



**PROVISION FOR POST PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
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EVALUATION REPORT



UDF-SIL-11-425 – Initiative to Build Social Movements in Sierra Leone

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report. All errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

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Map of Sierra Leone (©UN) – the project had a national scope; many activities took place outside the capital Freetown, particularly in the Eastern and Southern provinces (Kenema and Bo)

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(i) Project data

This report is the evaluation of the project “Initiative to build social movements in Sierra Leone”, implemented from October 2012 to August 2015 inclusive (including an 11-months no-cost extension) by the Sierra Leonean non-governmental organization (NGO) Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD). The project’s operational budget was US\$199,500.

According to the project document, its main objective was to “strengthen national civil society platforms to become more organized, cohesive, confident and effective in engaging power holders with the aim of bringing about social change in their communities”. The project’s expected outcomes were:

- “Well coordinated, cohesive and properly managed civil society platforms that are inclusive and gender sensitive”;
- “Visionary, committed and confident leadership that is steering these platforms and keeping them functional”;
- A capacity building program in place that facilitates the strengthening and sustained engagement of the civil society platforms”.

The project involved activities such as training on conflict transformation and organizational management skills; consultations within and amongst existing coordination platforms of civil society organizations (CSOs), as well as facilitated strategy sessions and retreats, and public meetings aimed at engaging with political decision-makers at national and provincial levels. The project, originally planned to last 24 months from 1st October 2012, was eventually implemented over 35 months, ending 31st August 2015, mainly as a result of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak and subsequent crisis which struck Sierra Leone in early 2014.

(ii) Evaluation findings

The project was **relevant**, in that it correctly identified the need for improved coordination and enhanced capacity within and amongst Sierra Leone civil society platforms. It was also relevant in that the training approach that was at the core of the project was well designed and met identified needs. Nevertheless, the project presented significant design weaknesses:

- It lacked a sufficient analysis of the challenges to coordination among civil society and of CSOs’ views about the role of platforms;
- It did not include provisions to follow up the planned training with support for platforms, coaching for managers or encouragement of joint advocacy activities. However, the resources provided by the grant may have been too limited to make this possible.

While CSOs and platforms welcomed the training process designed by NMJD, they were not necessarily ready to follow it up with practical implementation, if this required additional resources. For the same reasons, the enhancement of platform and CSO leaders’ management skills did not necessarily result in additional advocacy activities. The evaluators take the view that the project’s relevance could have been enhanced, by providing incentives for platforms to develop joint advocacy or campaigns.

The project was **effective** at activity level in that it implemented – Ebola notwithstanding, and with delays attributable in part to that crisis – the great majority of planned activities. At outcome level, the project only partially achieved two of the three planned outcomes, and much remains to be done to achieve the third. The baseline “profiling” research and consultations and the training sessions, which formed the great bulk of the project’s activities, were implemented to an appropriate standard. Another positive point was that many activities with a national scope, including training sessions and consultative meetings, were held in Kenema and Bo (capitals of the Eastern and Southern provinces respectively), thus enhancing the participation by, and the visibility of, local CSOs, and reinforcing the exposure of Freetown-based platform leaders to the constraints faced by their local constituents.

The key limitation to the effectiveness of the project was the lack of follow-up of training and consultations: skills acquired during training and decisions made during consultative meetings were not sufficiently implemented by participants. This was due in part to the lack of capacity within NMJD to support stakeholders, and to the lack of funding for follow-up activities.

The project was relatively **efficient**, in the sense that financial resources were mostly used as originally planned, despite the disruption caused by the EVD crisis and the resulting 11-months no-cost extension of the project implementation period. The project was also efficient in the sense that it reached a critical mass of NGO leaders, through training sessions and consultation meetings bringing together hundreds of activists, from the grassroots to the national level. Project management was appropriate, in that the NMJD team dealt adequately with the challenges posed by project implementation – including the substantial disruption caused by the EVD epidemic. Nevertheless, the project suffered somewhat from understaffing at management level, in that there was insufficient management capacity to monitor project report comprehensively, and particularly to undertake a redesign to include engagement in advocacy as part of the project.

The project achieved elements of **impact**, in that some participants in training underwent an attitude change, understanding the importance of strategic thinking, institutional development and joint work among CSOs. Similarly, some participants told the evaluators that the profiling report (issued in March 2013 as one of the first outputs of the project) “opened [their] eyes” about the real state of effectiveness of existing platforms and the extensive need for dedicated work to reinforce civil society coordination structures. In the evaluators’ view, the project could have achieved more impact by supporting advocacy engagements by platforms on issues identified during the training sessions. Funds could have been set aside for this purpose, which would have provided platform managers with an incentive to develop and implement strategies for engagement with relevant decision-makers. As it was, the platform leaders who became aware of needs and opportunities for advocacy were often unable to address these, due to lack of resources.

The project’s **sustainability** was relatively weak, mainly because of the very fragile state of the civil society movement in Sierra Leone – a situation that is outside the control of the project implementer. In principle, the training provided by NMJD could have been instrumental in helping the platforms, and the civil society movement as a whole, to become more resilient – better able to withstand pressure and to become more entrenched – as a result of improved management, greater organizational capacity, improved project design and management capacity, better coordination among member CSOs, etc. However, those improvements to civil society resilience that did happen were relatively limited.

(iii) Conclusions

- ***The project addressed an important need to build capacity among platform managers.***
- ***The project's approach was innovative.***
- ***The project lacked adequate follow-up to training.***
- ***Many activities were effectively implemented, despite the Ebola crisis.***
- ***There were shortfalls in the achievement of outcomes.***
- ***The project reached a critical mass of platform leaders, thus contributing to added value.***
- ***The project was under-managed because its management team was too small to address all the necessary tasks.***
- ***The project contributed to attitude changes among platform managers.***

(iv) Recommendations

- ***NMJD should continue working with platforms to enhance their performance.***
- ***NMJD should implement its next phase approach, with a greater focus on the provincial/district level.***
- ***NMJD should maintain its innovative approach of debating capacity-building issues across platforms.***
- ***NMJD should ensure its training follow-up is adequately resourced.***
- ***NMJD should consider adding to its project template activities such as coaching for platform managers, and a small grants mechanism.***
- ***NMJD should consider working directly with platforms on the design and implementation of advocacy campaigns.***

II. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

(i) The project and evaluation objectives

This report is the evaluation of the project “Initiative to build social movements in Sierra Leone”, implemented from October 2012 to August 2015 inclusive (including an 11-months no-cost extension) by the Sierra Leonean non-governmental organization (NGO) Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD). The project budget was US\$225,000, of which US\$ 25,500 was retained by UNDEF for evaluation and monitoring purposes.

According to the project document, its main objective was to “strengthen national civil society platforms to become more organized, cohesive, confident and effective in engaging power holders with the aim of bringing about social change in their communities”. The project’s expected outcomes were:

- “Well coordinated, cohesive and properly managed civil society platforms that are inclusive and gender sensitive”;
- “Visionary, committed and confident leadership that is steering these platforms and keeping them functional”;
- A capacity building program in place that facilitates the strengthening and sustained engagement of the civil society platforms”.

The project involved activities such as training on conflict transformation and organizational management skills; consultations within and amongst existing coordination platforms of civil society organizations (CSOs), as well as facilitated strategy sessions and retreats, and public meetings aimed at engaging with political decision-makers at national and provincial levels.

The project, originally planned to last 24 months from 1st October 2012, was eventually implemented over 35 months, ending 31st August 2015, mainly as a result of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak and subsequent crisis which struck Sierra Leone in early 2014. The first acknowledged cases of Ebola disease occurred in March 2014, the spread of the disease leading to the declaration of a nationwide state of emergency in July. Among other consequences, the crisis severely limited movements and public gatherings during most of 2014, thus paralyzing the activities of the project. NMJD therefore requested three successive extensions as the crisis evolved; these were agreed by UNDEF, for a total duration of 11 months.

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

(ii) Evaluation methodology

The evaluation started in April 2016 with fieldwork in Sierra Leone from 17 to 21 April 2016 inclusive. An international expert and a national expert conducted the evaluation. UNDEF evaluations are more qualitative than quantitative in nature and follow a standard set of evaluation

¹ See: Operational Manual for UNDEF-Funded Project Evaluations, page 6.

questions that focus on the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and any value added from UNDEF-funding (Annex 1). This is to allow meta-analysis in cluster evaluations at a later stage. This report follows that structure.

The evaluators reviewed the standard project documentation: initial project document, mid-term and final narrative reports, milestones reports, etc. (see list of documents annexed to this report). The evaluators also reviewed NGO publications about the role of civil society in policy debates and peace building, as well as publications concerning the post-Ebola recovery strategy developed by the Government of Sierra Leone.

As a result of the initial desk study of project documentation (Launch Note UDF-SIL-11-425, April 2016), the evaluators also identified the following key issues requiring closer scrutiny:

- **Planning.** The project targeted existing NGO platforms, yet these were not involved in the project design. A Memorandum of Agreement was subsequently signed with each platform. The evaluation assessed how the planning went, and whether it would have been possible and advisable to involve the platform in the design phase. A related question was to see how NMJD dealt with inevitable differences of opinions and interests among participating NGOs and platforms.
- **Relevance of aims and objectives.** In the project document, the focus was very much on NGOs' participation or influence in relation to governance issues, including political participation. The evaluation assessed the relevance of the project to each platform.
- **Ebola.** The project was designed before the EVD struck Sierra Leone, but the Ebola crisis had a clear impact on its implementation. Beyond the obvious impact on activities, the evaluators assessed whether the crisis also impacted on the definition of the project's aims, and whether any lessons learned from the Ebola crisis were integrated into the project in its final months.
- **Effectiveness: coordination.** The project relied on training to ensure that the platforms functioned as effective coordination mechanisms. However, experience from other training projects demonstrates the need for follow-up mechanisms to ensure that skills acquired through training are put to good use. The evaluators reviewed this aspect during the field visit.
- **Effectiveness: gender equality.** There was evidence, including through the baseline study conducted by the project that NGOs other than those specifically focused on women tended to be largely male-dominated. The evaluators sought to identify any improvements to gender equality that may be ascribed to the project, for example through any increase in the proportion of women in leadership or board positions in NGOs other than those specifically targeting women.
- **Effectiveness: national vs. local focus.** The project was by nature focused on Freetown-based platforms. However many activities were implemented in provincial capitals, including Bo (Southern Province) and Kenema (Eastern Province), apparently as a result of a deliberate decision to provide additional support to NGOs in these more deprived provincial areas. The evaluators visited these locations to probe the experience of local NGOs with regards to the training.
- **Advocacy engagement.** One planned project outcome was to enhance the civil society sector's capacity to influence policy-makers. It was therefore important to determine the extent to which the strategic capacity building provided by the training was used to achieve this outcome.
- **Risk identification and mitigation.** The project document identified some risks to the project, particularly political risks. Bearing in mind that the grantee could not have predicted

the level of disruption caused by the EVD crisis, the evaluators will nevertheless assess the extent to which the grantee was able to respond to this crisis, as well as to other risks.

- **Sustainability and impact.** The final narrative report (FNR) outlined some project impacts and achievements. The evaluation sought to assess the current situation, and whether the successes described were sustained over time.

The evaluators met a range of stakeholders during their visit (see full list annexed to this report):

- A number of interviews were conducted in Freetown, with stakeholders including the following:
 - NMJD representatives: management, project managers, people involved in project monitoring, administrative staff, etc.;
 - Representatives of all the target platforms;
 - Representatives of major NGOs;
 - Representatives of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development;
 - Representatives of the Human Rights Commission;
 - Trainers and consultants who were involved in workshops and training sessions, especially the Development Education Leadership Training for Action (DELTA) sessions;
 - Representatives of other donors (EU, bilateral donors) as well as UN agencies knowledgeable about the work of NGO platforms in Sierra Leone.
- The evaluators visited Bo and Kenema to meet NGO members in these provinces, as well as a representative sample/focus group of community members impacted by the project.

Note on Ebola crisis: the first cases of Ebola virus disease were officially reported in Sierra Leone in March 2014, after appearing in Guinea (December 2013) and Liberia (March 2014). The country was officially declared free of Ebola virus transmission on 7 November 2015. In addition to its many victims (see below) the epidemic caused widespread and profound disruption to all aspects of life in Sierra Leone, hampering travel and constraining economic activities as well as development projects. The work of NGOs, including NMJD and its target CSOs and platforms, was also severely constrained.

The epidemic thus prevented project activities for about the last 8 months of the project. Some of the planned activities were reoriented to take into account the imperative to fight the epidemic.

The evaluators took these exceptional circumstances into account, in two ways in particular:

- They had in mind the extent to which logistical hurdles were increased by the epidemic. Apart from Ebola's actual toll, restrictions on the movement of people heavily affected project implementers and beneficiaries. CSOs and platforms' representatives also consciously and understandably focused on disease-related work, to the detriment of their project plans.
- The epidemic also gave rise to new concerns affecting local governance, in relation for example to the provision of health services. Discrimination against victims – including their relatives and survivors of the disease – also had an impact on local governance.

(iii) Development context

Sierra Leone recently emerged from a devastating Ebola epidemic that devastated the health and economy of Sierra Leone, as well as neighboring countries. By December 2015, the outbreak had led to 28,637 confirmed, probable and suspected cases, and 11,315 reported deaths, more than

all other incidences of outbreak combined. The outbreak revealed the precarious nature of over ten years of post-conflict reconstruction and reform in Sierra Leone, which included interventions in the health and education sectors.

Despite the gains in peace building thirteen years after the end of the war, Sierra Leone has some of the worst poverty statistics in Africa. It has not yet been able to convert its natural resource wealth² into essential services for its people. Sierra Leone's Millennium Development Goals (MDG) score in 2014 and 2015 was the same: 2.5 lower than the average low-income country score of 3.88³. Sixty six per cent of rural population remains poor.⁴ There have been years of weak accountability and fiscal discipline, and limited allocation of resources to service delivery sectors. The 2012 Bertelsmann Transformation Index report notes "While the majority of the population is poor, there is a high level of gender inequality, with women affected far more dramatically by the consequences of poverty than men⁵.

Legally, civil society is fully protected by the Sierra Leone constitution. In Chapters 2 and 3, the constitution guarantees equality before the law; protection from arbitrary arrest or detention; freedom of conscience, expression and the press; freedom of assembly and association; and protection from discrimination. The country is also a signatory to the major United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) Conventions and treaties governing human rights, civil and political liberties, and economic, cultural, social and related rights.

Although nobody is constitutionally above the laws of the land, there is a yawning gap between laws in place and the practices for safeguarding civil liberties, human rights and the overall rule of law environment in which CSOs operate. For example, a state of emergency (SOE) has been in force since 31 July 2014 as a measure to control Ebola. As part of the application of the SOE, the Sierra Leone police issued a release demanding that all meetings involving more than 10 people and unrelated to Ebola or worship should be cleared by the police. Although this regulation is rarely enforced, it seems intended to still fear among CSOs wanting to stage anti-government protests. A recent Freedom House report states that law enforcement agencies are more inclined to support government officials and the ruling party. This is evident in the apparent unevenness of the police in handling protests by civil society. In March 2015 a crowd drawn from parts of the country were allowed to rally in Freetown to show their support for the president's decision to sack his vice president. When an opposing group staged a counter demonstration, the police arrested them.

An important future of the CSO landscape is weak organization of the CSOs themselves. Here lies the importance of the UNDEF project. Citizens are weakly organized to engage with different levels of government, participate in policy debates, monitor government expenditure and call for reform. Demand for improved services tends to be poorly focused and government policy processes often exclude citizens⁶, even though citizens' involvement is written into the Local

² CIA World Fact Book; Mining industry growth rate in Sierra Leone was 42% in 2013, the fastest in the world. Political stability has led to a revival of activities in the rehabilitation of mining of bauxite and rutile, which will benefit from planned tax incentives.

³ UNDP, 2014 MDG, - Average score for low-income countries was 3.78 in 2012 and 3.88 in 2013.

⁴ Statistics Sierra Leone 2011

⁵ Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index (BTI) report 2014

⁶ Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report Vol. 1 pp10: 'It was years of bad governance, endemic corruption and the denial of basic human rights that created the conditions that made conflict inevitable. Successive regimes became increasingly impervious to the wishes and needs of the majority. Instead of implementing positive and progressive policies, each regime perpetuated the ills and self-serving machinations left behind by its predecessor. Government accountability was non-existent'.

Government Act⁷ and underscored by Government's development agenda⁸. Women and girls are constrained by negative social norms and other factors: they are less confident and less able to express themselves in public debates, which limit their ability to challenge, even when they should be accessing free healthcare for themselves and their children. Additionally, low literacy and education levels and poor transport infrastructure mean that people's access to information and public meetings and events is limited. Poor citizens have less voice/limited opportunities for cooperation. Poor citizens feel removed from the decision makers and lack confidence to engage with them. Endemic poverty means that rural people have become used to surviving with little or no government assistance and this isolation has helped to dampen demand for services.

In spite of the difficulties, some CSOs such as the Center for Accountability and the Rule of Law (CARL), Society of Democratic Initiatives (SDI), and the Budget Advocacy Network (BAN) have been strong in taking issues to government. For example, the BAN report in 2012 stated that government lost \$224m in duty waivers on goods and services tax to mining companies⁹, which amounted to 8.3 per cent of GDP. The estimated annual average loss over the three years 2010-12 was Le 840.1bn (US\$199m)¹⁰.

Strong and value driven CSOs can constitute a threat to vested interests who have been always determined to fight back either through co-option or intimidation. Newspaper publications have shown a good number of CSO leaders that receive contracts from government and have been disruptive to the work of genuine and value driven groups. A group of CSOs have openly supported the president's unconstitutional bid for a third term and the sacking of the vice president. So in the course of implementing this project, governance landscape in Sierra Leone has two categories of CSOs – (1) those who support government's agenda that are appointed in all committees and accompany government on official trips (local and international) and make statements of endorsement; and (2) those value driven CSOs that are holding government to account but are largely excluded from certain spaces.

Uniting CSOs around common advocacy agendas is an uphill task. The fact that state accountability continues to be an issue for Sierra Leone, means that civil society needs further support in their advocacy and policy influencing role. Sierra Leone scored 31 on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (highly clean) in the 2012 Corruption Perception Index, ranking 123 out of 176 countries¹¹. Clientelism and corruption remain major constraints to administrative efficiency: progress in implementing government anti-corruption policies remains weak¹².

⁷ See Sesay, M.G. and Gaima, E. 'Sierra Leone: Democracy and Political Participation' A review by AfriMAP and the Open Society Initiative for West Africa, January 2014

⁸ *Agenda for Prosperity* 2011

⁹ BAN, April 2014: Losing Out, Sierra Leone's Massive Revenue Losses From Tax Incentives. BAN estimates that it would take approximately \$50m per year to provide better education and health care, and that GoSL will lose revenues of US\$131m in the three years from 2014-16 solely from corporate income tax incentives granted to five mining companies.

¹⁰ BAN, April 2014, *ibid*.

¹¹ Transparency International, 2012

¹² BTI 2014, *op. cit*.

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

i. Project strategy and approach

Strategy

The project sought to draw lessons from earlier failed attempts by civil society to build a cohesive social movement. In essence, the project document ascribed the failure of previous coordination attempts to the lack of “visionary and dynamic leadership” in NGOs and an “aversion among civil society groups to working together”. It also noted the lack of capacity building programs for NGO leaders and the failure of development partners to prioritize such capacity building. The project document drew a direct link between these factors and the “exclusion of civil society and citizens from decision-making processes”.

In view of this, the project document defined the project objective in terms of civil society effectiveness and capacity to influence social change, and the outcomes in terms of coordination, leadership skills and CSO institutional capacity. The project set out to target the following stakeholders:

- Previously active NGO platforms, which had become less active recently. These included the National Forum for Human Rights (NFHR) and the Civil Society Movement Sierra Leone (CSM-SL), and Civil Society Alternative Process Sierra Leone (CSAP-SL);
- Other platforms that were nominally in existence but had not, according to the proposal, proven effective at the time of the project design, including Community Radio Network; National Youth Coalition; National Women’s Forum; Women’s Forum on Mining and Extractives; etc.

The key assumptions of the strategy were the following:

- That training of CSO leaders and platform managers could enhance the effectiveness of these organizations. In particular, the focus of initial training phases was going to be on conflict resolution – this was clearly meant to address conflicts among NGOs;
- That institutional capacity among NGOs could be developed from the top down – that is, by developing the capacity of managers and senior staff first;
- That developing strategies for the platforms to influence policies could help enhance their effectiveness.

In addition, the proposal had identified two key risks:

- That elections could interfere with the project because political leaders would use the work of NGOs to serve their own ends (elections were due a few weeks after the project’s planned start);
- That NGOs would turn down opportunities to work together, so as not to “lose their identity”.

The strategy will be reviewed in the relevance section of the next chapter. It is notable, however, that political disagreements among NGOs were not listed as a risk, despite the well-known level of political polarization among CSOs in Sierra Leone.

Approach

The project document summarizes the history of attempts to coordinate civil society in Sierra Leone, dating back to the late 1990s. It is notable that the document refers to the need to organize a Sierra Leone “Social Forum”, thus showing that the proposal was influenced by the Social Forum approach exemplified by the World Social Forum (WSF), an annual gathering of civil society groups initiated by opponents of (Capitalist) globalization in 2001. The WSF seeks to foster change through support to advocacy and solidarity (across borders and amongst participating groups). The WSF has often taken a confrontational position vis-à-vis governments: this was not the approach taken by the project, as the proposal made clear that the Social Forum it envisioned was designed to engage in dialogue with the government and to influence change at various levels, including institutions.

Nevertheless, the project design differed in many important respects from a mere national version of the WSF. The key difference was that the Social Forum was only one component, alongside the – more fundamental – components that consisted in building management and strategic capacity among NGOs, and encouraging coordination within and amongst CSO platforms. The political risks related to this approach were identified: risk of misuse of the NGO movement by politicians during the 2012 elections, and risk of disagreements among NGOs wary of losing their identity if they join coordination bodies. As the evaluation will show, the latter risk actually materialized during the project period.



Meeting of CSOs on strategy development, Freetown, March 2014 ©NMJD

ii. Logical framework

The framework below aims to capture the project logic. In view of the focus placed by the project document on outcomes and indicators, these are set out in separate columns.

Project outputs	Output indicators	Project outcomes	Development Objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowering group management and conflict redress mechanisms established and used within civil society platforms. Baseline data of 10 national CSO platforms established. Core group of 50 CSO activists knowledgeable and skilled in leadership, keeping their organizations in action and following plans. Well-defined strategic plans that will inform and guide the operations of the platforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of conflicts that the targeted platforms amicably resolve internally. Number of national CSO platforms profiled. Number of civil society activists providing visionary and proactive leadership. Number of organized actions taken by the targeted CSO groups. Number of the targeted platforms that have current strategic plans and capacity building programs. Level at which the targeted groups are implementing their strategic plans and capacity building programs. 	<p>Well coordinated, cohesive and properly managed civil society platforms that are inclusive and gender sensitive.</p> <p>Visionary, committed and confident leadership that is steering these platforms and keeping them functional.</p> <p>A capacity building program in place that facilitates the strengthening and sustained engagement of the civil society platforms.</p>	<p>To contribute to building an organized civil society in Sierra Leone for effective engagement on issues of national importance that impact citizens.</p>

To achieve the above outcomes, the project proposed to implement the following key activities:

Project outputs	Key activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowering group management and conflict redress mechanisms established and used within civil society platforms. Baseline data of 10 national CSO platforms established. Core group of 50 CSO activists knowledgeable and skilled in leadership, keeping their organizations in action and following plans. Well-defined strategic plans that will inform and guide the operations of the platforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training in conflict transformation and organizational management Consultation and planning meetings with targeted CSOs and platforms Action-oriented research and profiling of national CSO platforms DELTA training for CSO leaders Coaching and mentoring of DELTA trainees Monitoring trainees' performance as CSO leaders Strategic planning retreat meeting National Social Forum

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

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

(i) Relevance

The project was relevant, in that it correctly identified the need for improved coordination and enhanced capacity within and amongst Sierra Leone civil society platforms. It was also relevant in that the training approach that was at the core of the project was well designed and met identified needs. Nevertheless, the project presented significant design weaknesses:

- It lacked a sufficient analysis of the challenges to coordination among civil society and of CSOs' views about the role of platforms;
- It did not include provisions to follow up the planned training with support for platforms, coaching for managers or encouragement of joint advocacy activities.

The project proposal included an analysis of the challenges faced by CSO platforms, identifying inadequate leadership as the main cause of weakness. Other factors, ranging from political interference to CSOs' lack of stable funding, were not explicitly analyzed, despite their practical importance. For example, the proposal overlooked the fact that some CSOs may distrust joint action or platforms that may require them to compromise on their vision or mission statement.

The project document also failed to discuss the way in which competition for project funding among CSOs might hamper their commitment and capacity to cooperate. CSOs that depend on short-term project funding for their survival (which is the case of many organizations in Sierra Leone) may be wary of sharing plans with others, lest donors demand that they also share project funding.

Assessing the state of play: the report on social movements in Sierra Leone

In March 2013, NMJD released this report, one of the first project outputs. The report had an ambitious aim: to help guide interventions to "re-engineer CSO platforms and social movements". The study considered 14 platforms through interviews, a questionnaire and focus group discussions.

The report used frank language. Platforms such as the NFHR were described as "failed": it had led collective civil society action on peace negotiations in the early 2000s, but "died in 2009 when it last had a functioning secretariat". CSM similarly failed a few years later. Accusations of financial malpractice, directed at both platforms, contributed to their demise. Other platforms were described as "compromised", essentially as a result of politically motivated actions taken by their leadership in Freetown.

On the contrary, some platforms, such as BAN and NEW, "commanded respect" from interviewees, thanks – the report said – to their effective governance and accountability mechanisms, good resource management and clear mandate.

The report recommended training in advocacy and lobbying; support for internal democracy within platforms, and the development of "incentives" that could make the platform more relevant to member organizations, by offering benefits such as training and financial support. There was also support for reviving platforms such as NFHR and CSM: this eventually happened during the project period, though separately from it.

Project design

In 2011, at the time the project was designed, Sierra Leone's CSOs were weak and disparate – they arguably still are (see “development context” section above). With the exception of those Sierra Leone NGOs that were affiliated to international organizations, no local NGO had yet achieved the critical size necessary to reduce dependency on funding for individual projects. In addition to their dependency on project funding, many CSOs were also, in effect, dependent on some form or another of support by local authorities (for example grants to provide social services), thus reducing their capacity to act independently. These factors were not reviewed in detail in the project proposal, which focused almost exclusively on the quality of NGO leadership.

This focus on leadership skills explained the approach taken, which was to train platform managers and other CSO leaders, on the assumption that the training would trickle down to other CSO staff, and across to other CSOs, and enhance the overall operational capacity of civil society. The initial research paper commissioned at the start of the project also took this approach, identifying – in very direct language – “failed”, “compromised”, or “promising” platforms (see box on previous page). The research paper, in its analysis of CSO platforms' effectiveness, overlooked constraints on CSO's work stemming from political interference and fragile funding, and did not identify the need to complement the proposed training with joint advocacy activities.

On the basis of this initial research (described as “profiling” in NMJD's reports) the project involved a consultation stage with platform representatives, to disseminate the findings of the profiling report and agree next steps. This stage was particularly relevant because the platforms had not been consulted in advance about the design of the project – partly because NMJD distrusted the capacity of platform managers to think strategically. The subsequent training was designed in a staggered manner: three-day training sessions, several weeks apart, designed to allow participants to apply the skills acquired to their organization. At the start of each training session, participants were asked to describe changes they implemented in their organizations since the previous session.

The training focused on conflict resolutions (to help platforms mediate conflicts that arose among their member CSOs), organizational development, project management and fundraising. It also provided guidance on the development of strategic plans for each of the participating platforms. The training, known as DELTA (development education leadership training for action) was facilitated by NMJD staff and led by consultants.

This training phase was, in the main, implemented before the EVD struck Sierra Leone. The subsequent project stage was, in the original design, to coach and mentor platform leaders to develop strategic plans for each platform, in consultation with platform members. Once the strategies were agreed at platform level, it was expected that the platforms could get together for joint advocacy, including a national Social Forum, broadly modeled on the international Social Forums of the early- to mid-2000s.

The Ebola crisis made it impossible to implement the project as originally planned, and activities were effectively suspended for the better part of a year. When the project was able to resume, in 2015, its focus changed somewhat. NMJD took a different approach consisting in supporting further strategic thinking on the part of platforms and their CSO members. The aim was to learn

from the Ebola crisis and better define how CSOs can influence the political agenda at national and local level. This was the focus of the last meetings held by NMJD as part of the project.¹³



Strategy meeting, project launch, March 2013. ©NMJD

Response to needs

The project was built around a clear identification of the need for coordination among NGOs, coupled with the correct assessment that then-current coordination structures (in 2011) had neither the leadership skills nor the organizational capacity to design or coordinate joint action by civil society to influence policies in sectors of interest. This assessment by NMJD, while correct, begs the question of civil society's expectations from coordination structures or platforms. In other words, it was important, when

assessing the relevance of this project, to ask what CSOs expected in 2011, or would expect today, from platforms such as those targeted by the project.

Interviews with CSO and NMJD representatives indicated that the answer to this question was not necessarily very clear. Although CSOs expressed support in general terms for coordination with other like-minded organizations, their actual priorities may have been elsewhere. Three key factors are at play, according to interviews:

- Most CSOs in Sierra Leone are small, they lack long-term sources of funding that could provide them with financial stability. As a result, they tend to depend on short-term project funding. Securing these assumes a higher priority than coordination with counterparts.
- Operating platforms involves costs, and CSOs are wary of compromising their own funding if they must also contribute to the cost of coordination structures.
- Some CSOs are wary of compromising their reputation if they join forces with other organizations which they may perceive as lacking political independence.

These factors meant that, while CSOs and platforms welcomed the training process designed by NMJD, they were not necessarily ready to follow it up with practical implementation, if this required additional resources. For the same reasons, the enhancement of platform and CSO leaders' management skills did not necessarily result in additional advocacy activities.

Could the project design have been made more relevant? The evaluators take the view that the project's relevance could have been enhanced, by providing incentives for platforms to develop

¹³ One major lesson learned from the impact of the EVD on CSOs has been the need to build CSO capacity from the ground up – i.e. to start at the district level. This is the approach that NMJD has taken in a project proposal submitted to UNDEF in the 2015 round.

joint advocacy or campaigns. For example, the project could have set aside small grants – for example three or four grants of about US\$3,000 each, which could have been awarded to those participating platforms or groups of CSOs that, after the training, came up with solid, well thought-out action plans. Such small grants would not necessarily have been sufficient to carry out an entire action plan, but they could have constituted a starting point, perhaps encouraging other donors to support the actions.

(ii) Effectiveness

The project was effective at activity level in that it implemented – Ebola notwithstanding, and with delays attributable in part to that crisis – the great majority of planned activities. At outcome level, the project only partially achieved two of the three planned outcomes, and much remains to be done to achieve the third. The baseline “profiling” research and consultations and the training sessions, which formed the great bulk of the project’s activities, were implemented to an appropriate standard. Another positive point was that many activities with a national scope, including training sessions and consultative meetings, were held in Kenema and Bo (capitals of the Eastern and Southern provinces respectively), thus enhancing the participation by, and the visibility of, local CSOs, and reinforcing the exposure of Freetown-based platform leaders to the constraints faced by their local constituents.

The key limitation to the effectiveness of the project was the lack of follow-up of training and consultations: skills acquired during training and decisions made during consultative meetings were not sufficiently implemented by participants. This was due in part to the lack of capacity within NMJD to support stakeholders, and to the lack of funding for follow-up activities.

Effectiveness at outcome level

The degree of achievement of the anticipated outcomes can be summarized as follows:

- *Well coordinated, cohesive and properly managed civil society platforms that are inclusive and gender sensitive.* This outcome was to be achieved through training and through the baseline profiling process. The training was implemented, focusing on platform management processes and emphasizing conflict management mechanisms. This emphasis stemmed from the notion that platforms’ capacity to influence society is hampered by internal conflicts among members. Interviews have made clear that some platforms benefited significantly from the training. The National Forum for Human Rights, for example, had been active in the immediate aftermath of the civil war but had become dormant in subsequent years. The NFHR was described as “failed” in the profiling report. NFHR participants in the training told the evaluators that, as a result of it, they took steps to address internal policy disagreements, as a result of which they resumed some joint actions, such as issuing joint public statements (for example to highlight the issue of discrimination against Ebola survivors). Importantly, the process of internal reconciliation led to the reestablishment of coordination mechanisms, in the form of a secretariat and a network of focal points in member CSOs. Members of other platforms, such as the National Elections Watch (NEW) and the Civil Society Movement of Sierra Leone (CSM-SL) also told the evaluators that the training helped enhance the operational capacity of their networks, but they were in a different situation in the first place. The work of NEW, by nature, follows the electoral cycle, while part of the revival of CSM-SL stemmed from its association with the trade union movement in the country.

This outcome's effectiveness was also related to the factually accurate baseline research compiled into the profiling report. The major merit of that report was that it laid the groundwork for a shared diagnosis among practitioners of the situation of the participating platforms. This in turn, according to interviewees, helped foster agreement on steps to be taken to improve the situation.

One should not underestimate the innovative character of the approach taken by the project in this regard. Stakeholders had long known that most CSO platforms were weak, and had views about the causes of their weakness. However, the discussion of these issues across platforms, in a relatively non-confrontational environment, was unprecedented. It helped ensure that participants could identify common problems, and discuss common approaches to remedy them. These were subsequently addressed during the training sessions, thus contributing significantly to the effectiveness of the project as a whole.

The main caveat regarding the effectiveness of this outcome was that the benefits were only felt in a few platforms – fewer than anticipated in the project document, as will be discussed below. Secondly, the lack of resources in the project budget dedicated to implementing capacity-building measures agreed by platforms also limited the achievement of this outcome.

- *Visionary, committed and confident leadership that is steering these platforms and keeping them functional.* Like the previous one, this outcome was achieved through training of platform leaders. The three-phased training process consisted in successive training sessions implemented at about three months' interval, so that platform managers could follow-up the initial session by testing ideas in their own organizations, and could report on response or implementation at a subsequent session. The training was well designed and delivered by competent and effective trainers. Participants praised its quality in interviews, and many said they drew important lessons relevant to their work. The training sessions took place in Kenema, bringing together platform leaders from Freetown with CSO representatives from the provinces.

Participants in the training reported that it had tangible effects in terms of cohesion within platforms and informal groups of CSOs – one representative of a women's CSO said that she meets with counterparts on a weekly basis since, to discuss work plans and joint action. Nevertheless, it could not quite be said that the activities of platforms improved to the extent foreseen in the project document. Despite individual successes by platforms, highlighted by NMJD in the FNR, there was insufficient evidence to conclude that joint action at platform level had reached the frequency and degree of effectiveness envisioned when the project was designed.

Similarly, with regard to engagement with government authorities, the training was particularly effective at enhancing the analytical skills of platform managers, and at providing advice on good practice concerning advocacy (how to define a problem, a message, an audience, etc.). But most platforms struggled to implement the learning, largely because of a lack of resources.

- *A capacity building program in place, that facilitates the strengthening and sustained engagement of civil society platforms.* The achievement of this outcome would have required all the participating platforms to develop strategic plans including capacity building

programmes, and to implement these plans in practice. The platforms all appear to have adopted some form of strategic plan, but there is no evidence that all were formally agreed by participating CSOs – some plans were clearly developed by platform staff with little consultation of member CSOs. There was little evidence of implementation, because the great majority of the platforms lacked the monitoring capacity that would be necessary to report to members on the fulfillment of plans.

In this outcome more than in the others, effectiveness was limited by a lack of project resources to support platforms after their managers were trained. NMJD did not have the capacity to monitor the platforms or to coach their leaders. This lack of follow-up capacity was a significant challenge, which also discouraged platform managers from participating wholeheartedly in activities.

As indicated above, there would have been scope to improve the effectiveness of the project by devoting resources to training follow-up, in two ways:

- Coaching and mentoring. This would have involved the provision of support to platform managers, provided by experienced academic or counterparts in other organizations or within NMJD, to address strategic and program implementation challenges. Although some mentoring was provided by NMJD in relation to action plans, this was limited to an individual activity.
- Small projects funding. NMJD could have set aside a small amount of funds for platforms to apply for to implement strategic plans. This would have provided an incentive for platforms to follow up on acquired knowledge, by providing at least some initial support for strategic plan implementation. In view of the precarious financial situation of most platforms, even small amounts (under US\$3,000) could have made a difference in terms of the project's effectiveness.

Effectiveness at activity level

Most of the planned project activities were implemented. The few exceptions – cancellation of a CSO meeting on strategic plans, replaced by a consultation on post-Ebola strategy; addition of an unplanned consultative meeting of CSO leaders – stemmed from stakeholder demands, or from the Ebola crisis itself.

The effectiveness of the activities was hampered by significant delays in activities, even before the EVD struck the country. NMJD stated that these delays were related to the late arrival of payments by UNDEF, but also recognized that NMJD work organization was also, to some extent, a factor behind the delays. The evaluators believe that the delays can be ascribed, in part, to the fact that the project management team was too small (less than 1.5 full-time equivalent staff, see next section). Obviously, the Ebola crisis also had a significant impact on the timeline of activities, but delays had already occurred prior to the crisis.

Overview of outcome indicators

Generally speaking, the indicators listed in the project document were related to activities more than outcomes. The project document also listed target values for these indicators. The targets proved over-optimistic, as several of them were not reached.

(iii) Efficiency

The project was relatively efficient, in the sense that financial resources were mostly used as originally planned, despite the disruption caused by the EVD crisis and the resulting 11-months no-cost extension of the project implementation period. The project was also efficient in the sense that it reached a critical mass of NGO leaders, through training sessions and consultation meetings bringing together hundreds of activists, from the grassroots to the national level. This contributed to the added value of the project, as did the fact that many activities were deliberately conducted outside Freetown: though this bias in favor of provincial-based activities may have led to some additional costs, it also helped ensure that CSOs – in the Southern and Eastern provinces in particular – were more closely involved than they would have been if all major meetings had been held in Freetown.



CSO representatives debate post-Ebola strategies, 2015. ©NMJD

The project's operating budget (excluding funds retained by UNDEF for monitoring and evaluation purposes) was just over US\$200,000. The table below summarizes the way the budget was used. Over- or under-spending in each area was low, never exceeding a few hundred dollars over two years. The following comments may be made about the allocation of funds:

- Salaries represented a surprisingly low proportion of the budget. From experience, it is not uncommon that this area amounts to 15-20% of UNDEF project budgets. In this case, salaries only represented around 8% of the budget. The salaries line only covered two positions: project officer and finance controller; there were no provisions to contribute to part of the Executive Director's salary, despite the fact that he devoted a significant portion of his time to the project. Similarly, there were no explicit provisions to cover payments to provincial-level NMJD coordinators. While NMJD should be commended for having kept expenditures on staff to a minimum, it may be argued, in view of the challenges noted above about effectiveness, that the project was understaffed.
- The contractual services area covered mostly research and reporting costs incurred when recruiting consultants to prepare reports and trainers for the various sessions. These costs were reasonable and consistent with the amount of outputs (publications and training sessions) produced during the project. It was not clear why some trainers' fees were listed under this item, while fees for facilitators were listed under "meetings and training sessions".
- Meetings and training sessions took the lion's share of the budget – over three quarters. While the great bulk of the expenditure went to straightforward expenses such as rental of meeting spaces and the cost of accommodation, it was noted that a surprising amount (close to US\$3,000) went to fuel for vehicles. That cost, if necessary, should have been

listed under “miscellaneous”, since it is doubtful that all fuel costs were solely related to meetings and training sessions.

- Although outreach was listed as a separate item, expenditure was extremely low, reflecting the point made above in this chapter that the project, though it encouraged NGOs to engage in advocacy, did not contain provisions for conducting any significant advocacy activity.
- Expenses on rent, power, etc., were low, reflecting the fact that the project had a light staff footprint.

Actual project spending compared to original budget – sources: project document, FUR

Item	Amount (US\$)*	% of budget**	Remarks
Salaries	16,800	8.3	Slight underspend. Did not include share of Executive Director’s salary.
Contractual services	21,250	10.5	Slight overspend. Included research consultants and trainers’ fees.
Meetings and training	156,300	77.2	Slight overspend. Included space rental, participants’ accommodation and meals, as well as transportation. Also included facilitation fees, some allowances and large vehicle fuel costs (see below).
Outreach	471	0.2	Slight overspend. Mostly website administration cost.
Miscellaneous	7,300	3.6	Slight overspend (rent, audit, power, etc.).

*: Rounded figures

**: The operating budget was US\$202,500

Project management

Project management was appropriate, in that the NMJD team dealt adequately with the challenges posed by project implementation – including the substantial disruption caused by the EVD epidemic. Nevertheless, the project suffered somewhat from understaffing at management level, in that there was insufficient management capacity to monitor project report comprehensively, and particularly to undertake a redesign to include engagement in advocacy as part of the project. Such engagement could have enhanced the project’s impact significantly, and helped prepare the platforms to deal with future challenges, such as that of the forthcoming 2017 parliamentary elections.

(iv) Impact

The project achieved elements of impact, in that some participants in training underwent an attitude change, understanding the importance of strategic thinking, institutional development and joint work among CSOs. Similarly, some participants told the evaluators that the profiling report (issued in March 2013 as one of the first outputs of the project) “opened [their] eyes” about the real state of effectiveness of existing platforms and the extensive need for dedicated work to reinforce civil society coordination structures. The extent of policy and political disagreements among civil society organizations, and the implications of these conflicts on the overall effectiveness of civil society, were also elements that participants in training said they understood better as a result of the training. These factors contributed to enhancing civil society leaders’ sense of the importance of working together more effectively. Participants also noted that the training had helped them acquire the skills needed to address conflicts among civil society organizations. Nevertheless, the impact of the project was hampered, above all by the advent of the EVD crisis, which in practice forced civil society leaders to take their eyes of the “platform” ball, focusing

instead on the emergencies at hand. It was also hampered by the failure of the project to include practical follow-up to the training. As a result, platforms whose leaders had undergone the training did not improve as quickly as they could have done, had the project included a more explicit focus on impact.

How could the project have achieved a greater impact? In the evaluators' view, it could have supported advocacy engagements by platforms on issues identified during the training sessions. Funds could have been set aside for this purpose, which would have provided platform managers with an incentive to develop and implement strategies for engagement with relevant decision-makers. As it was, the platform leaders who became aware of needs and opportunities for advocacy were often unable to address these, due to lack of resources.

The under-estimation of the weight of political interference in NGO work also probably hampered the project's impact. Although it was impossible to address this issue explicitly so as not to antagonize meeting participants, an analysis of the role of government – and particularly the possible dependency of some CSOs on financial support by government institutions at various levels – could have helped NGOs develop strategies to make platforms more resilient in the face of possible political pressure. This is particularly the case in some regions (Eastern Province for example) where opposition political forces are strongly established, and at some periods such as the run-up to elections (the next parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone are due in late 2017). In practice, the extent to which civil society will engage in a coordinated way with political forces vying for election in 2017 will be one possible indication of the project's impact.

(v) Sustainability

The project's sustainability was relatively weak, mainly because of the very fragile state of the civil society movement in Sierra Leone – a situation that is outside the control of the project implementer. In principle, the training provided by NMJD could have been instrumental in helping the platforms, and the civil society movement as a whole, to become more resilient – better able to withstand pressure and to become more entrenched – as a result of improved management, greater organizational capacity, improved project design and management capacity, better coordination among member CSOs, etc.

However, those improvements to civil society resilience that did happen were relatively limited. The EVD crisis is partly to blame, as it impacted civil society's capacity to plan and develop autonomously. Other factors were at play, particularly NGOs' dependency on short-term funding, which continued to make it difficult for them to plan long-term strategies.

Could the project have done more with regards to sustainability? Reviewing the three planned project outcomes from the sustainability angles, here are some comments:

- With regard to the coordination, management and gender sensitivity of civil society: the project certainly instilled in many training participants a sense of the need for more coordination and enhanced management quality – elements that, if implemented, would enhance the sustainability of the civil society movement. In practice, however, civil society has taken little on-going action as a result of the project. One area of identifiable sustainability was gender sensitivity, to the extent a number of local women's organizations have made it a point, as a result of discussions during training sessions, to meet weekly at local level in the Eastern Province to exchange experience and develop joint activities.

- The outcome on the quality and vision of platform leadership has not, to date, led to sustainable implementation, although interviews suggested that some platforms' work did improve (such as NEW, focusing on elections monitoring).
- The outcome on capacity building has not brought about sustainable results, because no explicit program was implemented – though the need for such a program has certainly been understood. NMJD's plan to follow up the project with coordination and capacity building activities at district level would help address this issue.

V. CONCLUSIONS

(i) The project addressed an important need to build capacity among platform managers. This need is often overlooked, as the focus is often on capacity-building for single organizations. This project raised an important issue, based on appropriate analysis of the prevailing conditions.

(ii) The project's approach was innovative. The innovation consisted in bringing together platform managers working on a variety of thematic issues, thus highlighting common challenges and creating a conducive atmosphere to encourage new approaches.

(iii) The project lacked adequate follow-up to training. While participants praised the quality of the training delivered, the project did not sufficiently support them in implementing new ideas and skills, due to lack of resources for follow-up activities beyond training. However, the resources provided by the grant may have been too limited to make this possible.

(iv) Many activities were effectively implemented, despite the Ebola crisis. It is a testimony to the resilience of MNJD staff and platform managers that many activities were implemented, though often with delays, despite difficult conditions.

(v) There were shortfalls in the achievement of outcomes. Some outcomes were over-ambitious in their formulation, and the lack of provisions for follow-up made the full achievement of planned outcomes more difficult.

(vi) The project reached a critical mass of platform leaders, thus contributing to added value. By addressing over 10 platforms working on a broad range of themes, the project ensured that its analysis and proposed steps forward were widely shared and adopted across the civil society movement.

(vii) The project was under-managed. NMJD' management team of less than 1.5 full-time equivalent staff was too small to address all the necessary tasks. In particular, the team lacked the capacity to provide platforms with hands-on coaching support.

(viii) The project contributed to attitude changes among platform managers. Participants clearly achieved a better understanding of the shortcomings and challenges faced by their platforms, and were able to debate and adopt new working approach, emphasizing the resolution of conflicts among constituent CSOs.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

(i) NMJD should continue working with platforms to enhance their performance. NMJD has identified an important issue – the general weakness of CSO coordination structures – and it well placed to continue addressing it, as a result of the experience acquired in this project.

(ii) NMJD should implement its next phase approach, with a greater focus on the provincial/district level. The next phase planned by NMJD takes the sensible approach of seeking to build the capacity of platforms at provincial level, so as to bring them closer to the concerns of constituent CSOs. This approach is also likely to make platforms better at addressing local government authorities.

(iii) NMJD should maintain its innovative approach of debating capacity-building issues across platforms. The approach consisting in bringing together platform leaders working on a wide range of thematic issues proved effective, because it created a conducive atmosphere for addressing common challenges.

(iv) NMJD should ensure its training follow-up is adequately resourced. The key lesson learned from the project is that emphasis on training alone is unlikely to bring along practical changes. These are more likely to be achieved when training is followed up with hands-on support for change within each platform. However, the resources provided by the grant may have been too limited to make this possible.

(v) NMJD should consider adding to its project template activities such as coaching for platform managers, and a small grants mechanism. Coaching and mentoring would help platform managers to better use the skills acquired in training. A competitive small grants mechanism would encourage platforms to develop practical plans, and help them with initial implementation.

(vi) NMJD should consider working directly with platforms on the design and implementation of advocacy campaigns. While training has addressed advocacy and campaigning principles, there is a need for NMJD to work directly with platform to implement these principles in practice, because many platforms still lack the capacity to do so on their own.

VII. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context? ▪ Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent have the project's objectives been reached? ▪ To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not? ▪ Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives? ▪ What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?
Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? ▪ Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability? ▪ Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address? ▪ Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative? ▪ To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization? ▪ Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?
Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact? ▪ Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?
UNDEF value-added	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project, that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc.). ▪ Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF's comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?

ANNEX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Project documents UDF-SIL-11-425:

- Project Document
- Mid-Term and Final Narrative Reports
- Milestone Verification Reports
- Financial Utilization Report
- Program of National CSO Forum
- Extension request letters and approvals
- DELTA Training Curricula and presentations
- Strategic Planning Report
- Civil Society Meeting Reports
- Final Report, CSO Profiling, March 2013

External sources:

- The Stolen Happiness – Civil Society Appraisal Report on HIPC-Funded Projects for 2002-2005, NMJD and CSAP-SL, May 2006
- Ebola Security, Governance and Accountability in Sierra Leone, Campaign for Good Governance, May 2015
- National Ebola Recovery Strategy for Sierra Leone, 2015-2017, Government of Sierra Leone, July 2015
- Civil Society and Peace Building: the Role of the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone, Accord, October 2000
- Civil Society Engagement with Political Parties during Elections – Lessons from Ghana and Sierra Leone. Oxfam, December 2013
- The Civil Society Landscape in Sierra Leone – Understanding Context, Motives and Challenges. World Bank, June 2007
- Amnesty International Report, entries on Sierra Leone, years 2011 to 2016
- Bertelsmann Foundation Transformation Index report, 2014
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Sierra Leone report, www.sierraleonetr.com

ANNEX 3: LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

*: denotes phone/Skype interview

17 April 2016	
Freetown	
Andrew Lavali	(Evaluation planning)
18 April 2016	
Freetown	
Fallah Ensa N'dayma*	President, Trade Union Confederation of Sierra Leone
Ibrahim Tommy	Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law
Juliet Anderson	Executive Committee member, Civil Society Movement
Djibril Masie Bah	National Forum for Human Rights
Sallieu T. Kamara	Communication Director, NMJD
Abu Brima	Executive Director, NMJD
James Sheku	Development Coordinator, NMJD
Esther Finda Kandeh*	National Coordinator, Women's Forum on Mining & Extractives
James Lahai*	National Elections Watch
Suleiman Molku	Sierra Leone Labor Congress
19 April 2016	
Freetown	
Morlai Conteh*	National Youth Coalition
Aaron Boima	Sierra Leone Labor Congress
20 April 2016	
Kenema District (Eastern Province)*	
Patrick Adu	NMJD, Eastern Province Coordinator
Fallah Bokari	Civil Society Movement, Eastern Province
Miatta Hopah Jusu	Water Evaluation and Planning System, Kenema
Satta M. Senesie	Defense for Children International Sierra Leone
Fatmata Mabay	Coordinator, Gbotima Women's Development Association
Bo District (Southern Province)*	
Jeremy Simbo	Chairperson, CSOs Platform in Southern Region
Keneth Amadu	Provincial Coordinator, National Elections Watch
Jarai Barrie	Foundation for Human Rights and Development
Paul Koroma	NMJD, Southern Province Coordinator
21 April 2016	
Freetown	
Abu Bakar Kamara*	Coordinator, BAN
Augustin Mattia, Sallieu T. Kamara, Abu Brima, James Sheku.	NMJD (debriefing)

ANNEX 4: LIST OF ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
BAN	Budget Accountability Network
BTI	Bertelsmann Transformation Index
CARL	Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSAP-SL	Civil Society Alternative Process Sierra Leone
CSM-SL	Civil Society Movement Sierra Leone
CSO	Civil society organization
DELTA	Development education leadership training for action
EVD	Ebola virus disease
FNR	Final narrative report
GDP	Gross domestic produce
HIPC	Highly indebted poor countries
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NEW	National Elections Watch
NFHR	National Forum for Human Rights
NGO	Non-government organization
NMJD	Network Movement for Justice and Development
SDI	Society for Development Initiatives
SOE	State of emergency
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TUC-SL	Trade Union Confederation of Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WSF	World Social Forum