



## HRCSL MOBILE COMPLAINT HEARING IN BOAJIBU TOWN

With support from UNDP and Irish Aid, the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) on Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th August, 2023 took its complaints hearing session to the people of Boajibu Town, Simbaru Chiefdom in the Kenema District.



The objectives were to increase the Commission's visibility in hard to reach communities, engage in public education on the Commission's mandate and functions, and the receipt of complaints of human rights violations from residents.

At the commencement of the hearing at the Court Barray the Commission delivered public education to the community leaders and ordinary people within and outside the township on the work of the Commission over the years, especially Complaint Handling and the Sexual Offences Act of 2012 as amended in 2019.

A total of 100 community people were in attendance with seventy-three (73) male and twenty-seven (27) female. They raised issues about gender-based



violence and sexual penetration and urged the Commission to continue its public education drive on human rights issues.

A resident, Iye Diemma said “I am happy that the HRCSL is here. I never knew that we have an institution with the responsibility of ensuring our rights are always protected. The knowledge I have gained today will improve my understanding about human rights.” She urged the Commission to replicate such engagement in other communities within the district.



A total of eleven (11) complaints were received; seven (7) male and four (4) female. Some of the complaints bordered on marital dispute, police neglect, destruction and deprivation of property, domestic violence, high fine and property (land) rights.

Chiefdom Speaker, Vandi Kimbo said they were pleased to welcome the Commission, adding that before this time, several individuals were claiming to be human rights workers without consulting traditional leaders.

“Whatever will be said here today by the HRCSL will be of great value to the people and it can be disseminated to others who are not fortunate to attend,” he assured.



Oversight Commissioner for Complaints, Investigation and Legal Services, Commissioner Hassan Samba Yarjah said human rights is about discipline and respect for the rule of law and added that God is the first human rights defender.



"During the monitoring of prisons and detention facilities across the country, the Commission discovered that large numbers of people in those facilities are youths and this cause for concern both at national level and at our local community level," he said.

Commissioner Yarjah encouraged residents, especially the youths to make use of opportunity by bringing to the notice of the Commission issues affecting the full enjoyment of their rights.

The engagement helped to increase the knowledge of the community people on the work of the Commission, especially its mandate and functions, as well as provisions in the Sexual Offences Act of 2012 as amended in 2019.



The HRCSL team also conducted monitoring visits to the police station and the healthcare center.