
- What continues to give you hope about the protection of women against violence-
- Tell me your story- why are you still doing what you do? What continues to inspire you? (Check if there is there a story of a woman in the community or elsewhere that inspires them; Check if any women have been confident to seek justice, and what forms of justice they've sought)

What would access to justice look like for women and girls in their communities? What are their hopes for the future? What would they want done, or changed?

- Imagine a time in the future where women and girls in your community are safe and protected. Is that possible? Why?
- Imagine a time when women and girls have access to timely and fair justice. Is that possible? What would that look like? Who is doing what, where?
- What would need to happen for justice to be a reality for women and girls? What would you need to do? Who else has an important role to play? What would they do?
- What would you do as women? What would the men do? What would the chiefs do? What would the police do?
- What requires immediate attention?
- What challenges would we need to overcome to achieve timely and fair justice for women and girls
- Imagine you are in charge of ensuring women and girls access fair and timely justice? What would you do differently?