

CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENT - SIERRA LEONE

VNR PROCESS-JULY 2021

Thank you chair, I am speaking on behalf of the Stakeholder Group of Volunteers. I am a citizen of Sierra Leone.

Civil society has played a very significant role with participation from organisations from the 16 administrative divisions of Sierra Leone. We have taken part in stakeholder engagement on the VNR over recent weeks. State agencies were also engaging and private sector engagement was quite minimal.

Although civil society played a significant role in the process, the contribution of CSO's to some of the gains achieved have not been adequately captured. Securing accurate data on all sectors have proved quite challenging and could contribute to distorting the actual issues.

We are of the view that some of the Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs) have not yet well integrated the SDG's into their overall plan and vision though our national development plan has been aligned to the SDG's. Though the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development has made efforts to ensure its integration some MDAs are yet to put more emphasis on integrating and capturing SDG achievements. We are of the opinion that the SDG targets needs to be prioritized and mainstreamed in the coordinating MDAs.

In addressing Goal 16, the government's report highlights the gains made by the legal Aid Board but we believe a deeper dive indicates generally continued challenges in the justice sector especially with the Judiciary. It would be good know what improvements the GoSL proposes in the justice system?

We would ask the government to indicate the tangible efforts and strides made to address the deepening political divide and its drive to ensure social cohesion as this affects the effectiveness in the delivery of the other goals.

Finally, we request that the government clearly aligns the VNR recommendations to ongoing development initiatives and reforms and strengthen data collection and analysis across all sectors as this is a gap.