

Stand Strong: Women and politics in Sierra Leone

Part of Christian Aid's 2015 impact assessment on governance programming

Guidance document on methods



Councillor Mariama Lavallie uses a Flip camera to record Jeneba Combey's (SEND Governance Project Officer) response to the question: 'What is the biggest difference women in politics has made in your community?' Kailahun, September 2015

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1. Introduction

This document provides:

- An introduction to the overall approach for the assessment
- An overview of methods used
- Issues for consideration when using these or similar methods.

It is based on the consultants' experience of carrying out the assessment in Kailahun, Sierra Leone over five and a half days in September 2015. The methods section contains an introduction to each method, notes about facilitation, and identification of some benefits of use. Please note, this document is not intended to be a comprehensive set of guidelines on delivering these methods. It is an accompaniment to the main report, *STAND STRONG: Women and politics, Kailahun, Sierra Leone*; both are part of Christian Aid's 2015 impact assessment on governance programming.

1.1 The assessment – rationale and aims

The assessment focused on Christian Aid's partner SEND and its Women in Governance Project in Kailahun district, Sierra Leone. Between 2008 and 2012 SEND developed the Kailahun Women in Governance Network (KWIGN), a network of women's groups linked to micro-finance opportunities. SEND supported women in the network to aspire for political and electable positions in the 2012 elections. As a result, between the 2008 and 2012 elections the number of women councillors in Kailahun increased from three to 12, out of a total of 29 councillors (41%), making it the only district to meet (and exceed) the national target of 30% women councillors.

The design of the assessment in Kailahun was informed by Christian Aid's generic Terms of Reference (TOR) for the four country assessments on governance programming. In addition, it responded to: interest from Christian Aid and SEND in using participatory methods; a commitment to prioritising the perspectives and experiences of women involved in the governance project in Kailahun; and a request for materials for communication as well as learning. The resulting assessment was also inevitably framed by resource and logistical considerations.

The purpose of this assessment was to look beyond the project's success in terms of numbers of women councillors elected, towards understanding the meaning and significance of women's increased involvement in politics - both for those directly involved in the project and other community stakeholders. In addition, through collaboration with project participants, the assessment aimed to explore and document their experiences, challenges, sources of support - and the changes resulting from their involvement in politics.

The following three research questions framed the work:

- How do women who have been involved in the project, experience and describe their participation in politics?
- How do others within the community perceive and experience women's increased involvement in politics?
- What are the development impacts and changes (for men, women and children) resulting from women's increased involvement in politics (actual, perceived, and/or anticipated)?

A detailed research plan is presented in the appendices.

1.2 The approach

A qualitative participatory research approach was adopted for this assessment. Participatory research is characterised by a commitment to 'democratising' processes of knowledge generation - redressing normative power dynamics inherent to research. It does this, in part, by seeking to support those who are the 'subjects' of research to play a more active role in the process. In this assessment this meant supporting participants: to inform the research agenda; to generate, analyse and manage data using a range of visual, discursive and collaborative techniques; and to determine how they and their communities are represented (both visually and in writing) to the wider audiences for the assessment.

The decision to adopt participatory approaches and share control of data collection and analysis with participants and co-researchers has a number of advantages. These include the potential to develop more sensitive and appropriate methods and questions, enabling inclusive and reflective dialogue, higher levels of engagement in the research, and the development of participants' skills, ownership and confidence. Potential challenges and limitations include the need for additional (or specialist) resources and time, risks to the quality, consistency and relevance posed by sharing control of data collection, and challenges for the lead researchers/writers in understanding, organising and making sense of the rich and 'messy' data generated through mixed methods and by multiple individuals.

1.3 Key elements and principles of our approach

- **Capacity-building** – the process integrates both training and support for co-researchers, who are drawn from NGO/CBO staff and the programme participants.
- **Safe and ethical practice** – the design of research activities prioritises the creation of a safe, sensitive and accessible research environment (both physical and non-physical) which engenders participation and is based on informed consent.
- **Transparency** – the process is designed to support participants to maintain control and understanding of any knowledge that is generated. Data is not understood as being 'extracted' from participants but rather developed and analysed by and with them.
- **Enabling participants to inform and steer the research agenda** – the participatory and inclusive nature of research methods supports participants to prioritise discussions according to their own experiences and perspectives, as opposed to those of the researchers;
- **Adopting a contextual perspective** – the consultants strive to understand participants' lives including and beyond a particular project. While the 'project' may determine the thematic framework for the research (in this case women and politics), discussion avoids taking a project-centric perspective in order to understand the wider context of participants' lives.
- **Prioritising first-hand accounts** – the assessment is underpinned by a belief in the importance, value and power of first-hand accounts. This recognises the validity of personal, subjective and verbal accounts of those with first-hand experience of development issues as an important form of evidence rather than solely prioritising written analyses of outside 'experts'.
- **A commitment to self-representation** – a recognition of the risks of misrepresentation by others; wherever possible, the tools of representation (cameras, audio recorders, pens and the task of transcription) are handed over to participants.

Through careful design, participatory research can enable learning, capacity building and communication to occur simultaneously. In the context of this assessment, the first-hand accounts, photographs and other visual material generated by co-researchers and participants provides material for learning as well as communication outputs for national and international audiences.

1.4 The research participants

A total of 45 women and men participated in the research: 33 women and 12 men. This included a core group of nine women councillors and nine members of the Kailahun Women's Governance Network, plus additional stakeholders including two political party representatives, two radio journalists, two SEND staff members, two staff members of CA, two male Town Chiefs and 17 men and women from Kailahun town and Nyandehun village¹.

1.5 The methods

This assessment engaged a small group of staff and project participants throughout the process as co-researchers: a woman councillor, a woman network member, two members of SEND staff and a staff member from Christian Aid Sierra Leone. These five co-researchers were provided with a training session, and were mentored throughout by the consultant.

The assessment design centred on participatory workshops with the core group of research participants (the women councillors and network members) using visual, theatre and video tools. The assessment also involved individual and small group interviews with a range of other stakeholders. While the women co-researchers were also research participants the two male co-researchers were not. The timetable for the assessment therefore ensured the workshop sessions would be women-only, by arranging for the male co-researchers to carry out interviews with other stakeholders while the workshops were taking place. A schedule for the assessment activities in Sierra Leone is presented below.

The language used in workshops was English. Interviews were in English, Kissi, Mende or Krio. Both interviews and workshop sessions were audio-recorded to provide first-hand accounts for use in both analysis and communication outputs. Video and photography were also used for a range of tasks: video vox pops with women research participants; portraits of the women; to capture aspects of the physical environment; and to document processes, notes, flip charts and visual representations produced during workshops.

The commitment to listening to (and recording) individual perceptions and experience generated a large number of transcripts of interviews and workshop sessions. Selected extracts from these are included throughout the main report and there are plans to share more of these first-hand accounts online and within discussion packs for supporter groups.



Councillor and co-researcher Theresa S Garber adding her contribution to the question: 'What is the most important thing/person/event that has enabled you to be a councillor?'

¹ Nyandehun village is located one and half hours' drive from Kailahun town

1.6 Timetable of assessment

The assessment took place between the 12 - 23 September 2015, with five and half days spent in Kailahun (rather than the intended six days). Below is the actual schedule of field research in Kailahun.

Overview of assessment activities in Kailahun, Sierra Leone, September 2015

Day	Date	Consultant-led activities	Co-researchers
Sun	13 Sept	Consultant arrives in Freetown following overnight flight	
Mon	14 Sept	AM Purchase necessary supplies, and security briefing PM travel Freetown to Kenema	
Tue	15 Sept	AM: Travel Kenema to Kailahun PM: Introductions, security preparations, and training session with co-researchers	
Wed	16 Sept	AM: Workshop with Women Councillors: Introductions, Jo Blagg activity, Start Life Maps, Video vox pops	AM: 2 Male co-researchers conduct 4 small group 'street' interviews with women, younger men, older men and a Mammy Queen.
		PM: Data organisation, write up, transcription, planning, and administration	
Thu	17 Sept	AM: Workshop with Women Councillors: Presenting Life Maps	AM: male co-researchers conduct individual interviews with two male Town Chiefs
		PM: Individual interviews with Councillors. Data organisation, write up, transcription, planning, and administration	
Fri	18 Sept	Thinking, organising, documentation/translation Co-researchers practicing photography	
Sat	19 Sept	AM: Workshop with Women Network Members: Introductions, Jo Blagg activity, Start Life Maps, Video vox pops PM: Data organisation, write up, transcription, planning, and administration	AM: 2 male co-researchers conduct 2 interviews with radio journalists and political party representatives PM: female co-researchers visit Nyandehun village and carry out 2 small group interviews with women
		AM Workshop: Women Network members: Presenting Life Maps PM: Joint Analysis, Closing discussions. Evening: Brief meeting with Joseph Ayamga	
Mon	21 Sept	AM: Travel to Freetown	
Tues	22 Sept	AM: Interview with Jeanne Kamara Steven Kaindaneh Christian Aid Sierra Leone and Travel to Airport Hotel PM: Data organisation and administration	

*Copies of all data and photographs were left with SEND in Kailahun. A draft version of the report of findings was sent to Christian Aid Sierra Leone and SEND with a request for comments and feedback, including from all co-researchers². According to SEND, one of the co-researchers, who runs a weekly radio programme, will broadcast findings following review of report.

² There was a specific request from the female co-researchers that we share our draft findings with them so that they can check that our report accurately represents them and their colleagues.

2. Overview of methods used

This section presents details of the three key participatory methods used. In each case, we provide an overview of their origins and use, a step by step list of the process involved and a summary of the strengths and benefits of each method, relating these to the experience of using them in Kailahun.

2.1 Training and working with co-researchers

As noted above, the assessment was designed to engage a small group of staff and programme participants as co-researchers. Training and building the capacity of local participants in research techniques is a commonly used method in participatory research. Sometimes referred to as 'peer research' this seeks to transfer partial ownership and control of the process to participants; demystify the research process; heighten relevance and engagement; and ensure that knowledge transfer and local capacity building take place.

Topics covered in the training (and handouts) in Kailahun included recording interviews, interviewer behaviour, informed consent, questioning skills, and transcription. Usually the consultants would involve co-researchers in the development of questions for interviews, but due to time limitations the consultants prepared a set of interview guides for the different stakeholders in advance of the fieldwork to support co-researchers with these interviews. It is important to point out that a training session for co-researchers should ideally last several days to ensure sufficient time for discussion, learning, practice and reflection. As indicated above, it is not possible to cover everything within one day.

Process of using co-researchers within the assessment

1. The consultants designed a one-day practical training session with accompanying handouts for co-researchers on carrying out recorded interviews³
2. Co-researchers worked in pairs to record interviews: the two male co-researchers carried out additional interviews (mostly with men) whilst women-only workshop sessions took place; and female co-researchers recorded small group interviews with women in a village located several hours drive from Kailahun.
3. Co-researchers, with guidance from the consultant, prepared sets of notes and/or full transcriptions of their (and others') recorded interviews.
4. The consultant facilitated a rapid 'analysis' session at the end of the fieldwork. This involved co-researchers first providing their own immediate responses to the three research questions. This was followed by co-researchers reviewing the responses of others and indicating if any were contradictory to the data they had collected. Finally, a group discussion took place to explore the meaning of any discrepancies. Time constraints and the associated need for focus during this task relied on strict time-keeping and the use of music to maintain the pace and keep the group energised.

Potential strengths and benefits of using co-researchers

- Builds skills and capacity of staff in partner organisations/programme participants through training and experiential learning.
- Increases likelihood of ownership and use of research process and outputs by local staff and partners as a result of their engagement going beyond logistics and administrative support for an external consultant.

³ Unfortunately, due to delays in departure from Freetown, the time available for staff training was reduced to half a day, resulting in the consultant only being able to deliver half the session and having to rely on the handouts to deliver the remainder. This meant we weren't able to engage so deeply with the ideas underpinning participatory research.

- Further refines the research process and heightens its relevance and feasibility for local participants through input from co-researchers (for example informing timings, participant selection, and making questions more relevant and appropriate).
- Increases scope and scale of research – enables more data collection to be undertaken simultaneously and the involvement of research participants who do not speak English.



Fatmata Swarray, network member and co-researcher, during the rapid analysis session. Kailahun, September 2015

2.2 Jo Blagg

The 'Jo Blagg' activity used in Kailahun has its origins in a much longer drama exercise developed by the Manchester Theatre in Prisons Project (<http://www.tipp.org.uk/>). The version used in this assessment is developed by Jane Martin and focuses mainly on character generation. Fictional characters or scenarios are commonly used as research tools when discussing sensitive issues or those which people may consider taboo. These techniques provide a degree of distance: supporting people to draw on their own experiences without explicitly making personal associations to the subject matter. It is a tool which enables equal opportunities for participation, as no one individual's personal experience is privileged.

In Kailahun, during the Jo Blagg activity, group members were facilitated to develop a fictional character; one who shares aspects of their own identity, but who remains fictional. This enabled group members to talk about a range of issues with which they may not have wanted to associate personally. For example, while it may not have been appropriate to ask individuals to share personal experiences of gender-based violence in the group setting, we could ask whether the character they created - 'Sao'⁴ - ever suffers from domestic violence.

Process of using 'Jo Blagg' activity within the assessment

1. Within the workshop, the facilitator asked for two volunteers: one lies on a large spread of paper on the floor, the other draws around them to create the outline of a person⁵.

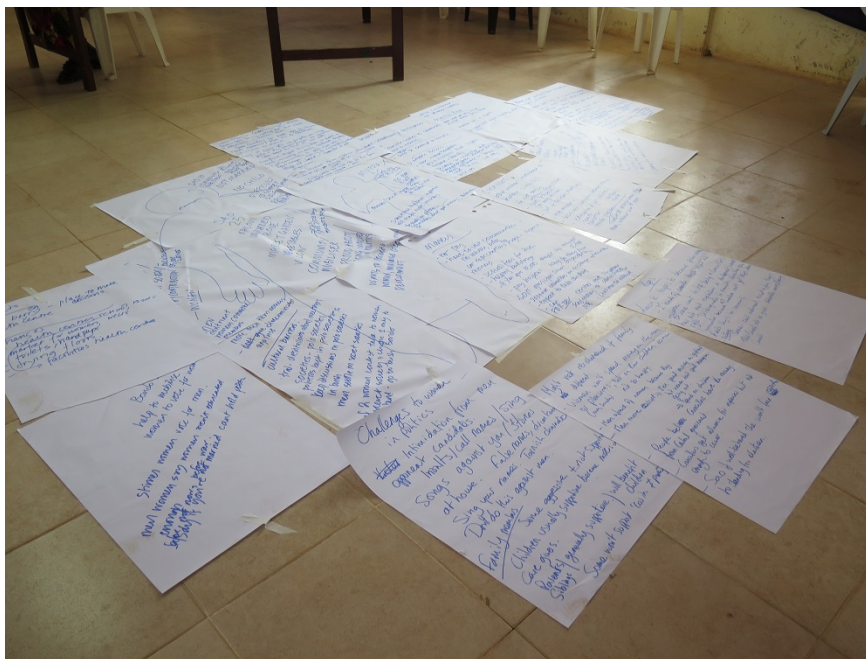
⁴ This was the name suggested by participants; it is a name that works in both Kissi and in Mende.

⁵ If participants are not comfortable with this, an outline can be drawn free hand by the facilitator.

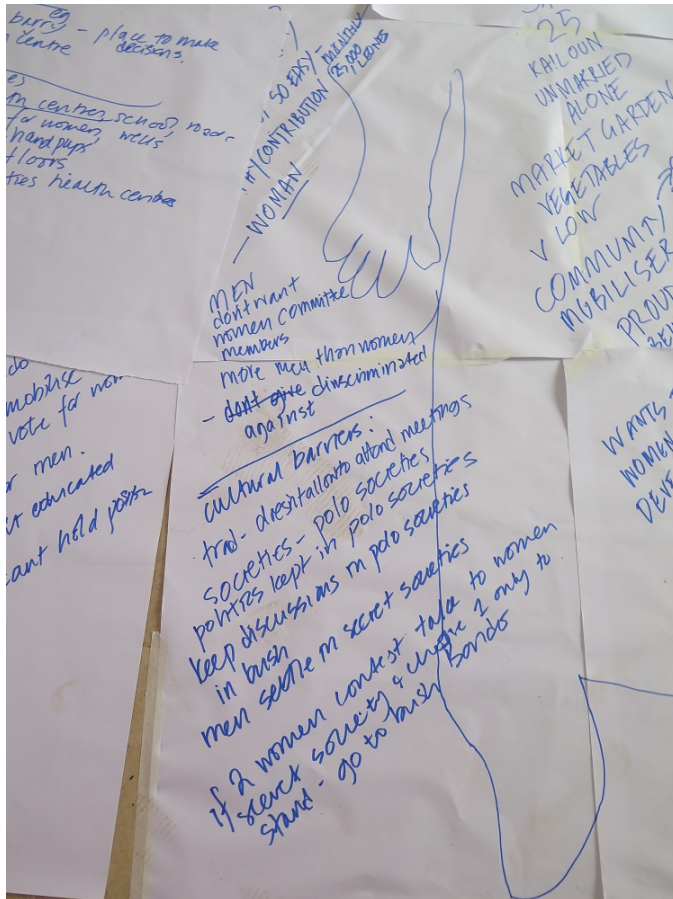
2. The facilitator enabled the group to build an archetypal character. In Kailahun she was either a woman councillor or a network member depending on the group of research participants we were working with. The character was given a name, biographical and family details.
3. Further facilitation and questioning lead to further character development. For example, the group was asked, 'How is Sao feeling today?' and 'What makes Sao happy?'
4. This archetype was used to explore the research questions using a range of open questions, and probing where necessary. For example, 'What are the main challenges facing Sao in her role as a councillor?' 'Did her family members support her decision to stand for election?'

Some benefits of using Jo Blagg as a research method

- A fast and fun activity, generating lots of discussion and data in a short amount of time.
- Supports a more democratic discussion than a regular focus group, through the development of a shared fictional character in which no single individual's experience is privileged.
- Elicits discussion about both thoughts and feelings - through the focus on an individual character - as well as discussion on external factors influencing the character's decisions and actions.
- Facilitates safe discussion of sensitive issues through working with a fictional character rather than drawing on individuals' personal experiences.



Data on women in politics generated from woman councillors telling the story of an imaginary character in the Jo Blagg activity. Kailahun, September 2015



Record of the discussion on male secret societies during the Jo Blagg activity with women councillors. Kailahun, September 2015.

2.3 Life Maps

Practitioners in a variety of fields (including personal development) use 'Life Mapping' to describe many different processes and activities. It is a potentially powerful activity for a group of people who will be – or are – working together, as a way of learning about and gaining respect for different members, uncovering shared challenges and opportunities which can strengthen group dynamics and advocacy strategies.

Jane’s approach allows for creative expression, and participants use any method they want to help them to tell a story about their life, or describe an aspect of their life, to their peers or colleagues. Drawing is often used, using a river as a metaphor. Drawing helps the storyteller to think about their life and the story they want to tell and it also helps the storyteller to share their story with others without using a script.

The process draws on structured, therapeutic principles, including making sure each person has equal fixed amounts of time for both creating and sharing their story. Facilitator(s) remind storytellers not to include anything they wish to keep private. Most people enjoy the process; for many it is the first time they have been listened to uninterrupted for a significant amount of time. It is important to acknowledge the time required to use this method properly, in terms of both facilitation time and managing the data generated.

Process of using Life Mapping within the assessment

1. The facilitator introduced the activity by drawing her own life map and sharing the questions she asks herself while producing it – questions about her own engagement with politics. In Kailahun she had a list of possible questions for participants including:
 - What does politics mean to you? Why are you engaged with it? Why you and not somebody else? What happened in your life that made you politically engaged? Think of specific events. What are the most important turning points in your life?
 - What do people near you think about your political engagement? Does it cause you any problems? Does it make you want to stop? Who is supportive? Does it make people see you differently?
2. Participants were provided with pens and paper and given an hour to develop their own life maps.
3. Participants then delivered the life maps to each other. (Depending on time available and number of participants, this might be done in a whole group or in several small groups.) In Kailahun each person was given 45 minutes for their own story: they were told that they can use this time as they like, but the focus must be on that one person's story and life map including sharing it with the group, others asking them questions about what they have drawn or presented, and/or time spent in silent reflection. After 45 minutes have passed, the group moved on to another individual and their life map and story.⁶
4. At the end of the session, each woman was photographed with her life map and took it away with her.



Life map produced by councillor Jamie Kpange. Kailahun, September 2015

Some benefits of using life maps as a research method

- Generates information and awareness of the factors and circumstances that have led to individual's position and role today.

⁶ Ideally the activity is carried out in one group with everyone hearing everyone's stories. Following the presentation of the life maps the group would process what they had heard and learnt by exploring shared themes, and similarities and differences emerging from the life maps within the framework of the research. This was not possible with the time constraints in Kailahun.

- Reveals shared experiences across a group and shared challenges/barriers and strategies for overcoming them.
- Enables everyone to contribute equally; there is no privileging of one person’s story – everyone’s story is heard and everyone has the same amount of time to tell their story.
- Provides space for individuals to tell their story the way they want to tell it (as opposed to answering an interviewer’s questions). Questions from peers come *after* the presentation of the story.
- Creates compelling oral personal stories and visual materials for communication/advocacy purposes.



Network member Iye E B Mustaph reflects on her life during a workshop activity in Kailahun, September 2015.



Network Members share life stories during a workshop activity in Kailahun, September 2015. L-R: Alice N Ngevaio, Mariama Jalloh, Fatmata Swarray.

3. Working with participatory methods: issues for consideration

3.1 Technical and equipment

- Ensure adequate budget for equipment.
- Equipment must be easy to use: Flip cameras have a smaller capacity than Zoom recorders for recording audio but are easier for people to learn to use.
- Using the same model of recorder means that you can teach a group once, rather than once per model, and saves a lot of time.
- If using organisational laptops, ensure that data can easily be moved on and off them without encryption, firewalls and restrictions on adding software.
- Ensure memory cards are clean before using, and are a suitable size for at least four hours of audio recording (16GB or more usually).
- If audio is not being recorded for broadcast, set recorders to record in MP3 mode rather than WAV. MP3 audio files are much smaller allowing more audio to be recorded on a single memory card and making file transfer quicker.
- Only use personal mobile phones for recording if you know how to get the data off.
- Ensure you bring enough batteries for all recording planned and a 50% contingency. In some places it can be difficult to source decent quality batteries and electricity supply can be intermittent.
- Remember (and remind IT staff) that you may well not have internet access, and so cannot access online help for any technical problems.



Transcribing interviews; on the left can be seen equipment for preventing Ebola infection. L-R: Claire Bamberger, Abdulai Walon-Jalloh and Charles Momoh

3.2 Safety and security

- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and security restrictions can have a critical effect on the duration and type of participatory activities.
- SOPs and security information needs to be available well before the trip begins, not during, so that provision can be made to accommodate these in research design and appropriate methods selected.

3.3 Planning and timetabling

- Partners require clear and timely communication on the criteria for and numbers of participants (both research participants and any co-researchers).

- Research participants require clear communication on their participation, in terms of days, timings and activities.
- Consult with partners and participants in advance to ensure timings and locations for activities are appropriate and comfortable.
- The transfer of power, knowledge and control that is inherent in working with participatory approaches does mean that data collection can take more time than in non-participatory research.
- Important to ensure that the workplan/timetable has contingency time built into it for unexpected delays.
- Regularly review timetable with partner and co-researchers to ensure on-going shared understanding of time involved, expectations etc.

3.4 Participants' comfort: space and refreshments

- If your work includes bringing groups of people together, ensure that travel and refreshment arrangements can be easily put in place, and that finance is available for this as opposed to this being an additional cost for a partner organisation.
- Make sure the food arrives at pre-arranged times on time – when the workshop breaks for lunch the food should be ready. Activities are designed around builds and drops in energy – having refreshments available at these times works with the natural flow. The energy developed from completing a successful activity quickly diminishes when the next 10 minutes are spent wondering where the food is!
- The working space is really important. Participatory activities are generally done in a flexible space where people can work individually, in circles, and in small groups. Heavy tables in a classroom set-up are difficult, and rarely required. It's important to read through the space requirements and discuss if anything won't be possible.



Network members and the research team take a welcome stretching break during a workshop in Kailahun, September 2015.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 List of Relevant Resources

Participatory research

A useful reference site for information on participatory research is:
<http://www.participatorymethods.org/task/research-and-analyse>

Participatory evaluation

Useful overview and discussion of using participatory approaches in evaluation and assessment
http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/participatory_evaluation

Peer research

Many of the pros and cons we experienced are highlighted here:
https://www.shu.ac.uk/_assets/pdf/hccj-ResearchMethodology.pdf

Oral testimony

Giving Voice: Practical Guidelines for implementing oral testimony projects (Panos London, 2001) Out of print but file version available from siobhan@oraltestimony.org and at <http://panos.org.uk/wp-content/files/1999/01/Giving-Voice-English.pdf>

Joe Blagg

<http://www.c-linq.nl/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Blagg-final-report.pdf>
<http://www.tipp.org.uk/projects/training-support/>
<http://www.conspiretheatre.org/the-blagg/441/>

Life Maps

<http://www.kstoolkit.org/River+of+Life>
<http://www.reflect-action.org/rivers>

Appendix 2: Research plan

Overall Aims

The Sierra Leone country study is being commissioned as part of CA's wider organisational assessment of its work on accountable governance. The aim of the wider assessment is to:

- To generate evidence of the impact CA's work has had
- To generate learning across Christian Aid – on discrete areas of work, but also on how connections are made across the organisation on different pieces of work.

This plan is a working document, we welcome criticism and ideas from Christian Aid and SEND staff in Sierra Leone. This current version is based on the initial TOR from Kate Newman/Kate Bingley, review of project documents by Christian Aid and SEND, other background research by the consultants and very useful phone conversations and information from Joseph (SEND) and Abdulai (CA).

Outline of proposed schedule

Day	Date	Activity	Overnight
Sat	12 Sept	<i>Travel London-Casablanca-Freetown depart LHR 19:50 arr FNA 09:45 Sun</i>	
Sun	13 Sept	Consultant prep and rest	Freetown
Mon	14 Sept	Travel Freetown to Kailahun	Kailahun
Tue	15 Sept	Training and planning day with co-researchers	Kailahun
Wed	16 Sept	AM Workshop: Women Councillors; PM write-up	Kailahun
Thu	17 Sept	AM Workshop: Women Councillors; PM additional interviews	Kailahun
Fri	18 Sept	Thinking, organising, documentation/translation day	Kailahun
Sat	19 Sept	AM Workshop: Women Network members; PM additional interviews, community level	Kailahun
Sun	20 Sept	AM Workshop: Women Network members; Write-up and Joint Analysis	Kailahun
Mon	21 Sept	Wrap-up meeting with Joseph and co-researchers Travel to Freetown	Freetown
Tues	22 Sept	Interview with Jeanne/Steven; PM Travel to Airport	Airport
Wed	23 Sept	Travel Freetown-Casablanca-London Depart FNA 05:00 arr LGW 15:20	

Research participants and methods

The **core group of research participants will be a sample of women who participate in SEND's Women in Governance programme**. There will be two groups, each of 6-8 women.

Group 1: Women who were elected as councillors during the 2012 elections

Group 2: A sample of women who are network members, ideally drawn from two network groups.

Additional research participants

We estimate that there will be total of 9 'slots' for additional interviews (see schedule). We propose the following:

1	Audio vox pops with members of the public (men and women)
2	Traditional leaders (male) Focus Group
3	Media representatives – Individual interview/small group
4	Follow-up interview with women workshop participants
5	Follow-up interview with women workshop participants
6	Non-network members (women) at community level – 1 or 2 small groups (younger women and older)
7	Young men at community level – small group
8	Individual interview with political party representative
9	Individual interview with political party representative

Methods

Our priority will be to create opportunities for the core group of research participants (women) to share their experiences and perspectives through both interactive workshops with small groups using visual and theatre exercises; and also spaces for individual stories (recorded interviews and life mapping).

Documentation and transcription

The research will be designed to record programme participant's first-hand accounts for both accuracy re data as well as supporting a valuable set of resources for effective communication. There is a balance to be achieved in terms of amount of data; and ability for good quality transcription and organisation of data so that it can be used. Co-researchers will be required to undertake some transcription/translation in addition to data-gathering activities.

Research Questions

Overall Aim: Assessing the impact of women's increased participation in politics, Kailahun, Sierra Leone

Research Questions

Core questions for majority of research participants

- How do women experience and describe their participation in politics?
- How do others experience and perceive women's greater involvement in politics?
- Development impact/changes for (men, women and children) resulting from women's greater involvement in politics? (Actual, perceived, anticipated)

Additional questions for SEND/Christian Aid staff and to emerge from interviews with other research participants

- Lessons learnt re programming
- Relationship between programming/networks and Ebola

1. How do women experience and describe their participation in political/governance processes?

For network members

- Reasons for being involved in network? (Or reasons for not being involved – why do some women get involved and others don't? – *explore non-involvement*)
- Any challenges relating to involvement in the network? Difficulties for participation? (Is time an issue/other responsibilities, how do women manage this?)
- Benefits of involvement in the network? Disadvantages?
- Why is it important that women are involved in politics?
- Attitudes/response from others about involvement in network: Family (men and women), community (men and women)
- Explore impact of women's political participation on status/position of women in household, in community: changes in household and community relations for women involved in the network, and women elected as councillors – i.e. has participation in the programme/election increased women's social/economic power?
- Personal change as a result of involvement in network/as councillor? General changes for women?
- Are women involved in any other groups/networks aside from the Network?
- How does the network relate to other structures in the community? Is the network a platform for communicating women's concerns?
- Does the presence of a network in the community, change things for women?
- Apart from the network, are there other groups/organisations in the community that women are, or are not part of?
- Did all women in the network vote for women councillors? Which is more important to you – a woman councillor, or someone representing the political party you support? *How does network accommodate political differences between women?*

Similar versions of the questions above will be asked to women councillors and women non-members

For councillors

Similar questions to above but focused on their experiences of being an elected councillor

- How have women councillors experienced their political lives?
- What's the relationship between women's political involvement locally and nationally?
- What are your aspirations/expectations for the next election? Do you want to remain involved, stand down? Why?

For non-members

- Have they heard of the Women in Governance network? What do they know about it?
- Is there a group in their community/nearby community?
- Have they ever thought about becoming a member? Why? Why not?
- Can any women join or is it easier for some women to join the network?
- What could be the benefits/disadvantages of being a member?

- Do they have a male or female councillor representing their area?
- What do they think about women councillors?
- What difference does it make to the community to have a women councillor?
- What do they think about the increase in women councillors in the last election?
- Advantages of women in politics? Disadvantages?

2. How do others experience, perceive and respond to women's greater involvement in politics?

Some questions included above, in terms of women sharing experiences of others' response/attitudes to their involvement in network or as councillors. As well as of course the response from others we will interview (women non-members,

(Current perceptions, levels of support, changes in practice and structure, plans for the future, adoption of gender action plan etc)

- What do you think about the Women's Network? Are any of your relatives involved?
- What are the benefits/disadvantages of women being part of a network?
- Why do you think more women were elected as councillors in the 2012 election than in the 2008 Election?
- Do you think it's important to have more women involved in politics?
- What difference does it make to the community to have a women councillor?
- What do you think will happen in the next election?

3. Development impact/changes resulting from women's greater involvement in politics? (Actual, perceived, anticipated)

- What happens when women become more involved in politics?
- What are women's key development needs and priorities?
- Are they able to address these through governance network?
- What actual changes have they seen as a result of their involvement in the network/ as a result of having women elected as councillors?
- What are their aspirations for changes in the future for themselves, their children?
- Explore any changes in women's economic and social lives, as well as their health and well-being.

We appreciate that women councillors can also potentially have a positive impact on others in the community, not just women and will tailor these questions accordingly.

Questions below are more for SEND and CA SL. Whilst we expect that SEND and Ebola will come up in discussions and interviews with women and other stakeholders, answers to the questions below are more likely to come from interviews with SEND and CA staff, and perhaps some stakeholders. We will take guidance from SEND and CA SL on how to include questions about Ebola with research participants

Women in governance programming in Sierra Leone, lessons learnt

How has SEND's approach to involving women in politics changed over time?

What are the current challenges to strengthening the network + promoting women's involvement in politics? Why do CA support this work?

Are there approaches/strategies by SEND/women that can be replicate in other areas?

Is it confident that the changes put in place are sustainable?

Relationship between Women in Governance programming and Ebola crises

How/did response to Ebola benefit from structures/networks/empowerment from Women in Governance programming?

How did Ebola crises affect ongoing governance activities? Have those been able to resume?

How did the Ebola crisis interact with the experience of people in this programme – how sustainable was the previous intervention in the face of the Ebola crisis, did increased women's participation in governance systems have any bearing on the local response to Ebola etc. Why and how did this happen, what has been the impact and what can we learn?

Outputs

1) Guidance note on Methods

The consultants will produce a 5-8 page document providing an overview of the methods used in the assessment to support CA's aim to increase the types of evidence it gathers to demonstrate impact and improve learning.

2) A short report to share key themes and key learning

A 5-10 page report outlining key themes emerging from the assessment and outlining key learning issues for Christian AID. This report will not be illustrated by the data (interview extracts, photographs, images etc) but will serve as an overview of key themes.

3) Organised, fully-referenced selection of data

A selection of first-hand accounts (depending on transcription/translation) organised by both theme and individual

4) A selection of photographs

of individuals, activities, and images-produced during the research – organised by theme and individual.

3) and 4) This data will be for both CA and Sierra Leone for their use in future communication pieces.

5) A shorter selection of materials for sharing at the CA Board meeting

The consultants will produce a small selection of images and extracts – fully referenced and edited, for CA to use as copy for presentation materials at its Board meeting.

6) To prepare and participate in a Consultant's workshop

Detailed plan for time in Kailahun

Day 1: Kailahun, Tuesday 15th September Training and planning day with Co-researchers

Abdulai Wallon-Jalloh, CA Sierra Leone (male)
Charles Momoh, SEND Project officer (male)
Jeneba Combey, SEND Project officer (female)
Lucy Gondor, Network President (female)
Theresa Satta Garba, Councillor/Network secretary (female)

9-10	Meet SEND staff, review week/logistics etc
10-10.30	Tea/coffee
10.30 -11.00	Introducing Assessment/Overview
11.00-12.00	Themes and Questions overview
12.00-1	Interviews: recording equipment, interview relationships, using consent forms
1-2	Lunch
2-3.30	Session 3: Interviewing in pairs, 3 audio recorders (2 from CA and 1 from Jane) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abdulai and Charles• Jeneba and Jane• Lucy and Theresa
3.30 - 4	Tea break/reflecting on interviews
4-5	Organising data; Trial handwritten transcription or typed if laptops available.

Resulting data

5, 30-40 minute recorded interviews in English.

Each person responsible for transcribing the interview in which they were the interviewer (aside from Jeneba and Jane, when Jeneba will transcribe the interview carried out by Jane)

Day 2, Kailahun, Wednesday 16th September

AM: Workshop 1 with Women Councillors

PM: Analysis and write-up

Abdulai and Charles will spend morning carrying out audio vox-pops around the town, using the question – aiming to talk to a ‘representative’ group of adults, male and female, young and old. If this method is approved by SEND and CA. If not undertake interviews with additional stakeholders as agreed.

Women and politics, what do you think?

AM: Workshop 1 with Women Councillors – Jo Blagg (talking generally)

9-9.30	Warm-up
9.30-10.30	Session 1: Joe Blagg?
10.30-11	Tea break
11-12	Session 2
12-1	Session 3

Documentation

Language of workshop sessions will be English, Clare will take notes, sessions will also be recorded
Resulting data: Annotated flip charts, notes, 2-3 hours of complex audio, up to 10 short vox pops

PM: Analysis and write-up with co-researchers

2-2.30	Reflecting on morning’s session and Vox Pops
2.30-3	Abdulai and Charles to work on transcription of Vox Pops and key info about informants Jane/Clare and 3 women co-researchers to manage write-up of morning’s workshop + complete transcriptions of Day 1’s interviews?
3-5	Transcription, Data organising. Working tea.

Day 3, Kailahun. Thursday 17th September

Abdulai and Charles will do focus group with Traditional Leaders in the morning and write-up in the afternoon.
Recorded, and one take notes.

AM: Workshop 2 with Women Councillors – Life mapping (talking personally)

9-9.30	Warm-up
9.30-10.30	Session 1
10.30-11	Tea break
11-12	Session 2
12-1	Session 3

Documentation: Language of workshop will be English, Representations of life maps on flip charts
Audio recordings of presentation of life maps. *Both recorders will be in use, plus phone if 3 groups.*

PM: Additional interviews

2-3.30	Follow-up interview with 1 woman councillor
2-3.30	Follow-up interview with 1 woman councillors
3.30 - 5	Transcription

Resulting data: 2 hours of simple audio (English?) + notes; Flip charts, 4-5 hours of complex audio (Life maps and Traditional leaders Focus Group)

Day 4, Kailahun

Friday 18th September

Reflection, Organising Data, Write-up/Transcription

10-11	Discuss data collection to date: workshops, vox pops, focus group interviews, individual interviews. Reflect on what worked well and any lessons learned. Any amendments for next workshop sessions/interviews
11 – 11.30	Ensure all consent forms, audio files, transcripts and photos are named re a system.
11.30 – 12.30	Discuss emerging issues/findings
12.30 – 1.30	Lunch
1.30 - 3	Individual transcription
3.30 - 4	Refreshments
4 - 5	Individual transcription

Day 5, Kailahun, Saturday 19th September

Abdulai and Charles to interview media representative

AM: Workshop 1 with Network members – Jo Blagg (talking generally)

9-9.30	Warm-up
9.30-10.30	Session 1: Joe Blagg?
10.30-11	Tea break
11-12	Session 2
12-1	Session 3

Documentation

Language of workshop sessions will be English, Clare will take notes, sessions will also be recorded

Resulting data: Annotated flip charts, notes, 2-3 hours of complex audio, 1 hour simple audio

PM: Additional interviews at community level

2-3	Travel and greetings/introduction
3 - 5	Small group interview with women (non-members) – Jane and translator
3-5	Small group interview with women (non-members) – Other two
	Small group interview with men – Abdulai and Charles

Resulting data: 3 – 5 hours of complex audio. Not in English.

Day 6, Kailahun, Sunday 20th September

AM: Workshop 2 with Network members

Abdulai and Charles to interview political parties (2 interviews)

AM: Workshop 2 with Network Members – Life mapping (talking personally)

9-10.30	Warm-up and session 1
10.30-11	Tea break
11-1	Session 2 + Session 3

Documentation

Language of workshop will be English, Representations of life maps on flip charts, Audio recordings of presentation of life maps. *Both recorders will be in use, plus Jane's phone if there are 3 groups.*

Resulting data: Flip charts, 3-4 hours of complex audio

PM: Write-up and analysis

2-2.30	Reflecting on morning's session
2.30-5.00	Write-up, organising data, analysis (working afternoon tea) Work on presentation for other staff

Day 7, Kailahun

Monday 21st September

Kailahun to Freetown, Possible meeting with Joseph 9AM if possible to leave at 10 (Dependent on weather and road conditions)

Day 8, Freetown

Tuesday 22nd September

9-11: Debrief at Christian AID office

Interview with Jeanne and/or Steven

Travel to Airport and check in hotel.

Overview of Research Participants/Methods/Researchers

Research Participants	Method	Language/Researcher?
4 SEND staff (3 women, 1 man) + Abdulai	5 individual interviews (part of training)	English, in pairs
8 Women Councillors	2 Workshop sessions with 8 women, 2 individual interviews with 2 of the women	Jane + 3 women co-researchers
8 Network Members	2 Workshop sessions with 8 women	Jane + 3 women co-researchers
4 Traditional Leaders	1 Small Group Interview	Abdulai + Charles
1-2 Media representatives	1 interview	Abdulai + Charles
4 women community level (non-members)	1 Small Group Interview	Jane + 2 co-researchers
4 men community level	1 Small Group Interview	Abdulai + Charles
2 Political Parties	2 Individual interviews	Abdulai + Charles
2 CA staff	1 Small Group Interview	Jane
10 members of public (5 men, 5 women)	Recorded vox-pops	Abdulai + Charles

Estimated total, up to 48 research participants

Women: 29

Men: 19

Data totals

- 4, 4-hour workshop sessions in English (priority to organise/transcribe in-situ)
- 11 individual interviews in English (some of these could be outsourced for transcription if small budget available for this).
- 3 small group interviews (local language, must be transcribed in situ)
- 10 Vox Pops – to be transcribed in situ.