

INTEGRITY ALERT



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL SIERRA LEONE MONTHLY BULLETIN

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Is Sierra Leone becoming a Haven for Fraudulent Acts



Corruption is a source of violation of Human Rights and generates poverty and under development.

SUPPORT OUR WORK:

Fighting corruption requires resources. TI-SL needs resources to effectively engage in the fight against corruption. We will be grateful for any support received: Technical, Financial, Equipment, Stationery etc.

Address:

20 Dundas Street, Freetown

CONTACT CALL:

+232 88 173 037

+23279 060 985

E-mail:

tisl@tisierraleone.org

Website:

www.tisierraleone.org

Facebook:

Transparency
International Sierra Leone

Lack of adequate /constant access to basic services is a key factor that undermines Integrity and Corruption Control

It is a fact that every human being aspires to live a comfortable life. Taking into cognisance the fact that the nature of what constitutes a comfortable life vary from person to person, there is no doubt that it entails unimpeded access to basic services. It is the duty of a government to provide basic services needed by citizens to enable them live comfortable lives.

Unfortunately, access to basic services in Sierra Leone seems to be a constant challenge for successive governments. Notably, access to constant electricity and water supply which are two of the most basic needs of citizens in Sierra Leone seems to be an unending problem.

Water Supply

Adequate/constant water supply is very vital for healthy living. Without this there will be the prevalence of illnesses notably. Typhoid, Diarrhea etc . To worsen the situation is the fact that one cannot even guarantee the quality of pipe born water these days. The frequent rationing of water supply leaves citizens to resort to harvesting rain water for domestic purposes or using water from running streams which equally poses tremendous health hazards. Packaged water has become the vogue these days to the extent that one is looked down upon if you are not partaken of it. This requires extra cost on very inadequate sale vices . Where does this come from?

Electricity

Constant supply of electricity has become a necessity nowadays especially with the advancement of technology. Offices and homes require constant electricity supply during the daytime for work and at night for easy access to move around, study and most importantly to receive broadcasted information on news and for security purposes.

The cost of using a generator is burdensome, expensive and unaffordable to many . One has to cope with extra expenses for fuel, lubricants and repairs as well as the noise and pollution it produces. Inadvertently it poses a threat to corruption control at both grand and petty level, as people struggle to secure funds needed to meet the constant running cost.

How then can we justify good governance if citizens cannot be provided with the basic services to live a comfortable life. How effectively can we control corruption if we need to be constantly looking for extra costs to cover the purchase of packed water and generator running cost.

These poses a high potential to the compromise of moral standards and the values of integrity.

SIERRA LEONE STRIVES TO FURTHER PROMOTE OPEN GOVERNMENT

Sierra Leone joins 63 other countries to promote accountability, transparency and integrity in governance.

In October 2013, the government of Sierra Leone led by President Ernest Bai Koroma took the bold step to express its interest in joining the Open Government Partnership (OGP) which is an initiative launched in 2011 to provide an international platform for domestic reformers committed to making their government more open, accountable and responsive to citizens.

In order to qualify for the membership in the OGP, a country should demonstrate a minimum level of commitment to open government principles in four key areas:

Fiscal Transparency, Access to Information, Income and Asset Disclosure and Citizens Engagement. A country is supposed to score at least 12 out of 16 points as 4 points each is allocated to each of the 4 scores. Sierra Leone scored 13 out of the 16 points.

To further demonstrate the government's commitment, two focal points were identified to lead the process among government MDA's: the Office of the Chief of Staff and the Open Government Initiative (OGI) a thir-

ty four (34) man committee was formed comprising representatives from MDA's and civil society including the media, nominated through a very consultative process as the OGP Steering Committee.

This has been viewed by many including TI-SL as a positive stride by the government to further promote accountability, transparency and integrity which is of dire need within our governance system.

Sierra Leone is well endowed with natural resources and with a small population of approximately 6 million people, proper management of these resources especially the funds derived from them, is more than enough to lift this country from its present underdeveloped and poverty stricken state.

What is now needed is the total commitment and support of all entities and stakeholders both state and non state actors towards the effective implementation of the action plan to be developed that has the potential to contribute immensely, together with other existing mechanisms to make Sierra Leone a prosperous country.

The Steering Committee since nominated has commenced its meetings towards the development of the National Action Plan.

Watch out for further update in our next edition.

Is Sierra Leone becoming a Haven for Fraudulent Acts

Several years back, Freetown was rocked by the terrible death of a business man engaged in Foreign Exchange at a Guest House at Circular Road.

Barely two or three years ago an agency known as 'Wealth Builders' succeeded in duping Sierra Leoneans based on a scam geared towards wealth creation. A few months ago, the media broadcasted the achievements of the Rangers Manpower Solutions in securing jobs for young Sierra Leoneans in Canada. Barely a month after that, it was alleged that the job opportunities in Canada as proposed by the Rangers Manpower Solution was a mere Scam.

Recalling the frequent allegations of business investors being duped every now and then. One tends to think 'Is Sierra Leone becoming a Haven for Fraudulent Acts'. This is becoming very serious and if not curbed, would not only further tarnish the image of the country, but also cast a shadow on the credibility of Sierra Leone as a safe place to do business.

In view of this, TI-SL urges the government to institute stringent measures to curb this growing menace, and call on the government to undertake the following:

1. Ensure proper scrutiny and verification of all proposed business ventures, existing and new, including liaising with our Foreign Office or where no such office exists liaise with notable Sierra Leoneans residing in those countries, before clearance is given to a proposed business to operate.
2. Ensure the proper supervision and oversight of existing business ventures during the course of business.
3. As much as it is the government's responsibility to protect its citizens, Sierra Leoneans should be wary and mindful of business, wealth creation and international job opportunities proposed by business ventures especially now. once and should ensure to verify and clarify the credibility of these business before committing themselves to it. Bear it in mind that there are unscrupulous persons out there, who would go at length to dupe unsuspecting persons for their own personal gain.

Challenges that contribute to undermining Women's Empowerment in Society

Women they say constitute more than half of the population of Sierra Leone, (approximately 52.2%), Women they say are the guardians of the family as they ensure that the husbands (men) and children are take care of. They say' Train a man, train an individual but train a woman, you train a nation. These are all pointers to the importance of women in the society. As such Women's Empowerment should be a primary focus of all national development efforts.

Challenges in the management of development funds been major obstacles in the allocation of adequate funds for program and activities geared towards women's empowerment.

Sexual harassment and sexual exploitation aka the body currency has become rampant as young girls and women seek opportunities vigorous in the life e.g. to securing a job, maintain a good standard of living, gain access to education and economic opportunities.

Traditional and cultural beliefs and values that continue to relegate women to a subservient position have also contributed to women being sidelined and marginalized. Limited and inadequate financial means of most men in society has further contributed to the prevalence of neglect deprivation of the needs and welfare of wives and children in the marital/family homes increasing the rate of school dropouts, indiscipline and lawlessness in the society.

The collapse of moral standards and values, ethics and integrity in the society has led men to regards women as mere sexual tools/objects for exploitation at will.

This situation is faced by women in both rural and urban settings and has continued unabated in the society. Unless women take up the challenge themselves to address these ills backed by total political commitment at the higher level of government and related stakeholders these acts will continue unabated.

It is a fact that we do have the three gender laws enacted in 2007 and the sexual offences Act of 2012, How effectively these are implemented to curb these act is another matter that needs looking into.

CORUPTION JOKES

At the height of a political corruption trial, the prosecuting attorney attacked a witness "isn't true," he bel-lowed," that you accepted five thousand dollars to compromise this case?"

The witness started out the window ,as through he hadn't hear the question.

"isn't it true that you accepted five thousand dollars to compromise this case?" the lawyer repeated loudly.

The witness still did not respond.

Continue in page

KNOWLEDGE CORNER

KNOW THE ANTI-CORRUPTION ACT 2008, SOME CORRUPTION OFFENCES REF: PART 4 ACC ACT

CORRUPT ACQUISITION OF WEALTH:

A public officer is guilty of corrupt acquisition of wealth if during investigation by the Commission, he is found in control or possession of any resources or property or in receipt of the benefit of any advantage which may reasonably be suspected of have been acquired or received corruptly or in circumstances which amount to an offence under this act.

SOLICITING OR ACCEPTING ADVANTAGE:

Any public officer who solicits or accepts any advantage as an inducement or reward on account of performing or abstained from performing any act in his capacity as a public officer; is guilty of an offence.

USING INFLUENCE FOR CONTRACTS: Any person who, whether in Sierra Leone or elsewhere, offers an advantage to a public officer as an inducement or reward for giving assistance or uses influence on any public officer for a contract commits an offence.

MISAPPROPRIATION OF PUBLIC FUNDS OR PROPERTY:

Any person who misappropriates public revenue, public funds or property is guilty of any offence

IMPEDING FOREIGN INVESTMENT:

Any public officer who knowingly performs or abstains from performing any act in his capacity as a public officer in order that a non-citizen investor or potential investor is coerced, compelled or induced to abandon his investment or, as the case may be, is prevented from proceeding with his initial investment, to the advantage of any other person is guilty of the offence of corruption in respect of foreign investment

CORRUPT TRANSACTION WITH AGENTS:

Any agent who without lawful au-

thority or reasonable excuse, solicits or accept any advantage as an inducement to or reward for or otherwise on account of his performing of abstaining from performing or having performed or abstained from performing any act in relation to his principle affairs or business is guilty of an offence.

BID RIGGING: Any person who receives or solicit or agrees to receive or to solicit an advantage as an inducement or reward for refraining from submitting a tender, proposal, quotation or bid, withdrawing or changing a tender, proposal, quotation or bid; or submitting a tender, proposal quotation or bid with a specified inclusions or exclusions, commits an offence.

MISAPPROPRIATION OF DONOR FUNDS OR PROPERTY:

A person who being a member or an officer or otherwise in the management of any organization whether a public body or otherwise, dishonestly appropriates anything whether property or otherwise, which has been donated to such body in the name or for the benefit of the people of Sierra Leone or a section thereof, commits an offence.

DECEIVING A PRINCIPLE:

Any agent who with intent to deceive his principle, knowingly uses, any receipt, account or other document in respect of which the principal is interested and which contains any statement which is false or erroneous or defective in any material particular and

KNOWLEDGE CORNER

KNOW THE ANTI-CORRUPTION ACT 2008, SOME CORRUPTION OFFENCES REF: PART 4 ACC ACT

which to his knowledge is intended to misled the principal commits an offence.

ABUSE OF OFFICE: A public officer who uses his office to improperly confer an advantage on himself or any other person commits an offence.

ABUSE OF POSITION: A public officer who knowingly abuse his position in the performance or failure to perform an act, in contravention of any law, in the discharge of his functions or duties commits an offence and shall liable to a fine not less than thirty million Leones or to imprisonment for a term not less that 3 years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

What is an Advantage?

The Act prevent public officers from soliciting or accepting an advantage .It also prohibits the offering of an “advantage” to public officers as an inducement or reward in order to influence a contract.

The Anti-Corruption “advantage” includes

- **Any gift, loan, fee, reward or commission consisting of money or any valuable security or other property or interest in property.**
- **Any office, employment or contract.**
- **Any payment, discharge or liquidation of any loan; and**
- **Any other benefit or favors (except entertainment).**

Can you consider as an act of corruption or sign of appreciation if a public officer re-

ceived a gift from an individual after a successful performance of duties?

The Act not define a gift. However, if for example, the gift was given as an inducement to or reward for or otherwise on account of the public official performing or abstaining from performing any act in his capacity as a public officer then it will be considered as a corrupt practice.

Joke continues

Finally, the judge lean over and said ,”sir please answer the question.”

“oh,” the startled witness said," though he was talking to you.”

A husband once asks his wife, “if I die will you remarry?” The wife replied “no! I will stay with my sister.” The wife then asks the husband, “but if I die will you remarry?” The husband replied, “No, I will stay with your sister”

A boy asks his father, “Dad, why are all these people running?” The father replied, “This is a race, the winner will get a trophy” and the boy replied “If only the winner gets the trophy, why are the others running?

A teacher once asked his student to convert the following sentence into future tense – I killed a person. The student then answered, “The future tense is you will go to jail”

ANTI-EBOLA CAMPAIGN NOTICE

Transparency International- Sierra Leone (TI-SL)

ANTI-EBOLA CAMPAIGN NOTICE

The Ebola Disease is here, it is Real and has no cure it Kills.

Factors responsible for the spread of the disease.

- **Unbelief**
- **Poor hygiene and sanitation practices**
- **Interaction with an infected person particularly if dead.**
- **Protecting infected person by keeping them at home or hidden from health authorities.**
- **Failure to report suspected cases to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation**

Steps towards preventing being infected:

- **Acknowledge that the disease is real and is now in Sierra Leone.**
- **Avoid going to affected areas or en-**

sure to take preventive measures to avoid being infected if living in or going to an area already affected.

- **Avoid physical contact with any person suspected to be infected.**
- **Report any person suspected of being infected to the health authorities.**
- **Avoid physical contact with people as best as possible as long as the disease is prevalent.**
- **Wash hands regularly and especially after physical contact with people.**
- **Practice safe hygiene.**

Profile of Transparency International Sierra Leone

Transparency International Sierra Leone, formerly the National Accountability Group is a local non-profit, non-governmental anti-

corruption advocacy civil society organization established as a taskforce in 2001 under Campaign for Good Governance after 7 professional Sierra Leoneans participated in the Annual Members Meeting and International Anti Corruption Conference in Prague, Czech Republic organized by Transparency International. The trip was funded by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Sierra Leone and the Open Society Institute (OSI) in New York and was organized and led by the then Coordinator of Campaign for Good Governance and former Executive Director of NAG, Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura.

In July 2004, TISL formerly NAG was reorganized as an independent organization with a mandate to achieve greater accountability, transparency and integrity in private and public affairs. Its work is dedicated to curb corruption by holding local and national governments and public duty bearers accountable to the people of Sierra Leone.

In September 2001, after duly serving as a local in the formation and completing a Self Assessment of TI for Full Chapter status, TISL

was granted Full Accreditation by TI Secretariat as the Local Chapter in Sierra Leone. This has led to the change of name and logo in April 2011.

Core Programme Focus Areas

TISL's core programme focus areas are as follows:

- **Research and Surveys.**
- **Public Education, Awareness Raising and coalition building.**
- **Monitoring.**
- **Institutional capacity building**
- **Grant Making**

Mission

“To empower the citizenry of Sierra Leone through education and participation to demand accountability, transparency and integrity from government, private sector and civil society, to curb corruption and better the lives of the people”

Vision

To have a country in which the Government, the business community, civil society and the daily lives of the people are free from corruption.

Address: 20 Dundas street Freetown, Sierra Leone , Contact: call: +232 79 06 09 85 / +232 88 173 037

E-mail: tisl@tisierraleone.org / Web: www.tisierraleone.org