

FoRUT  
PEER REVIEW REPORT 2021



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## 1. BACKGROUND

FoRUT undertook a peer review process to scrutinize its strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and to promote ongoing learning and ways of seeking feedback from multiple stakeholders about our various interventions and their impact. The learning and information generated from the peer review processes informed all other aspects of our accountability and transparency, learning and planning approaches. It is based on this background that the peer review for our various programmes was carried out.

This event took place in Western Area, Moyamba and Port Loko Districts. This process sets the manner in which we start programme implementation for 2022. It also ensures that we gathered lots of information from district and community stakeholders that can be used as a tool to ensure quality assurance whilst we deliver on our various strategic objectives. This Peer review is also more relevant as FoRUT enters the second year of implementing its strategic plan “Surprise 2.0’. We were able to achieve this task based on the following viewpoints: understanding the local context, analysis from various stakeholders in respect with FoRUT programme interventions, community understanding of our programme interventions and feedback on outcomes, review of documents, staff and partner review.

## 2. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

- **Political** – The following are leaders at chiefdom level: Paramount Chief, Chiefdom Speaker, Section Chief, Town Chief/ Headman, Chairlady, Chiefdom Youth Leader and Village Youth Leader. In the three districts, the political structures are as follows: City councils (CC), District Councils (DC), Ward Development Committee (WDC) and Village Development Committee (VDC). In the last one year, the three districts (Western Area, Port Loko and Moyamba) experienced no political unrest. Political unrest happens mostly during and immediately after elections. There is still low participation of women in politics over the last one year. However, The Paramount Chief of Kangbora Chiefdom was not happy with the way the youth leader of Konbora Chiefdom was selected by government due to the government policy and he thinks that the process is a recipe for conflict in the chiefdom. Furthermore, some community members in Port Loko and Western Area complained that they feel abandoned by their Member of Parliaments (MPs) and Councillors. They expect their MPs to visit their communities and give update on development projects, laws and policies that will affect their lives. The MPs only come to communities during elections to solicit their votes. Nevertheless, in Tombo, community members admitted having a cordial relationship with the MP and counsellor. There is a significant improvement in terms of women participating in decision making in the three districts due to women’s rights NGOs interventions
- **Economic** - Production of food crops, such as rice, cassava, groundnut, and sweet potato, are the main livelihood sources for most of the communities in Port Loko Moyamba and Western Rural districts. Petty trading, animal husbandry, gang labour, coal and small scale mining are other sources of livelihood. There are areas around Port Loko such as Kamathor and Royema which are known for bauxite mining and has served as a source of livelihood for most young people. Cost of living has been very high in the period covered 2020 – 2021. Community members reported that their daily average earning is estimated at ten thousand Leones (Le 10,000) for both men and women. Most of the men use their income

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on alcohol, food and education of their children whilst women used their money on clothing, trading and educating their children. Many of the youth are unskilled and unemployed because of limited education and unemployable skills and livelihood opportunities. Those whose sources of livelihood were severely affected in 2020 were not able to fully recover in 2021. Community members who benefit from the Community Credit and Savings Associations (CoCSAs) have a secure source of micro-loans that they invest in on-farm and non-farm micro-enterprises.

- **Health** – The diseases that affected most of the members in communities are diarrhoea, malaria, cough and common cold. The health centres are mostly visited by pregnant women, lactating mothers and under five children. Most of the Peripheral Health Units (PHUs) are understaffed and lack essential drugs. The attitude of PHU staff is poor. Most of them leave the health centres to attend meetings and workshops. Community members call and pay for the service of an ambulance when there are serious medical cases. The health facilities serve the communities and its environs, and they treat and make referrals to the district headquarter towns as and when the need arises. In communities such as Mano Koya and Mofornah community members have challenges with emergency care particularly at night. Mano Koya in Western Area complained that they do not usually benefit from the free bed net distribution for malaria control. There is strict enforcement of community bye laws for home deliveries, levying a fine of Le50, 000 for women who deliver at home. Community people attested to the fact that Government has been raising awareness on adolescent sexual and reproductive health services which is offered at the health centre. Covid Vaccine uptake is highest in Tombo in the Western Rural District and most of the communities in Moyamba and Port Loko District (Magbenka, Mafora, Mapatheh, Kareneh, Maronka and Ropollon). Most of the communities visited said that, they did not have cases of COVID – 19 in the communities whilst they continue to adhere to all covid 19 protocols. The introduction of Potato pap, a potato-based pap infant feed supplement of Bennimix that is very high in protein and vitamins is improving infant and child malnutrition in Tombo. Community members have started growing the variety of potatoes to enhance household nutrition.
- **Food Security** - There is a general agreement that food affordability, accessibility and availability is difficult. Generally there has been poor harvest in all of the communities. For example, in Mafora community, harvest in 2020 was a bit better as compared to 2021 due to the erratic weather condition which interrupted farming activities. In Bauya, community pest infestation has been a major challenge for the farmers which also led to poor harvest.
- **Education** – Many more children are attending school because of the Free Quality School Education Programme. However, there are many factors that limit access and quality of education. Parents continue to unfairly bear the cost of illegal charges even though most of the schools have been approved and are provided with learning and teaching materials and subsidies. Local authorities continue to complain that heads of schools demand extra charges from parents. They reported that the Quality Assurance Officers of Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education do not effectively monitor heads of schools to ensure that they adequately supervise teachers. Community members stated that volunteer teachers are more committed than trained and qualified teachers with pin codes. Participants in Waterloo informed the review team that there are more private schools than government-assisted schools in Western Area. Teachers in government-assisted schools

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prioritise private tutoring where they earn extra income. Some teachers in government-assisted schools also teach in private schools because of lack of supervision or connivance with heads of schools. Pupils in most of the communities in Moyamba and Port Loko performed poorly in National Primary School Examinations (NPSE), Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), and West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) last year due to untrained and unqualified teachers. For example, in Magbenka community, sixty-seven (67) pupils took the NPSE with two (2) passes and seven (7) took the BECE with no pass. Trained and qualified teachers who are supported from the communities end up leaving the communities after graduation in search of jobs and pin codes elsewhere. Although Tombo has one of the best WASSCE result and Movement of Faith Secondary School in Mapatheh did extremely well in 2021 WASSCE yet quality education is still poor. Gender Alert Groups (GAGs), one of the community structures, monitor school attendance and retention in Tombo. Their actions have reduced delinquency in schools. Despite this progress, child labour and apprenticeship in the fishing sector affects completion and quality of children's education.

- **Peace and Safety** – In 2021, most of the target communities in Moyamba, Port Loko and Western Rural Districts have no security threat. Communities have bye laws that guide the behaviour of people in communities. Those who violate the bye laws are fined and authorities ensure that violators pay their fine. There are isolated cases of violence against women and girls which are reported to the police. For instance, in Bauya, a case of sexual penetration was referred to the Family Support Unit and followed up by GAG members. Contrastingly, Mano Koya a community in the Western Area reported security threats in 2021, but the police responded swiftly to the call of the community leaders who reported. Theft is common in Kissi Town. For example, robbers stole a door in a school. Response of security enforcement officers to incidents of theft is very slow.
- **Accident and injuries** – All the communities visited in Western Area reported that accidents and injuries occur among bike riders. Port Loko and Moyamba have low incidences of motor bikes accidents but incidence of snake bites, injuries from farm tools and mysterious fire in selected communities are a major concern.
- **Disaster** - Disaster such as flooding occurs seldom in Mano Koya in Western Rural district and in isolated cases in Moyamba district. Okada accident rate is very low in their communities since 2020 – 2021. However, there are minor incidences wounding and snake bites during burning and clearing of farms for cultivation
- **Shelter** - Housing conditions in most of the communities are deplorable in the three districts. Most of the houses are prepared by mud. Most of the houses are overcrowded and sometimes caused diseases among people in communities. Storage facility has been problematic for some members of the communities. In some communities there are no stores for farmers to store their products as a result, most of their crops are wasted There is no significant change in women acquiring land and owning houses. In Mano Koya and Kissi Town that are densely populated, women can own land in all the communities visited both by acquisition and inheritance.

### 3. REVIEW METHODOLOGY

The peer review was commissioned from the 10<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The exercise was undertaken at Moyamba, Port Loko and Western Area district offices and some selected communities within these districts. Specially constituted meetings were held with partners,

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district stakeholders, host staff and communities to source the data. The review covered 77 communities and interacted with 282 participants (133 male 149 female). The host staff at the respective districts had the primary responsibility to mobilize community and district stakeholders. In doing this, meetings were summoned (physical, via telephones and emails for staff, partners and some representatives of village development committees (VDC) . During that meeting the following were agreed upon: location for the community meeting, selection of community representatives based on numbers, gender and the roles of various stakeholders. Letters were also distributed to partners and district stakeholders informing them about the date and location of the various activities. The Host staff also supported the review team with all the necessary logistics and provided guidance during our interrogation into the issues. The team made use of specific peer review guides that were used for communities, partners, staff and district stakeholders. We also used the peer review report outline for the consolidation of the report . The process lasted for six days:

- Day 1
  - Travel to the various location
  - Planning meeting with review team
  - Review of various review tools
  - Distribution of task to team members
- Day 2
  - Review meeting with district stakeholders, partners and staff on the operations of the district in 2021
  - Meeting with host staff on programme implementation in 2021.
  - A detailed review of working documents
- Day 3
  - Meeting with communities
  - Commencement of report writing
- Day 4
  - Report Writing
- Day 5
  - Editing and Compilation
  - Review team travel back to various Lo
- Day 6
  - National compilation of the report

During the meeting with district stakeholders, staff and partners, the review ascertained performance as against critical success factors, including output and outcome indicators, budget utilization and schedule, number of people reached, what worked well and what did not, and recommendations for improvements in our operations to ameliorate the challenges and weaknesses. The team also ascertained the visibility of FoRUT interventions, the level of collaboration and synergy between partners and stakeholders, and the impact of the interventions in the lives of the beneficiaries in our communities. The team also took note of all the concerns coping mechanisms, relevance of the interventions and suggestions to improve programme design and implementation. Case stories and testimonies were also collected.

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Members of the review team who were further divided into groups comprising of facilitators and note takers, facilitated field visits. The following participatory tools were used: focused group discussion, observations, and key informant interviews. To promote inclusion and encourage full participation, the various teams ensured that everyone had a voice. During the joint community cluster meeting, little was said by the children, however, the teams employed various techniques like doing energizers, jokes, games to ensure that they participated well in the interviews. A meeting was held with children and young people in the Western Area.

The national review team constituted; Alice James – Head of Programme, Patricia Jombo – Programme Manager, Western Area, Alhassan Jalloh, Advocacy and Communications Officer, Gbessay Dauda, Programme Officer, Port Loko, Fatmara Kamara, District Programme Manager Moyamba and Ibrahim Jah, M&E Officer.

**4. KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS IN 2021:**

No	ACTIVITY	OUTPUTS/OUTCOMES
	Consultative meetings with stakeholders on activities implemented in 2020 and plans for 2021	Stakeholders acquire knowledge and understanding on FoRUT's activities and budget
	Popularization of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Policy	Women are aware of their rights in terms of their involvement and participation in decision making processes in communities.
	Conducted four (4) health fairs at health centres	Pregnant women, lactating mothers and young girls gained knowledge on sexual and reproductive health rights, nutrition, child care for lactating mothers, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, importance on pre and post natal clinics and family planning
	Training of SMCs/BoGs on child rights, roles and responsibilities	School leadership understand child protection policies and implement them
	Commemoration of international events by CYP members (Day of the African Child (DAC), International Day of the Girl Child (IDGC))	CYP understand the different platforms use to conduct awareness raising on issues affecting children for actions to be taken
	Training of Community Health Workers (CHWs) on Reproductive Health and Right issues  Training of CHWs on alcohol and drugs	Increased knowledge in reproductive health and how to disseminate correct messages in communities

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		Increase knowledge on the effect of alcohol and drugs on people and how to effectively disseminate messages to people
	Training of Gender Alert Groups(GAG) on Sexual and Gender - Based Violence	Increased knowledge and understanding on the 2019 amended Sexual Offences Act(SOA), causes and effect of GBV, the referral pathways and penalties levied on perpetrators
	Training of Focal Persons on the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs	Increase knowledge on the effect of alcohol and drugs on people and how to effectively disseminate messages to people
	Training of Peer Educators on child right and child protection, alcohol and drugs, hygiene and sanitation and negative peer influence	CYP members who are lead peer educators acquire knowledge and understanding on various forms of abuses inflicted on children, it's effect, referral pathways, effect of alcohol and drugs on people, proper hygiene and sanitation practices and the effect of negative peer influence. They also acquired knowledge on how they should effectively manage the CYP groups and plan activities reaching many people to raise awareness.
	Construction of toilets in schools	Availability of toilets to be used
	Training of Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) on Farmer Field School	FBOs have acquired knowledge and understanding on improved crop production, increase yield, sell some of the crops harvested and store some seeds that they grow the next planting seasons
	Support youths in certified and non – certified skills training	Youth acquire knowledge and skills on the importance of engaging in skills training that makes them self-reliant
	Train teachers and community volunteers on learning circle	Teachers and community volunteers acquire knowledge and understanding on how to help slow learners improve on their academic work
	Train teachers, community volunteers and pupils on school safety protocol and disaster management	Train teachers, community volunteers and pupils acquire knowledge and understanding on the importance of observing COVID – 19 regulations and how to prevent disasters in communities



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	Supported schools with fist aid kits	Head teachers acquire knowledge and understanding on how to administer first aid on minor accidents that occur in schools
	Train teachers on Psychosocial Support	Teachers acquire knowledge and understanding on how to help traumatize children that will enable them to cope with their school work
	Conduct of back to school campaigns in communities	School authorities, local authorities and SMCs acquire knowledge on how to effectively conduct awareness raising in communities for children who have dropped out of school to return to school
	Establish PPM networks in Tonkolili & Karene districts	Existence on networks in districts
	Support to the Alcohol Control Technical Working Group (ACTWG) meetings to develop the national policy  Consultations with government MDAs on review of policies on women and children rights	The development of the development of the policy is on going
	Train CSOs including Sierra Leone Alcohol Policy Alliance (SLAPA) Members & media representatives on Women and Child Rights issues and Alcohol Policy Advocacy	SLAPA members acquired knowledge and understanding Alcohol Policy Advocacy

**a) Key challenges**

The following are key challenges identified from the review meetings:

1. Sometimes experience difficulties in mobilizing community people due to short notices in implementing projects.
2. Limited staff in the District Program Office to effectively implement routine activities at community level
3. Poor internet connectivity limits email communication in the districts, particularly in Moyamba.

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4. Children and Young Peoples club (CYP) are not provided with lunch when they have activities after school hours
5. Moyamba District Office not involved in SLAPA and PPM activities in district.
6. High expectations from alliances to fund activities.
7. Lack of support to survivors of GBV to facilitate their movement

**b) Key changes**

The following were key changes identified:

1. Children and Young Peoples Club members act as peer educators and talk about the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs during devotion in schools
2. Community Health Workers (CHWs) now monitor and collect data on defaulters for prompt referral cases
3. The establishment of CYP clubs in schools has created a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities, educating their peers on the harm of substance abuse and now advocating for them to enjoy their rights. The CYP members are now serving a role model as their peers listening to them.
4. CHWs screen and treat minor ailments such as malaria in communities
5. CHWs sensitize community members on Sexual and Gender - Based Violence
6. Gender Alert Groups (GAGs) report to ensure that appropriate action is taken for women and children's right violations, using the referral pathways
7. Girls become more confident in public speaking and understand their basic rights
8. Focal Persons support CYP club members to prepare action plans and monitor the implementation of activities
9. Timely approval of request
10. Support staff of the Family Support Unit (FSU) with fuel to facilitate their movement to communities to visit the scene of crime for GBV cases. This makes them actively involved in responding to cases
11. Visibility of FoRUT in sectorial meetings
12. There is community ownership as CoCSAs groups are able to regulate and handle their affairs with little or no support
13. Projects are in line with community needs
14. Better understanding of GBV and CR issues in our communities as a result of work with the Local Authorities and the establishment of the GAGs in the communities.
15. Effective collaboration with community structures and key government agencies and departments such as FSUs.

**c) Budget Performance**

- Budget are tracked for each activities implemented. Liquidations are done and copies of receipts are filed and kept in the office.
- The budget performance for the reporting period actually reflected inputs indicators formulated especially targets as against budgets attached to them.

**5. KEY FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

Staff in the regions had cordial relationship with Boundary Partners and other community members in the implementation of projects and activities. Another point raised by the communities is the sharing of budgets and plans which is not done by other organizations that work in the regions.

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This clearly depicts that FoRUT is a transparent and accountable organization to its partners according to communities visited. Community members said FoRUT had worked with them to establish various structures such as GAG, CHWs, CYPs clubs, Focal Teachers, Local Authorities to complement their work in these communities in an effective and inclusive manner.

According to community members, the community structures have been very useful as each of them serve the communities in specific areas. For example, GAG identify, report and follow-up on gender-based violence issues. With trainings provided by FoRUT, they now have good understanding of the referral pathways and collaborate with programme staff to ensure survivors of gender based violence get justice.

Farmers now work together in 15 FBOs in addition to engaging in their individual farming activities. This is achieved through farmer field schools facilitated by extension staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry with support from FoRUT. The FFS methodology has increased the knowledge of farmers on modern agronomic practices such as mulching and construction of seed beds for vegetable gardening. These Farmer Based Organisations now have seed banks and loan seeds to farmers that are not members of their FBOs and undertake other business activities from the harvest. The FBOs grow vegetables, and this has been a major source of nutrition for children and lactating mothers.

Secondly, communities have formulated and enforce by-laws against sexual and gender based violence and other human right violations in communities. Sexual and gender based violence has reduced to some extent as the knowledge of community members has increased and are now aware of the referral pathways. Compromising SGBV cases has reduced with the amendment of the Sexual Offences Act (SOA) which deters members and even religious leaders from officiating child marriages in communities. There is now peaceful co-existence and political tolerance in communities. This has been achieved mainly because of continuous sensitization by FoRUT.

Community members in the target districts stated that access to land for women has improved. In some communities particularly for cultivation, more women now have access to farmland. The exception is the Western area where land and house construction is comparatively expensive and income disparity a challenge for most women. Participation of women in politics has been of concern to many organizations, including FoRUT. Awarding of symbols to female candidates to increase their participation is still a challenge. With the introduction of the 30% quota policy now being discussed, it will increase the number of women in politics albeit that needs a lot of sensitization in communities.

## **6. KEY FINDINGS: DISTRICT AND CHIEFDOM STAKEHOLDERS**

- **District Council**

The District Council staff in Port Loko and Moyamba Districts said that their relationship with FoRUT is cordial since the organization started operating in the township. They also emphasized that FoRUT is a household name in the districts and staff always participate in Council meetings and district activities. The councils in our operational district applauded FoRUT for constructing toilets and schools. They affirmed that FoRUT always invites them and shared their planned activities and budget, thereby showing transparency and accountability. The Moyamba District Council staff rated FoRUT performance in the district at 90%. In Port Loko District council

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chairman praised FoRUT for doing a good job, compared to other organisations operating in the district.

- **District Health Management Team**

The various District Health Management Teams (DHMTs) narrated they have been working with FoRUT for the past years and have gained a lot from FoRUT. Some of the activities they have jointly undertaken includes training on the dangers of alcohol and drugs, health fair support and dangers of alcohol for women during pregnancy. The DHMTs added that they have a good collaborative relationship with FoRUT and that they are pleased with the operations of FoRUT in the districts. They also mentioned that FoRUT always consults those planning activities. They also applauded FoRUT for training staff PHU staff and providing WASH facilities in most communities which is the responsibility of the ministry. In Port Loko District, the Senior Health Education Officer expressed that the CHW's FoRUT trained complement the efforts of government in the distribution of bed nets in communities and during National Immunization Day (NID).

- **Family Support Unit**

The Family Support Units (FSU) in the operational districts applauded FoRUT for always inviting them to facilitate trainings. They also attested that FoRUT attends partners meetings and gives updates, reports alleged child abuse case in communities, and supports them with logistics to visit the scene of crime and arrest perpetrators.

- **Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs(MSWGCA)**

At District level the ministry of social welfare, gender and children's affairs still operate as one. MSWGCA attested their cordial relationship with FoRUT. The ministry mentioned that FoRUT staff invite them to supervise and facilitate trainings for GAG members on GEWE policy, CYP members on child rights, supports the ministry to commemorate the Day of the African Child and International Day of the Girl Child. They further stated that FoRUT attend partners meeting and give updates on activities and jointly conduct outreach in communities on child abuse and GBV. They ministry staff concluded by saying FoRUT report abused in communities and support them with logistics to visit the scene of crime and to arrest the perpetrators.

- **Ministry of Basic Senior Secondary School (MBSSE)**

The review team met only with the Deputy Director (DD), Moyamba District. Planned meetings in Port Loko District and Western Area were not held due to conflicting schedules. The relationship between FoRUT and MBSSE in Moyamba is cordial. FoRUT staff attend partners meetings and inform us about activities implemented, successes and challenges. They invite staff from the ministry to facilitate trainings for CYP members, School Management Committees and Board of Governors and share their budget and activity plans with them. The ministry confirmed that has benefited from collaborative relationship with FoRUT, such as with the provision of toilets in schools. Conversely, the DD cautioned that the team in Moyamba do not communicate all their work with the office. For example, staff did not inform the DD about the rehabilitation of two school structures.

- **Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry**

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According to the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), FoRUT attends all sectoral meeting and gives updates on activities implemented, and the successes and challenges. They appreciated FoRUT for providing technical support to farmers and monitoring of activities of farmers. MAF extension staff facilitate Farmer Field School (FFS) training for farmers to sharpen knowledge on improved crop production and farming calendar, in line with ministry policy. FoRUT shared their activities and budget. This shows transparency and accountability. This is a sustainable method that will reduce dependency. The ministry applauded FoRUT staff for been polite, accommodating and responsive to invitations. They also applauded this peer review process, explaining that it will help identify strengths, weaknesses and actions to improve on the weaknesses. The ministry appealed to FoRUT to support the programmes in commemoration of World Food Day.

**ALLIANCES AND NETWORKS (SLAPA, PPM, CRC SL)**

- ***People Power Movement Sierra Leone (PPM SL)***

In a meeting held with the District focal persons for PPM SL, they narrated that with support from FoRUT, they have conducted training on governance and service delivery. They further said FoRUT always invites them to its annual budget sharing meeting and support them to engage stakeholders and hold them accountable. The PPM members rate FoRUT at 70% in terms of transparency and accountability. They have gained advocacy skills from the trainings. They also expressed that FoRUT is a transparent organisation because they disclose their budget. The PPM members concluded by thanking FoRUT for raising awareness in all their operational areas.

- ***Children and Young People club***

In a meeting with a cross section of children and young people's club members in the three operational districts, the pupils narrated that FoRUT is one of the organizations that is trustworthy. It cares for the needs of children and school going pupils. FoRUT introduced the CYP Club in their schools and this club has helped them a lot. FoRUT has conducted trainings on sexual harassment and child abuse issue and personal hygiene, and also provided WASH facilities and toiletries to improve sanitation. They confirmed that they been trained on the provisions of the Child Rights Act and on alcohol and drug abuse. They also admitted that with FoRUT support, they held a radio discussion on June 16 to mark African Children's Day. They were also trained on the use of the internet. Patricia Fobbie a SSS 2 pupil narrated, 'before this time I had no knowledge on how to use internet or search for assignment but after the training, I can now boast of searching for vital information on the internet and solve assignments on my own'. The children attested to be role models, roles they would continue to uphold even when FoRUT support would have phased out in their schools or/and when they would have completed school.

- ***Child Rights Coalition Sierra Leone***

The Focal Point of the Child Right Ccoalition recognized FoRUT as one of its active members. FoRUT is always represented at meetings and trainings. He said FoRUT has provided technical and financial support to implement coalition activities, including trainings. It also provides refreshment during meetings and jointly monitors court cases related with child right issues He commended FoRUT for been transparent, trustworthy, in terms of budget sharing and programme implementation. He rated FoRUT at 75%. The Social Services Officer of Ministry of Social Welfare requested that FoRUT should support Moyamba to revive the CRC SL.

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- ***Mental Health***

According to Mental health staff they have a cordial relationship with FoRUT. As partners they have worked with FoRUT in complementing manner not competing manner. They concluded by commending FoRUT and its focal person.

- ***Anti-Corruption Commission***

Anti-Corruption Commission acknowledged FoRUT for organizing trainings for communities on corruption issues. FoRUT designed plans and actions are taken to the doorsteps of the people. The Commission emphasized willingness of community/stakeholders to work with FoRUT.

## **7. KEY FINDINGS: STAFF (HOST)**

### **A. Activities implemented in 2021 are as follows:**

The host staff present explained each of the projects they implemented in 2021. Some of the targets stated in the results framework were not met.

### **Project Outcomes**

About 90% of project activities were implementation in all the districts. All programme interventions reflected the felt needs of the communities. There is an increased consciousness of rights among community members, for example the representative of the FSU reported that they received complaints and cases from our operational areas that are well documented. Children from target districts able to ascertain that their schools are friendly. They no longer walk long distances to fetch water, and they don't defecate in surrounding bushes anymore due to the presence of water wells and toilets in their school premises.

FBOs have good knowledge of improved farming techniques and climate change through farmer field schools for pest control and preparation of sites for planting. Farmers in Magbenka, Mofornah, Mapathe, Karene, Maronka and Mano Koya and Tombo said their harvest was bountiful 2021.

Our GAGs can now document, report and follow up on cases of human rights violations. Community meetings are held regularly on improving ways in reducing cases of violations. Women in our operational districts are aware of their rights in terms of their involvement and participation in decision making processes in communities. GAG members in Gloucester, Tombo, Magbeni, Ropollon, Taninihun and Mboka increased knowledge and understanding on SOA and other laws formulated to protect the rights of women and girls.

Our CoCSAs saved Le 324,338,000 in 2021. At district they saved the following: Western Area Le 155,715,000, Port Loko Le 80,745,000 and Moyamba Le 228,018,000. The CoCSAs disbursed Le 151,293,000, Le 126,211,000, and Le 338,206,000 in loans in the Western Area, Port Loko and Moyamba Districts respectively. They document their transactions with little supervision from Community-based facilitators (CBFs).

The number of visits to health centres by pregnant women and lactating mothers for routine checks and treatment has increased as a result of the health and nutrition sensitizations that community health workers (CHW) regularly conduct in communities. In communities like Karene, Dworzak and Bauya, people are sick but who refuse to seek medical attention are now traced and accompanied to the health centres. Cases of malaria is reducing in some communities because of

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the proper use of the treated bednets. Young women and girls gained knowledge about adolescent sexual and reproductive health rights, nutrition, child care for lactating mothers, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections during home visits and community meetings.

Our CYPs in Maforki Agricultural Islamic Secondary school, Schelenker Secondary School, Tombo Secondary School and United Muslim Association Secondary School (UMASS) now hold assembly talks on ADD, CR, CP and teenage pregnancy regularly and increased the number of class-to-class sensitizations. CYPs now report cases of violation in their schools to appropriate stakeholders. Furthermore, they are more aware of the causes and consequences of teenage pregnancy and early marriage. Members of the CYPs now have enhanced understanding of punishment and disciplining of the children and the negative effects of alcohol and drugs to their parents at home and in communities. Pupils are aware of child rights and safeguarding issues.

Focal Person mentor CYP club members effectively. They ensure participatory planning of activities with CYPs in schools and conduct effective monitoring of CYP activities and supervision of CYP club members in school.

Engagement with SMCs and BOGs have been successful in 2021 as they regularly monitored the activities of head of schools, and followed up on actions between meetings, settled disputes amongst staff in schools, and monitored the implementation of school policies, including the child protection, School Code of Conduct.

### **Partnership**

In the area of partnership, FoRUT works with 11 partners in the districts. They are: MGCA, MAF, DHMT, District Councils in the three districts, MBSSE, SLP – FSU, Sierra Leone Alcohol Policy Alliance (SLAPA), PPM SL), CRC-SL, Port Loko and Freetown City Councils.

FoRUT has been highly collaborative with partners within the district and always do joint activities with MDAs, Networks and coalitions. They have always provided financial and material support for monitoring of activities. Their staff always attend district sectorial meeting and submit their yearly activity plan and report. Consult and plan with the various stakeholders in the implementation of activities.

The partnership relationship with MDAs and participating CSO alliances have been very successful over time. Representatives of MDAs take part in the implementation of FoRUT's activities by facilitating trainings, undertaking joint monitoring activities, participate in consultations and meetings. coalitions and alliances also help in the mobilization of participants for trainings and other activities within the districts.

### **Finance**

The budget was fully utilized. SLAPA and PPM SL Chapter did not report any budget constraints for activity implementation. However, some of the district offices reported that most times responsible CSOs representatives and alliances are slow to liquidate which affects the timely request for remittance and disbursement of funds for subsequent activities.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Staff members reported that activities are tracked as against relevant indicators based on the annual targets to measure change. This is reflected in the outcomes and impact of our work. Staff also

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document strengths, challenges, learning's and stories of change to help improve implementation on a day-to-day basis.

**Human Resources**

Generally, staff have the required skills set needed to perform their jobs. Staff also adhere to organizational policies, including the organizational Code of Conduct and Child Safeguarding Policy. However, some staff need training and coaching to overcome some capacity gaps. Staff are familiar with the internal control systems. The various teams are effective and sufficient. All the team members enjoy cooperation and cordiality amongst each other.

Staff have adequate logistic and equipment to carry out their duties. All motor bikes are in good running order. All programme staff have access to a laptop computer, except one Programme Assistant who only has access to a desktop. Each of the three districts have a functioning printer and photocopier that will enhance the smooth running of the office.

**8. Document review**

**A. Moyamba Office**

Review of documents	Up-to-date and accurate	Incomplete	Not attempted
Annual work plan Jan - Dec. 2021	✓		
Approved Plans and Budget	✓		
Quarterly Reports - Monthly Report	✓		
Project reports	✓		
Financial Reports	✓		
Field monitoring visit reports	✓		
Minutes of monthly staff meeting	✓		
Minutes/file notes of meetings with district stakeholders			
Activity Reports	✓		
Media tracking forms /(Record/CDs/Tapes on media coverage of activities, results etc)		✓	
Photo Bank			
Story BANK			

**B. Western Area**



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Review of documents	Up-to-date and accurate	Incomplete	Not attempted
Annual work plan Jan - Dec. 2021	x		
Approved Plans and Budget	x		
Quarterly Reports	x		
Project reports	x		
Financial Reports	x		
Field monitoring visit reports		x	
Minutes of monthly staff meeting	x		
Minutes/file notes of meetings with district stakeholders	x		
Activity Reports	x		
Media tracking forms /(Record/CDs/Tapes on media coverage of activities, results etc)	x		
Photo Bank	x		
Story Bank	x		

C. Port Loko

Review of documents	Up-to-date and accurate	Incomplete	Not attempted
Annual work plan Jan - Dec. 2021	✓		
Approved Plans and Budget	✓		
Quarterly Reports			✓
Project reports			
Financial Reports			✓
Field monitoring visit reports (10)			✓
Minutes of monthly staff meeting (4)			✓
Minutes/file notes of meetings with district stakeholders (2)	✓		
Activity Reports			✓

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Media tracking forms /(Record/CDs/Tapes on media coverage of activities, results etc)			✓
Photo Bank	✓		
Story Bank	✓		

## 9. SUCCESSES

- The various district fully implemented their programmes and projects as per plans and budget for 2021.
- Effective collaboration between FoRUT and partners
- The various districts established a very strong relationship with district and community stakeholders in 2021.
- Collaboration with line ministries and other organizations is evident.
- Capacity building has empowered school and community structures (boundary partners) to stand for their rights and rights of other vulnerable people in target communities.
- MDAs can refer to FoRUT's for shared learning with other organizations.
- There is increased enrolment of children in schools as a result of the back to school engagements in communities.
- There is reduction in SGBV due to increased reporting of incidents.
- We maintain good working relationship with networks/alliances that we work with in the various districts
- Trainings conducted and awareness raising programmes led by GAGs has empowered women to demand rights at community level.
- The farmer field school and the provision of seeds to FBOs have improve yields, increased seed banks and reduced post-harvest losses.
- Community participation in the various group discussions on project activities was high.
- Community ownership is high. Community structures are willing to continue with activities that FoRUT has introduced in their communities even when FoRUT eventually leaves these communities
- Communities appreciate FoRUT for their high level of transparency, accountability and trustworthiness in the work they do.
- Vibrant CYP clubs members demonstrate positive attitude to serve as role models
- FoRUT met its financial obligations to coalitions/alliances and networks.

## 10. Challenges

- Low participation from CYP members who do not take lunch to school
- Implementation of action point is a big problem faced by the coalition and networks that we worked with
- High Expectation of civil society organization

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- SLAPA Moyamba secretariat seem not to be au fait with programme activities of SLAPA
- CYP greatly depend on FoRUT support in rolling out most of their activities
- Low retention of children in school in communities where we operate due to unapproved teachers and parents withdrawing their children from school
- The transition from the outgoing Port Loko District Programme Manager and the Programme office placed constraints in tracking documents at office level
- Community relationship with their political representatives is not cordial
- Information gap from the Manager to staff at district office
- Some staff in the district offices do not have computer skills hence the delay in report writing of submission of information as and when needed
- Impromptu meetings with community structures affect our relationship with the communities
- Less use of pictorial during trainings for Forestalls clear understanding of the participants
- Internet connectivity was a challenge as there was no Modem to effectively check emails and conduct some routine official engagements.

**11. What Could Be Improved**

- The district offices must ensure that they inform the heads of MDAs about programmes, activities, and implementation
- SLAPA should improve working relationship with the Moyamba Office
- District offices should follow the agricultural calendar and supply viable seeds to communities on time.
- District offices should increase monitoring of programme activities in communities
- Staff should improve on their mobilization skills to enhance effective participation and availability of key stakeholders ( chiefs, mammy queen/ Chairlady, youth leader and religious leaders) during community meetings.
- Board Members should be informed fully about their participation in the review meetings.
- More Knowledge/Training for communities to fully understand pathways for referral
- More sustainable and educative awareness raising on SGBV issues and sexual offence acts, GEWE policy in communities through effective and efficient SGBV trainings.
- Timely implementation of programme activities
- Activities planned with networks/alliances should be acted upon in a timely manner
- Monitor adherence to Memorandum of Understanding between networks /alliances for effective and efficient joint action.
- Identify and monitor community corruption issues such as use of school fee subsidy, free health care and construction of schools and community wash facility.
- Organize certification ceremony for FBOs who have gone through the farmer field schools
- Cross learning and field visit among school and community structures in community.
- HR/Admin and supervisors to ensure detailed handover and smooth transition when staff resigns and retires.
- Explore other internet services with good internet connectivity at district offices.

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- Appraisal system should be strengthened to provide feedback on staff performance and use it for promotion.

## 12. Recommendations

1. FoRUT should plan joint monitoring with MDAs
2. Provide support for commemoration of World Food Day
3. FoRUT should liaise with Council engineers for subsequent constructions
4. CYP members must be introduced to one stop centers so that they can utilize them.
5. Smooth communication flow between teams at district offices
6. Staff should endeavor to work within the stipulated working hours to ensure work life balance.
7. Activity budget should be prepared for every activity to enhance budget tracking
8. FoRUT should provide refreshment for CYP programmes organized by CYP members
9. FoRUT to provide support for the reactivation of CRC SL in Moyamba
10. Strengthening the relationship with key governance stakeholders and MDAs
11. FoRUT should embark on effective and efficient monitoring & evaluation of public school in relation to free quality education.
12. Support farmers with seed varieties that are short duration and are easier to cultivate
13. Support FSU with logistic support to fast track response to SGBV
14. Put in place a clear succession plan from District Programme Manager to programme officers
15. Improve internet connectivity at the district offices
16. Strengthen appraisal system and provide feedback appropriately

## 13. Case Stories

### POLITICAL TOLERANCE IN KARENEH COMMUNITY



Kareneh is a community that lies six miles west of Port Loko along the Lungi highway. This community was notorious for political tension each time we had general elections in the country. The community was politically divided as even brothers were at each other's throat as long as they supported different political candidates. For them elections was a do or die battle that created animosity among family members. This created tension in the community so much that development projects were affected as residents never had the courage to work together.

Mariatu Bangura a resident of Kareneh in the Bakeloko chiefdom of Port Loko district had this to say *'I live with my husband Amadu Fofanah in the same community. I support the ruling Sierra Leone Peoples Party whilst the husband is a member of the opposition All Peoples Congress. That notwithstanding, each time my party has a function I am allowed to participate fully and freely. This is as a result of FoRUT intervention over time that we should be politically tolerant with each*

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*other even amidst our political differences. Thanks to FoRUT for helping us with trainings that have taught us about peaceful co-existence in our communities.'*

## CASE STORY 2

### **Alhaji Bally Mansaray now a Change Agent in Tackling Gender Based Violence**



**Maronka Community** is a small town in the Beke Loko Chiefdom, Port Loko District where Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases is often a part of life there. In that community, more than half (64%) of ever-married women have experienced intimate partner violence. Pa Alhaji Bally Mansaray a household head in Maronka Community had this to say *'I was an alcoholic. I used to physically abuse my wife especially after consuming alcohol. However FoRUT's intervention in the community has significantly changed my life. I am a change agent for women's rights in my community. I started questioning my relationship with alcohol when FoRUT started working in this community. I used to fight and beat my wife, but after receiving several trainings on Alcohol Misuse and Gender Based Violence from FoRUT, I can proudly say now that I respect my wife and no longer beat her. I'm now an Ambassador of Women's Empowerment in my community'*.

## CASE STORY THREE



Salamatu Kamara a member of CoCSA had this to say 'micro credit organisations charge high interest rates. This has been a serious concern for us in this community, since most of the people involved especially women end up leaving their homes, spouses and children when they are unable to pay back loans within the stipulated time. This has led to disputes in homes, increase in teenage pregnancy, school dropout and child marriages. FoRUT introduced the Community Credit and Savings Association (CoCSAs) in Mano Koya three years ago. The essence of forming CoCSA groups in communities was to financially and socially empower community members especially women through weekly contributions that qualify them to take loans for small

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business enterprises and other income generating activities. Participation in CoCSAs increases household income, which enables families to improve their nutritional and health status, their standard of living, and social standing. We came together and formed a group, named, “Woman for tie lapa for beteh”. of 25 (3 males and 22 females). We were supported with startup kits.

Last year, my group completed our second cycle of savings and share out a total of **43,090,000 Leones** with women saving the highest. This has helped members especially women to carry out our business with ease and do not have to leave our families any longer for unpaid loans.

CoCSA is the most sustainable financial association I had known and benefited greatly from. I will start going to Guinea to buy my business in February 2022. I am now an international business woman due to CoCSA”.

#### CASE STORY FOUR

#### **REDUCTION OF GENDER - BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) CASES IN MY COMMUNITY.**



My name is Gibrilla Koroma. I am 45 years old. I live in Magbenka, Kongbora chiefdom, Moyamba district had this to say *‘I am a member of Gender Alert Group comprising 5 (3 female and 2 male) members. I have been trained by FoRUT on the GEWE policy, various forms of GBV, causes, referral pathway. At the training, I learnt how to prevent and respond to GBV in my community. During the training on GBV, GAG members developed activity plan that guided us to implement activities in communities. He sadly said before the formation of GAG in my community, there was increase rate of GBV in my community and the cases were compromised. Perpetrators were not punished for the crimes they committed. After GAG have been formed in my community in which I am a member and later trained on GBV issues. I have acquired knowledge and skills that enabled me to disseminate corrected messages on preventing and responding to GBV issues. People in communities know my role and are reporting cases of GBV to me. Thanks to FoRUT for the knowledge and skills acquired*

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*in responding and preventing GBV .A case of wife battering was reported to me. I reported the matter to the chiefs and the matter was referred to the Family Support Unit (FSU) and ensured that the wife was referred to the health center to seek medication. The matter was peacefully settled by the FSU and the man was regularly monitored. Another case of sexual penetration was reported to me. I informed the Family Support Unit about the matter. The perpetrator was arrested and the matter was sent to court. He was found guilty and was sent to prison. Said, Cases of GBV have reduced in my community. Cases that are meant to be settled in our community will be settled by the stakeholders and genders alert group members and cases that are to be reported for actions to be taken are always reported to relevant authorities /stakeholders for appropriate action. A typical case was when a man from this community manhandled his wife and another case was a man virginated a young girl and those matters were reported to the chiefs and later on referred to Moyamba FSU and social welfare for speedy action.'*

#### CASE STORY FIVE

#### **COCSA MADE ME TO SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESS MY FAMILY ISSUES WITHOUT SEEKING SUPPORT FROM PEOPLE**



With FoRUT contribution to Moyamba District have helped various Sierra Leonean families get access to small loans, which have improved their lives significantly.

Abioseh Koroma had this to say ‘ I am 65 year old and I am a widow. I have one (1) child and eight (8) grandchildren (3 boys and 5 girls belongs to the CoCSA club in Magbenkah village. Her Community Credit and Saving Association (CoCSA) group started in June, 2019, and since then group members have saved money and gotten loans. The group started with about forty members but most members withdrew membership during the early weeks of operation. Some were withdrawn because they gave the group problems in repayment of loans. we are only thirty now but trust, belief and reliance on each other is what keeps us going and we are sure that our goals will be fulfilled very soon’.

After sharing out I buy vegetables and fruits to sell to other villages so that I can pay my grand son school fees and support my family. I am very thankful to FoRUT for this CoCSA project as it has made us realize that we are not poor. Before, we had no chance for saving and planning, but this is exactly what this CoCSA project has taught us”, says Abioseh I hope that the project will reach out to others who are not yet aware of this kind of wisdom and that they will be encouraged to form or join their own groups.’

#### CASE STORY SIX

**Zainab Davies a very strong community woman had this to say ‘My name is Zainab Davies, I live at Magbenka Community and am 30 years. I have lived in the Magbenka community for 13 years. I am married and have 5 children, 3 girls and 2 boys. I joined the CoCSA group in 2014.I**



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have been in the CoCSA group for eight (8) years. I appreciate FoRUT for supporting us to form CoCSA groups, trained and supported us with CoCSA materials to save money on a weekly bases



and take loan after three (3) months of saving. ***The CoCSA box made community members not to laugh at me***. My daughter Salamatu Alpha was at Bishop Kelly Secondary School at Magbenka Community. She was at JSS1 when she became pregnant. This occurred during the Ebola outbreak in 2014 when schools were shut down. She gave birth to a bouncing baby girl and was named Ann Marie Kamara. She is now 6 years of age.

took loans and invested the money in petty trading. Now I sell slippers, rice by cup and oil by pint. ***Thanks to FoRUT, my business is encouraging. I have increase in the quantity of items am selling and the sale is encouraging.*** After our share out in 2021, I got the sum of Le 1,825,000 (One Million Eight Hundred and Twenty – Five Thousand Leones). I reinvested Le 1,000,000 (One Million Leones) and Le 825,000 (Eight Hundred and Twenty – Five Thousand Leone) to support my daughter's education and welfare of my granddaughter. When my daughter was nine (9) months old. I am happy to inform you that ***I decided to take care of her granddaughter and enroll Salamatu in school to continue her education. She was enrolled at Safinatu Nurr Secondary School in Mano Koya, Waterloo and made necessary arrangement to stay with her aunt. Taking care of my granddaughter and enrolling Zainab in school was out of the petty business I did out of the loans taken. I am happy to inform you that, Salamatu is 20 years now and she is at SSS3 and will be taking her WASSE in June this year and my daughter will be enrolled in Moyamba District Educational Council Primary school next academic year. Thanks to FoRUT, I will ever live to appreciate you for making me to engage in income generating activities and enabled me to address my problems without seeking support from people.***