

## Annex D: Social Action Stories

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This section contains factual examples of social actions that have been undertaken by several communities in Sierra Leone and other countries. Please print the following pages and distribute them to the Community Representatives during the Community Scorecard Meeting.

## **SOCIAL ACTION STORY: COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING**

### **COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER TEAM: THE MOA WHARF COMMUNITY.**

Moa Wharf is located in the central part of Freetown, at the back of the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital (PCMH) along the Atlantic sea coast. It is among the most run-down communities across the city and is densely overpopulated.

A Community Volunteer Team which was set up during the Ebola outbreak in 2014 realised that even after the deadly virus was declared over there were still high rates of reported incidents related to malaria, diarrhoea, vomiting and sometimes cholera. In first understanding the problems, this team of community volunteers conducted an assessment to first understand the situation and related causes and then designed a community action plan to address these problems.

The community action plan identified a series of activities, such as meeting with community stakeholders, engaging the resident Councillor to further channel their concerns at the municipal council meetings, and meeting with the waste management company and stakeholder groups such as the Freetown City Council, Tribal Heads, the Freetown Waste Management Company, Women and Youth Leaders to be targeted. As a result of these collaborative actions, the volunteer team was able to ensure the development of a solid waste deposal point and establishment of a committee to oversee sanitation in the community.

Source: WASH-Net and MoPADA

**VILLAGERS LOBBY FOR BRIDGE REPAIR TO PROTECT WATER**

In Bumpeh Ngao chiefdom in southern Sierra Leone, three villages were suffering because of a broken bridge on the main road. They were unable to repair the bridge themselves, and as a result, trucks passing through would drive through the stream that supplied the villages with water. This caused their water to become polluted.

Residents from all three villages complained and asked a local organization to help. The organization lobbied the Sierra Leone Roads Authority to repair the bridge, and they and the community monitored progress to make sure the bridge was repaired. Right before the rainy season, repairs were completed.

Source: Summarized from <http://www.accesstojustice.africa/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ACE-Sierra-Loene-Case-Study.NOLOGO.pdf>

## SOCIAL ACTION STORY: COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

### **Community Partnership Results in Access to Clean Water Supply in George Brooke, Dwazark.**

People from the George Brooke community have had serious problems with prolonged lack of access to clean water. Many residents, particularly women and children, had to walk very long distances while braving the very dangerous highways to bring water home every single day. In 2007, several community members decided to lead their own development and welfare process by first taking this very matter into their own hands. First, they summoned the community for a meeting where the issue was discussed and with concrete proposals on how to improve the water supply situation in the community. The discussion began with distributing task of identifying potential funding sources and manpower to accomplish the digging of the water well. From within, the contributed in finally fundraising and were able to collect around Le 700,000,000 as initial funds to kick-start the project. This sum was used to hire labour to start the digging process for the well as well as providing food for young people providing voluntary community service in expediting the work. When the digging process started to show some results, they informed the rest of the community so that the larger community could also contribute to this effort. They received positive responses and more residents joined the effort which in aided the process of attracting more financial as well as bringing other partners on board who later on provided assistance in forms of materials (cement, sand etc). Along the way, the men contributed their labor and money, while the women helped prepare meals for all of the workers and donated rice, vegetables, and food. Given that there was no public land where this well could be located, a community member also donated the land used to build the well because he realized that it was for the common good.

Source: WASH-Net and MoPADA

## **SOCIAL ACTION STORY: COMMUNITY MONITORING**

### **COMMUNITY MEDICAL WATCH DOGS**

In order to reduce high infant mortality and maternal death, the government of Sierra Leone in 2012 introduced the free health care medical system for lactating mothers, pregnant women and under five children.

However, the free health care services came with its own challenges, including the theft of the drugs supplied to most of the health facilities. This warranted the communities to become watch dogs for the medicines supplied within their localities as most of the health facilities were frequently and constantly going out of supplies.

The community instituted a “watch dog approach,” which involves community members raising alarm with the government and facility when they see the theft of supplies. The watch dog approach has drastically reduced the drug shortages normally noticed in most of these health facilities as communities now apprehend individuals caught in the act of stealing the drugs and report the matter to the police for further investigation and prosecution. It has been an effective tool to remedy thieving and makes drugs available at all times until the supplies finishes hence ensuring better health services for all.

Source: WASH-Net and MoPADA

**FARMING AND PROVIDING LIVING SPACES FOR HEALTH WORKERS**

Sierra Leone is a country with bad road networks especially for hard-to-reach and isolated communities in the provinces. This made a community in the Kailahun district to come up with a strategy to encourage health workers to stay and worked for them. Through their own contributions, they have been able to construct health post and built a two bedroom house to host the facility in-charge. They were also simultaneously lobbying for the allocation of a health staff to the new health post which eventually happened after some protracted engagements. The call for a new staff in the health post was an obvious and in fact very urgent one especially considering the fact the lactating mothers and pregnant women had to travel very far distances to nearby health posts in other villages. Prior to having the new in-charge in post, several meetings were held with community elders, District Health Management Team and the resident councillor who was also very supportive of the move.

Also, as a means to encourage the new in-charge to stay in the rural community, the community further decided to have him included farm yield distribution as means to have food at all times. Now, the health post serves not only their community but nearby catchment areas which has variably improve on their health service delivery and illnesses which before takes them to their graves is now a thing of the past.

Source: WASH-Net and MoPADA

## **SOCIAL ACTION STORY: WORKING THROUGH A BROKER**

### **Community Members Work through Respected, Connected Liasion to Improve Nurse's Attitudes**

One community called Tuliza Moyo in Mara region in Tanzania was not satisfied with the services that were being provided by their local clinic. They were treated with a negative attitude by the health care providers and there were delays for pregnant women receiving care when going to deliver at the facility, especially during the night. This challenge had been going on for a long time and had resulted in low attendance at the health facility and high maternal and infant mortality rates.

The community decided to find a person who could connect them to the dispensary board so that their challenges could be discussed. They looked for an intermediary who had respect and connections that they thought would make their request more valid.

The intermediary organized a meeting with the dispensary board and the health worker. The board looked for a way to solve the problems. And the meeting had big results in that the health care providers have changed their attitude and have started providing women and other patients with quality services. Attendance of mothers has been good since this action.

Source: T4D Intervention in Tanzania

## SOCIAL ACTION STORY: SOCIAL DEMONSTRATION OR PROTEST

### **Yaakoko Demonstrates Against Illegal Sand Contractors, Gets Parliamentary Investigation**

Yaakoko is a farming community in the Ayensuano district of the eastern region of Ghana that is also plagued by illegal sand contractors and unofficial guards they hire to bully citizens. After a young resident of their community was allegedly killed by these guards, a youth group in Yaakoko staged a demonstration demanding justice and calling on the president and chiefs and elders in the area.

The member of Parliament for the area heard the peoples' concerns and brought the issue before the national Parliament. A parliamentary committee will soon visit the community to investigate and consider national law changes to protect Ghanaians from such abuses in the future.

Source: summarized from <https://www.ghananewsreports.com/residents-of-yaakoko-demonstrate-against-illegal-sand-winners/>



## SOCIAL ACTION STORY: INDIVIDUAL CHOICE

### POOR PUBLIC CARE PUSHES SOME FAMILIES TO PRIVATE CLINICS.

In many communities in Sierra Leone, people are very dissatisfied with their public health facilities. Some face water and drug shortages, and in other cases, people feel like the health staff do not give them good treatment. People from Kambia in Northern Province, for example, have several local hospitals and health care centres. But they report that they do not trust the quality of care from their local providers. As a result, they say they prefer to go to different clinics despite the extra cost, where they feel like they get better treatment.

There are examples from the capital, too. One woman from Freetown was taken to the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital. Because she had complications with her birth, she had to stay in the hospital for several days, and eventually passed away. Her husband said afterward that they had planned to go to a different clinic where she had been receiving ante-natal care, “because they knew Abibatu there and if anything went wrong they would refer her to proper care. I did not want to go to the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital...because I don’t really think they take good care of the patients there.”

Source: Summarized from <https://www.amnestyusa.org/files/pdfs/outofreach.pdf>

## **SOCIAL ACTION STORY: EXAMINING BETTER PERFORMING SERVICES**

### **STUDYING A NEARBY HEALTH FACILITY THAT PERFORMS BETTER.**

In one district in Uganda, community members noticed that the clinic in their village was very poor quality, while the clinic in the neighboring district was much better. Their clinic was unhygienic and only had two staff members serving around 4,000 patients, while the clinic in the neighboring district had 5 staff members and better equipment.

They asked to meet with the medical officer in charge of their clinic to discuss why the clinic's quality in the neighboring district was better than their own clinic. During the meeting the health care workers learned about the community's concerns and the community members came to better understand the problems facing their clinic. Together, they wanted to improve the services in the clinic by learning what the neighboring district had done. The health care workers and the representatives of the community gathered data on the condition of the neighboring clinic through personal visits and meetings with health officials there.

They learned that the clinic in the neighboring districts were able to access the District's fund, which allowed them to have more staff and better equipment. Upon learning this, the clinic and community members tried to voice their concerns to the District.

After this effort, the community successfully convinced the district to provide funds to construct a new health clinic. Once the clinic was built, four new staff members, including two midwives, were recruited, and the district purchased new equipment. The clinic now serves 11,000 people out of a catchment area of 7,000-10,000, meaning many people from outside the district come to the clinic due to its good quality. Of the women who have received antenatal services, 70 percent have returned to the clinic to give birth and receive more services, far surpassing the government target of 50 percent. (WORLD VISION)

Source: <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B01TNkdJ61czcVhIUUt1dzN0ODg/edit>

## SOCIAL ACTION STORY: TALKING TO JOURNALISTS

### ENLISTING RADIO JOURNALISTS TO HELP SECURE PROMISED FUNDS.

Disabled Sierra Leoneans were excited in March 2011, when the government passed a new law promising to invest hundreds of billions of Leones in programs to help people with disabilities. But the promised money did not materialize for months. Many disabled Sierra Leoneans started complaining to the Ministry of Social Welfare about the missing funds.

Eventually, people's complaints perked the interest of Tamba Tengbeh, a radio journalist at a community radio station in Freetown. He began investigating the disabled community's stories, and discovered the government had never made good on its promise. He broke the story of negligence in October 2011, and in just a few weeks, a portion of the fund was released. A group that represents disabled Sierra Leoneans thanked Tengbah for his help, saying "We have been trying for months to get the money allocated by the government to programs for people with disabilities. After the media campaign we were called to a meeting by the government where we received 20 percent of the money allocated to disabilities issues. This is the first time in the country people have got this money. The media keeps people informed. It helped to promote the issues we are struggling for and helps with the outreach that brings the community to action."

Source: Summarized from <http://www.jhr.ca/en/2012/01/18/sierra-leones-disabled-community-recieves-funds/>

## **SOCIAL ACTION STORY: RECOGNIZING GOOD PERFORMANCE OR NAMING AND SHAMING**

### **RECOGNIZING EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH TO MOTIVATE GOOD PERFORMANCE.**

In some health facilities, the facility administration creates recognition programs to help motivate doctors and nurses to perform better. At the Mattru UBC hospital in Bonthe District, the head matron of the hospital started rewarding the employee and ward of the month with a ribbon and appreciation ceremony. They believe the excellent service this promotes is one reason why more patients have been visiting the hospital.

This approach has been tried many times with private sector businesses, including in Sierra Leone. Sierra Rutile company, for example, rewards staff who are flexible, enthusiastic, safe, and especially friendly with customers. Both customers and community members can nominate staff to be recognized.

Source: Summarized from <http://ubcentral.org/2017/08/11/progress-at-mattru-hospital-in-sierra-leone/> and <https://awoko.org/2014/03/07/sierra-leone-news-rutile-organises-employee-of-the-month-award/>