

**Terms of Reference**  
**Final Project Evaluation Study**

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**THE PROJECT: Beyond Politics of Men: Empowering Women to be Effective Political Actors in Sierra Leone**

**1. Context**

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**Our Program**

Sierra Leone remains largely a gerontocracy country, with limited spaces for active female participation, especially in politics. Following the general elections in March 2018, women's representation in Sierra Leone remains low, dropping from 16% in 2012 to 12.1% in 2018. This decline in women representation in parliament is worrying and falls short of the 30% quota for women representation demanded by women since 2007. The 2018 Gender Audit Report commissioned by the 50/50 Group as part of the Standing Together for Democracy Consortium (an electoral support project led by Search for the 2018 elections) revealed that access to finance, women's ability to position their political messages, discriminatory and exclusionary practices have served to side-line women in politics leading to consistent decline in women's political representation in Sierra Leone.

The challenges that affect women's effective and meaningful political participation in Sierra Leone are numerous and multifaceted. However, based on the collective experience and understanding of the 50/50 and Search for Common Ground/Talking Drum Studio in this sector for the last two decades, the following challenges were initially identified to be addressed by this project and include the following:

- **Limited participation of women in politics:** Women's representation in politics remains low. The current first-past-the-post system, as opposed to proportional representation makes it increasingly difficult for women to demand for a gender sensitive electoral process. Violence and intimidation are key barriers to women's political participation. This project sought to address this challenge by building the capacity and enhance women's confidence to participate meaningfully in electoral processes. Women will not only gain the required knowledge but will also be mentored and supported to demand political space and effectively compete alongside their male counterparts.
- **Legal barriers:** Despite significant legislative changes that have increased women's legal protection, they continue to experience discriminatory practices. The Sierra Leonean Constitution (1991) provides for non-discrimination but problems arise from poor implementation, violations and impunity. Through this action, 50/50 and partner will advocate for and implement activities that enhance the transformation of the political environment (policies and legislations) that promote the participation of women in politics.

- **Limited Gender Mainstreaming by Political Parties:** Though gender considerations may be stated in political party manifestos or through announcements; negative attitudes, perceptions, norms and practices continue to present barriers for effective participation. Women generally lack the support, resources and information to effectively participate. On the other hand, political parties do not have the necessary motivation and knowledge on promoting effective women's participation. This action will seek to work with political parties to generate the necessary motivation, knowledge and affirmative action that increases women's overall standing in their political institutions and participation.
- **Media Reach:** Local radio stations are instrumental in the dissemination of voter education messages. However, women candidates lack the resources to pay for the cost of airtime and advertisements. Women political aspirants are more likely to receive minimal media coverage due to lack of resources. In addition, women lack the knowledge and skills of modern media technology to position themselves strategically as political actors. Most women do not even have a Facebook page nor do they actively use social media. Media activism is not well equipped to promote equal participation. The action will support media institutions as partners in the efforts to position women as important actors for political change. In addition, the proposed action will provide the required capacity on political communication and digital marketing for women and politicians to increase their visibility
- **Norms:** Socio-cultural, political and religious norms and perceptions serve to deter women from active public life. This is worsened by the deeply rooted social problems including poverty and illiteracy which impede women's effective participation in politics and societal life. The action will endeavour to mobilise local and national stakeholders in the conversation about the negative impacts and actions required to transform these norms.

## The Project

The 50/50 Group in partnership with Search for Common Ground/Talking Drum Studio have implemented a 36-month European Union project as follow-on project that sought to consolidate and sustain the impact of projects implemented that have targeted women's empowerment at local and national levels.

This action was designed to fit within a broader governance and women's empowerment programming to promote scalability, ensure complementarity, and build a more sustainable and lasting impact. The project was particularly relevant in light of the 2018 post-election context in which 50-50 mobilised and supported women to actively participate in the electoral process. However, the result of the 2018 elections still suggest that despite women making up over 50% of the population, the women quota in parliament in about 12% with some (e.g. Kambia) having no female representation in parliament. There is evidence that there was an increased number of women who demonstrated interest in political representation both at the local and national levels. Over 36 months now, the project has mobilized, energized and build the capacity of women who are interested in pursuing political representation at local and national levels, thereby increasing their chances of success in the 2023 general elections.

This project targeted 225 women politicians (including current MPs and councillors, members of the All Political Parties Women Association (APPWA), the female wings of political parties) and the leadership of political parties in the three project districts of **Kenema, Kambia and Tonkolili**. The action proposes to select these direct beneficiaries through a participatory process with a focus on scoping of women aspirants who participated in the 2018 elections and those who are generating

The overall goal of this project aligns with the global objective of the European Union. One of the key outcomes of this initiative is to position women as a catalyst for change, increasing their participation in local and national decision-making and governance in rural Sierra Leone. The proposed action is designed to promote local ownership through the use of participatory and inclusive processes of engagement.

### **Project Result Chain**

The overall objective of the action is to **‘enhance the effective participation of women in public and political life’**. This overall objective is complemented by two specific objectives:

1. To improve the capacity and confidence of women to participate actively in political and public life;
2. To create an enabling environment for increased participation and leadership of female members of political parties as decision makers in the political structures;

## **2. Goal and Objectives of the Study**

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The primary objective of the final evaluation study is to investigate the overall impact of fostering increased participation of women in political and public life, reinforcing the long-held view that there is a need for dedicated long-term support to enhance women’s political participation. This exercise will therefore examine the framework for a long-term transformation of the political culture in Sierra Leone. Provide analysis on how political parties have reformed their policies and change their norms in building the capacity and confidence of women to effectively engage in politics. Probe on how the project has mobilised, energized and build the capacity of women and political parties, to promote effective collaboration and coordination. Provide data on the technical level impact of the target groups and their ability to move this action beyond this stage and advance similar initiatives within their communities. Also provide analysis on how the project has positively impact the social status and wellbeing of women within public life and governance processes, at the community level, to become accepted allies within these processes by communities and stakeholders. The study will also seek to track the economic level impact, major economic development activities undertaken within the activities of this action, and how more equitable, transparent, and accountable governance systems in Sierra Leone is better responding to economic-related grievances of communities.

As per donor requirement, a final, external evaluation is to be carried out at the conclusion of the action and will serve to assess the results of the action, using the baseline assessment as a source of comparison. The exact scope and focus of the evaluation has been jointly determined by the partners implementing this project. The final evaluation would seek to explore two to three of the OECD-DAC criteria such as: effectiveness, relevance, and/or impact and sustainability of the action. It will also identify lessons learned and provide recommendations for future initiatives. The final evaluation will be based on quantitative and qualitative methods and will evaluate the transformation of attitudes and behaviors of the target groups through performance indicators. Lessons learned and recommendations will be documented and shared among beneficiaries, partners and other key stakeholders during renditions organized by the evaluator with support from 50/50 group and Search/TDS-SL. The evaluation report will be available to the public on the 50/50 group, TDS-SL and other websites and on the DME for Peace platform.

Finally, this exercise will examine the policy level impact on the beneficiaries such as the policy dialogues, annual women's governance forums, and radio programmes. How effective have these platforms be to connect government stakeholders at the national and local levels. What are the sustainability plans and exit strategies adopted by local communities? How can the project beneficiaries continue to leverage 50/50's strong relationships with women politicians and government authorities to ensure ongoing engagement after the project's end.

**The evaluation will be guided by the following questions:**

- What are the social, economic, cultural, political, and legal barriers that inhibit the promotion of gender equality and affect power relations in the project communities
- What are public perceptions on gender stereotypes, gender roles and attitudes towards women and other vulnerable groups' participation in public and local governance in in the project districts
- How many women leaders that are in active political positions?
- What has been the constraints women face to participate in politics whether at constituency, ward and all levels?
- What is the current women's participation in local governance and decision-making processes?
- Do you think traditional norms and practices about women participation in decision-making and local development processes, is a challenge in this community/District/Region? What is your opinion on these, and what suggestions do you have to make this a 50/50 strategy for both men and women?
- How can women's local coordination/networking skills be enhanced to promote their needs and interests?
- Can the project consider follow-up mechanisms in the implementation of local policies?
- How can women's local coordination/networking skills be enhanced to promote their needs and interests?

### 3. Assessment methodology

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#### Geographic Locations

The target areas in Sierra Leone are: **Kenema, Kambia and Tonkolili** districts. The assessment is expected to take place in all three districts. Efforts should be made to reach the project's targeted chiefdoms in each of the three districts. The consultant will develop an inception report, a Final assessment matrix, and the tools with inputs from Search/TDS-SL and the 50/50 group, conduct data collection, data cleaning and analysis, and will write a report outlining the findings and conclusions of the assessment.

#### Logistical Support

The consultant(s) will be responsible for organizing their own logistics for data collection (vehicles, fuel, and drivers), and this must be budgeted into the study. 50/50 group will provide support in arranging logistics. The external evaluator will be responsible for managing the logistics provided, enumerator hiring and training, data analysis and other related management issue.

In addition, 50/50 group and partners will share the following elements with the external consultant: Background materials including the project proposal and logical framework, M&E plan, project reports, ROM visit report and annual reports. The assessment Team will report to 50/50 group and Search/TDS-SL although they will not have control over the professional work of the evaluators. The DM&E Officers for 50/50 group and Search/TDS-SL DM&E teams will provide technical guidance for the evaluation to ensure the independence of the evaluation process, and that Search/TDS-SL's and 50/50 group independent evaluation policy is followed.

#### Ethics

The consultant is required to respect the following Ethical Principles<sup>1</sup>:

**Comprehensive and systematic inquiry:** Consultant should make the most of the existing information and full range of stakeholders available at the time of the review. Consultant should conduct systematic, data-based inquiries. He or she should communicate his or her methods and approaches accurately and in sufficient detail to allow others to understand, interpret and critique his or her work. He or she should make clear the limitations of the review and its results.

**Competence:** Consultant should possess the abilities and skills and experience appropriate to undertake the tasks proposed and should practice within the limits of his or her professional training and competence.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the *American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators, July 2004*

**Honesty and integrity:** Consultant should be transparent with the contractor/constituent about: any conflict of interest, any change made in the negotiated project plan and the reasons why those changes were made, any risk that certain procedures or activities produce misleading review information.

**Respect for people:** Consultant respect the security, dignity and self-worth of respondents, program participants. Consultant has the responsibility to be sensitive to and respect differences amongst participants in culture, religion, gender, disability, age and ethnicity.

In addition, the consultant will respect Search's evaluations standards, to be found in Search's evaluation guidelines: [http://www.Search.org/programmes/ilt/dme\\_guidelines.html](http://www.Search.org/programmes/ilt/dme_guidelines.html)

### **Required Qualifications and Expertise for Lead Evaluator**

**The Evaluator (individual or firm) shall have the following expertise and qualification:**

- At least Master's degree in Public Policy, International Development, Development, Economics/Planning, Economics, International Relations/ Diplomacy or any other relevant university degree;
- At least 5 years of experience of doing project evaluation and/or research. Experience in evaluating women's empowerment and peacebuilding programming will be an added advantage.
- Extensive expertise, knowledge, and experience in the field of aid effectiveness and aid management process related issues, local level governance, Social Cohesion and accountability and electoral support programmes and management in developing countries – especially in West Africa;
- At least 5 years of experience in working with international organizations and donors;
- Knowledge and understanding of international and country-level implementation of governance and civil society support projects in West Africa;
- Experience of project formulation and evaluation and practical experience of end project evaluation in Sierra Leone or a similar context;

Excellent written and verbal Communication skills in English. Experience in local Sierra Leonean language including Krio will be an added advantage.

**The offers will be reviewed according to the following criteria:**

- Consultant's ability to conduct qualitative and quantitative studies, knowledge of methodology and field of research;
- Research experience in areas of peacebuilding, women's empowerment programming and governance;
- Consultant's ability to complete the study in a timely manner;
- Consultant's capacity to recruit local data collection teams in the project districts;

- Quality of reports proposed by the consultant as a sample;
- Other: quality of the writing of the Consultant will be also evaluated.

## Submissions

### **The application file must include:**

A **technical offer** of maximum 8 pages which will include:

- A detailed methodology, including the main research questions;
- A short proposal for the organization of data collection and supervision of enumerator teams;
- An updated curriculum vitae of the Evaluation Coordinator of up to 4 pages;
- In annex: 2 examples of studies / qualitative and quantitative research conducted for other organizations as principal investigator.

### **A detailed financial offer which will include:**

- Consultant fees;
- Costs related to the recruitment of accelerated field data collection teams;
- Other items deemed necessary.

**Interested qualified and experienced person, group of person or firms must submit an application package by Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2023 to [fiftyfiftysierraleone@gmail.com](mailto:fiftyfiftysierraleone@gmail.com) and copy [skoroma@tds-sierraleone.org](mailto:skoroma@tds-sierraleone.org) and [mariamafofana345@gmail.com](mailto:mariamafofana345@gmail.com) outlining availability in line with the approximate timeline for the evaluation from 15-30<sup>th</sup> April 2023.**