**From Prisons to Corrections- Promoting Institutional Reform of the Sierra Leone Correctional Services (January – March 2019, Q1 Updates)**

The first quarter primarily focused on signing the Annual Work Plan and drafting and finalising agreements between the UNDP Rule of Law team and implementing partners. Letters of Agreement were signed for the Sierra Leone Correctional Services, Prison Watch SL, Humanist Watch SL (HUWASAL), and the Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law (CARL). Time during this quarter was spent preparing for several significant activities scheduled for the second quarter: a visit from INL/US donor, and the development of a Terms of Reference for a consultant to evaluate this project and another. This quarter also saw the revised Correctional Act and the Prison Rules No.2 1961 (both completed in the 4th quarter of 2018) approved by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Both have been sent to the Ministry of Justice Senior Legal Drafter for finalisation.

The most recent follow-up on the Human Rights (HR) Action Plan, facilitated by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI), took place on 5-6 March 2019. 40 correctional officers representing 19 centres, three regional offices and HQ attended. The workshop and training revisited commitments made by the SLCS in two earlier Action Planning Workshops and reviewed the progress made towards the achievement of these commitments, in line with the Mandela and Bangkok Rules. SLCS officers took the opportunity to discuss areas that could be improved upon, areas that had causes confusions, and to give advice on how to tackle an issue. Topics covered include admission processes, visits, medical services, hygiene and self-care, contact with the outside world, the earning scheme (250 inmates in Kenema have been set up with bank accounts), classification, education and accommodation. The HR audit demonstrated how much had been achieved since the last workshop in 2018; notable improvements, as highlighted by the RWI final report, were the introduction of more flexible and regular visiting hours, the paper filing systems and documentation, key and lock control, to the extent possible separation of categories, introduction of small scale vocational training in most centres, admission medical examinations, improved contact with the outside world, cleanliness, bedding, recreation, education, books, complaints, discipline, and due process. It was successful in renewing vigour among officers to make reforms within their centres.

A key development is that inmates in correctional centres are now classified by uniforms (convicted/trial/remand). Some centres have begun the process of classifying cells in centres.

Renovations to 7 out of 8 centres are completed. The new facility at Waterloo is expected to be completed by mid-2019. The completion of this centre will contribute to the decongesting the Freetown Pademba Road facility of up to 150 inmates.

It was agreed that the Justice App, piloted for the Judiciary, shall be expanded to include the SLCS; progress has been made on this by IDTLABS and Fix Solutions and this activity is in the process of being rolled out to all 19 SLCS facilities nationwide. A no-cost extension until 31st March 2019 was awarded from INL to enable to project to conclude successfully, however due to some delays in technical updates and training for staff members across the board, this activity is expected to be completed by mid-2019.