



HRCSL Consults with MDAs and CSOs on the Status of UPR Recommendations

With support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) has concluded a series of regional engagements with representatives from Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process.



Facilitated by the Directorate of Treaty Body Reporting and International Mechanisms, the engagements—conducted in Makeni, Port Loko, Waterloo, Bo, and Kenema from 26th August to 3rd September 2025—are part of the Commission’s ongoing efforts to prepare its alternative report in accordance with Resolution 16/21 and Decision 17/119 of the UN Human Rights Council. The Commission’s report, together with those of other stakeholders, aims to



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highlight key human rights issues and confirm the contents of the State's own submission.



Mr. Peter Conteh, Chairman of the Bombali District Human Rights Committee, described the engagement as timely and empowering for civil society.

“This engagement has built the capacity of CSOs to hold government accountable on their commitments,” he said. “We will now use these recommendations to raise awareness at the community level.”

The UPR is a UN mechanism that allows countries to report on the progress they have made in implementing human rights recommendations accepted during previous review cycles.

In Makeni, Sulaiman Kamara from the Polio Persons Development Association commended government progress but noted that more must be done to ensure



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Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) have access to social services and human rights protections as guaranteed under the Persons with Disability Act (2011) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). He pledged to intensify advocacy on UPR recommendations specific to PwDs.



Similarly, Mr Abu Bakarr Kamara, Executive Director of Hope for the Blind and Coordinator of the Sierra Leone Union on Disability Issues (SLUDI) in Bo, said the engagement empowered the disability community to track implementation of the 2021 UPR recommendations. However, he expressed frustration that despite the existence of progressive laws, implementation remains a major challenge.

Mr Dauda Bangura, Kono District Human Rights Committee Secretary General, emphasised the importance of the session, noting that it would help CSOs assess



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national progress and hold duty-bearers accountable for unfulfilled commitments.



Across all locations, HRCSL Commissioners reiterated that the UPR is a voluntary peer review mechanism that carries a moral obligation for participating states to fully implement accepted recommendations.

Participants engaged in group discussions to assess progress in key thematic areas, including health, education, women and children's rights, media freedom, and administration of justice, providing credible data and insights to inform the Commission's forthcoming report.

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