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MEETING MINUTES

Submitted by: Access to Justice Programme

Date Submitted: 6 August 2015

1. Access to Justice and Security Sector Reform Joint Project Board Meeting, 10.30am, 6th August 2015, UNDP Conference Room

2. Objective: To discuss progress thus far in 2015 and the way forward

3. Summary:

- Opening remarks and Courtesy Statement – UNDP Country Director

Thanks to everyone for coming.

Both A2J and SSR projects have cross-cutting components targeting both security and justice institutions and this justifies a joint PB meeting. Notes that there will be an evaluation of the Access to Justice (A2J) Project and a programme development phase going forward.

EVD early recovery and the justice/security sector: Decongestion of prisons has been a key area of intervention for UNDP during the Ebola response. The EVD isolation units erected during the crisis in some of the most crowded facilities will be converted into rehabilitation centres for inmates post Ebola. in partnership with the Sierra Leone Correctional Services. UNDP's Work with the SLP is focusing on asset management, English learning skills and continual support to the Independent Police Complaints Board (IPCB).

- Update/Achievements on Planned Activities, Q2 of AWP 2015 – Technical Specialist/PM a.i. (A2J)

(See PowerPoint presentation)

Effective functioning of the courts; support to CSOs to address SGBV and EVD related issues; continued support to the Human Rights Commission.

1. Summary of interventions;
2. Donors;
3. Budget 2015;
4. Timeline;
5. GoSL Partners;
6. CSO IPs

Outcome 1: Targeted state institutions and constitutional bodies are able to provide effective justice and security services in an accountable manner at national and local levels

In relation to this output, the following were achieved: Reactivation of justice services through support for extra court sittings to clear backlog of cases in Moyamba, Port Loko, Freetown and Kono; reactivation of case management meetings and going forward support from UNDP and ASJP in this regard.

Human Rights Commission: development of a Business and Human Rights training manual; UPR; Quasi-judicial mandate strengthened and CSOs strengthened to use the B&HR manual.

Outcome 2: State Institutions and CSOs including women's organizations and networks are better enabled to provide justice services for women, including on GBV, family inheritance, land and property issues

The achievement of this outcome has also included some EVD outreach combined with sensitization on women's rights, SOA and domestic violence.

279 SGBV victims supported to receive medical assistance; 255 matters charged to court with 79 convictions. This is also related to support to judiciary through UNDP and ASJP.

48 Networks established to refer SGBV cases

39 schools covered with 3,900 students and pupils reached in promotion of women's rights and awareness on SGBV, sexual exploitation in learning institutions.

New Focus Area: Promoting Transparency in the SL Judiciary 2015-2017

The new Project with support from the US State Department was submitted to the board for approval. This Project will focus on the development of sentencing and bail guidelines: training of justice sector personnel on developed documents, case management, public awareness (see slides based on the activities in the Annual Work Plan for the project)

Key priorities in the 3rd and 4th quarters: continue to discuss with key institutions to ensure that our support builds on what they need. For example, we are working with the HRCSL to continue to improve on complaints handling and to produce a thematic report; working with the judiciary for the successful finalization of the project on reactivation of justice service and clearance of backlog and CSOs to ensure domestic and sexual violence cases are addressed in remote communities.

- Roundtable discussion/questions and comments on Items 3 & 4 (Moderated by the Country Director)

Police advisor UNDP: Through the Access to Justice presentation we can see the link with our support to the SLP – there is a clear link to the justice sector. The police are the first port of call so if we get the interventions correct at this point we can make a difference for the whole sector.

Ministry of Internal Affairs: The Ministry would like to be involved in partnerships; they have good knowledge on the needs of different institutions and they also want to avoid duplication

CARL: How much coordination UNDP has with other donors? For example, the work of ASJP can be overlapping. There has been similar work done on sentencing and bail. Perhaps there are also other structures that can help, such as JSCO, to make the work easier. UNDP is working with CSOs and the interventions are needed but there also needs to be better collaboration and coordination with other partners doing similar work.

A2J PM a.i.: We are currently engaging with ASJP to ensure that we coordinate our interventions. This has happened during the reactivation of justice services with a joint intervention in the clearance of backlog of cases. Going forward, UNDP will be engaging the ASJP in the formulation of its new project.

Team Leader Governance: Collaboration/discussion with DFID ongoing to help frame future project

Irish Aid: DFID is an EU donor as is Irish Aid so they are keen to synchronise to make sure that the coverage and impact are greater from both justice programmes.

HRCSL: Only two areas highlighted in the presentation, also the issue of the UPR therefore any future plans should capture this. UNDP has supported these activities already so we need to ensure sustainability. The regional offices of the Commission also need support – any discussion on complaints handling should include the regionalisation of the Commission.

JSCO: The JSRSIP III must be taken into consideration in all the work going forward. The judiciary is central – weaknesses in the judiciary need to be addressed in order to make sure that other links in the justice chain can be effective in doing their job. In EVD recovery we need to ensure that there is a focus on the sector since the justice sector is left out of the government plans for the recovery. The passing of the CPA will mean a strain on the sector. There are staffing issues – loss of prosecutors as an example. We need to think about the pending issues as we look to the future.

IPCB: Importance of coordination in the sector and more focus on the priority areas – really think about the interventions before we move forward.

AzJ PM a.i.: Building the institutions in a sustainable manner – we have an opportunity with the development of the new programme. Development partners can do a certain amount but the Government needs to handle salaries, running costs etc. Otherwise the interventions are not sustainable.

IPCB: Can we have a one-pager to go forward? What do we need? For example, stenographers in courts. We currently do not have justice – backlogs are rife – people in prisons for many years for nothing.

UNDP CD: We need to be creative. Budget support to government by donors – they need to use leverage better to ensure that the Government achieves key things before more funds are released. Fundamental changes in the sector for example, before going forward.

Issue of case management – if we are going to focus on one or two areas, better case management will enhance the whole system.

IPCB: Not necessarily massive amount of money but creativity.

JSCO: We do need massive investment in the sector. The issue of Conditions of Service – if you do not have enough staff to run the system then case management cannot work. There are capacity issues and integrity issues but at least if the sector has enough personnel it allows CSOs to raise moral questions. The Government needs to increase investment to improve conditions for staff and attract more and better people. Example of Working Group for bail and sentencing – the members are overstretched in their work and therefore sessions are postponed.

IPCB: Cut down the amount of time the judges spend writing by investing in stenographers. This is simple but key in better justice delivery.

CARL: The GoSL has the primary responsibility to address justice needs, UNDP and others are here to support. The judiciary is the poor cousin in the sector. The Government needs to increase funding – otherwise we will continue to face the same issues. There is need for the Judiciary to be treated as an arm of government and not as a department within the Ministry of Justice.

SSR Project Updates/Achievements and plans – Police Advisor UNDP (See PowerPoint presentation to be shared)

We have recently gotten extensions on PBF and MPTF grants.

Outcome 1: SLP institutions and agents perform their duties professionally and account for the integrity, quality and timeliness of their services for ensuring public safety

- SLP CDIID – equipment and cooperation with IPCB
- SLP – Gender Unit supported to do country wide research on barriers to women for recruitment, promotion and retention in the force. This also includes awareness raising campaign
- Asset management
- Human Resources strengthening
- SLP at the borders – simple equipment such as rain gear
- Police Act
- IPCB support to get the institution up and running, including building work and technical support from APCOF. Building up to the launch of the institution officially

Outcome 2: Enhance capacities of security sector providers to effectively respond to the Ebola outbreak

- Prisons – ensure that no EVD cases have entered the prisons. This has included erection of isolation units, training to staff on EVD prevention, legal aid for decongestion, case management.
- Going forward the isolation units will be used for rehabilitation of inmates

- RSLAF supported with equipment for frontline response

Upcoming work:

English skills training for SLP

IPCB Construction and technical support

SLP gender work – the consultant has been identified for the research and the end result will be concrete recommendations on how to improve situation for women in recruitment and promotion within the police. There will be a campaign to encourage women to apply and going forward we hope to work with UNWOMEN to implement recommendations in the report. At least the goal of increasing recruitment of women to the police should be achieved. Working with universities – job fairs, outreach etc. CSOs could also be used for the preparation for police exams.

Continued support to RSLAF for the White Paper

The recruitment of a Consultant for evaluation of the Correctional Services

Important to note that there will be a project planning phase coming up which will be extremely consultative

Roundtable Discussion – Questions and Comments SSR

SSR recruitment – one of the current police advisors is soon to be replaced; the SSR temporary PM (Nasrin Khan) is back soon; we will have a Consultant to develop future programme.

Director of Corporate Affairs SLP: Local Police Partnerships Boards used in former recruitments to ensure that communities involved.

JSCO: The SLP has standards for recruitment and should not necessarily reduce the standards to allow for people to enter. Not even 25% of the candidates made the 50% pass mark in the last recruitment. It is important to retain high standards for a professional force.

Police Advisor UNDP: The increased recruitment of female officers will not include reducing standards. We will provide support where necessary. We will also use the community policing programme to help find out what the communities need in their police force.

JSCO: Also we need to be referring to reports/evaluations and recommendations to inform work going forward. For example the reports of the Human Rights Commission – they receive a lot of complaints about the police – we can use this information to improve. We need to be particularly wary when recruiting officers to relate to the public and to carry arms.

IPCB: Competency based recruitment is key, otherwise the Senior officers have to micro-manage everything and do not have time for their more strategic roles.

CARL: CARL has released several key reports on the SLP and the sector. At a recent launch some of the senior representatives pointed out that the former recruitment processes have not been transparent and have included political appointments.

HRCSL: Some of the issues that the HRC have raised with the police have not been reflected in UNDP's interventions. For example, Human Rights Based approach, use of force, insufficient representation of SLP in certain areas, the relationship between the OSD and general duty police. The type of support to the police does not reflect the Commission's recommendations. Going forward we will have to review reports to inform strategy, especially when the Commission's reports are based on public support.

Police Advisor: In the next phase of the programme we will include all of this – the development of the new programme will be extremely consultative.

Internal Affairs: Correctional services getting more budget allocation than the judiciary – they have been trained to submit good budgets to MOFED. Instead of general training to partners – specialised training, for example in managerial principles and specific competencies relevant to the agencies. Maybe if the judiciary has the capacity to submit convincing strategies to MOFED then they would be allocated more funds.

A2J PM a.i.: Improved access to justice and security services are key ingredients for economic development, stability and foreign investment. This can only be achieved when adequate support is provided for both sectors (security and justice). The Government needs to realise this and provide sufficient support to this sector.

CARL: Correctional services were not a sub-vented institution until this year and this was achieved through high level engagement and advocacy. UNDP has to think about advocacy around issues that need to be addressed. Partnerships with non-state actors are also extremely important – sharing information, working together.

SLP: Skills training for police force to give them confidence to properly do their work – for example police prosecutors.

JSCO: This type of training might be useful across the board but changing title of training from English language to communications skills.

169 million to the HRCSL – not enough. Other institutions face the same issues. UNDP needs to use its good offices to engage at a high level and make the case for increasing funding to the sector. The Government should know why it is so important also for foreign investment etc.

SLP should allow an independent board for recruitment rather than risk political appointments which damage quality of the force and also its reputation.

UNDP Governance Team Leader: It is clear from the discussion that there is a lot of overlap in the programmes and therefore makes sense to combine them. Nasrin will also find time to discuss with the partners before development of the new project document.

RoL Officer UNDP: In February the discussions on the EVD recovery strategy – two papers developed based on discussions and a lot of the issues still come up today and will continue to come up. These inputs will be included in our work going forward.

JSCO: research capacity of institutions to be improved including that of the JSCO.

Team Leader/PM a.i.: TORs designed for evaluation of Access to Justice Programme. The findings will inform the programme development.

- Conclusion and Recap of Action Points

The two main outputs under the Sentencing and Bail Project in partnership with the judiciary were presented by the PM for approval upon adoption of minutes

High level engagement with government by UNDP and other development partners is necessary to improve budget allocation to the sector

Strategy skills training (communications for example) across the board for partners is still necessary

Consultations with partners are necessary to ensure that our programme is well informed by priority needs

In support to the HRCSL for the rest of 2015 – UNDP should include continuation of the UPR (Universal Periodic Review) work seeing as UNDP has supported it thus far and there are key interventions needed between now and Sierra Leone’s second periodic review early next year

The new programme should be informed by reports/evaluations/recommendations existing (example of HRCSL report to inform work with the police as the information therein is based on public complaints)

Better coordination between UNDP and DFID funded justice programme is needed and UNDP is engaging on this

Share the A2J evaluation TOR with Irish Aid

UNDP to share presentations with the Board in conjunction with minutes

4. Participants of the meeting (see also scanned list)

Dandyson Thompson	LOD
Saidu B. Jalloh	MRU
Gary Porter	ISAT
Sudipto Mukejee	UNDP
M. B. Kamara	SLP
Elizabeth A. Turay	SLP
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Orla Kelly	UNDP
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Dr. Henry Mbawa	JSCO
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Emerlin George	IPCB
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Walter Neba	UNDP
Annette Nalwoga	UNDP
Edward Kamara	UNDP
Mona Nordberg	UNDP
Gibril Kargbo	Irish Aid
Jane Rhodes	UNDP
Francess Alghali	HRCSL
M.S. Kambeh	SLP

5. Minutes approved by the Board