



# Annual Report 2024

**Tackling  
Violence  
Against Women  
and Girls in  
Homes and  
Communities  
across Sierra  
Leone**

## THEME

RESTORING Value, Dignity and Respect:  
Overcoming barriers to Women's  
FULL participation in Sustainable Peace  
and Development.

## Table of Content

|                                                                                                |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Table of Content .....                                                                         | 2       |
| List of Abbreviations .....                                                                    | 3       |
| 1. <b>Section 1:</b> INTRODUCTION: About LEWAF and MANDATE .....                               | 4       |
| a. About LEWAF .....                                                                           | 4       |
| b. Mandate – What we do .....                                                                  | 4 - 5   |
| c. Program Theory of Change .....                                                              | 5       |
| 2. <b>Section 2:</b> Our work in 2024 .....                                                    | 6       |
| a. The Context .....                                                                           | 6       |
| b. Project Achievements: The Progress Analysis .....                                           | 7       |
| i. <i>Specific Outcome 1:</i> Women’s Economic and Social Empowerment ENHANCED....             | 7       |
| a. Women’s Economic Empowerment ENHANCED .....                                                 | 7 - 16  |
| b. Social Empowerment STRENGTHENED .....                                                       | 17      |
| ii. <i>Specific Outcome 2:</i> Security & Access to Justice for Women & Girls PROMOTED...      | 18 - 20 |
| iii. <i>Specific Outcome 3:</i> Women’s Legal Empowerment PROMOTED .....                       | 21      |
| 3. <b>Section 3:</b> Evidence based statistics; Challenges; Recommendations and Takeaway ..... | 22      |
| a. Evidence-based statistics on specific outcome 1 .....                                       | 22      |
| b. Challenges .....                                                                            | 23      |
| c. Recommendations .....                                                                       | 23      |
| d. Takeaway .....                                                                              | 23 – 24 |
| 4. Strategic Partnership and Collaboration .....                                               | 25      |
| 5. Solidarity and Felicitation .....                                                           | 26      |

## List of Abbreviations

|              |                                            |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------|
| ADR .....    | Alternative Dispute Resolution             |
| BDS .....    | Business Development Skills                |
| CBJAs .....  | Community-based Justice Advocates          |
| EaSE .....   | Economic and Social Empowerment            |
| GEWE .....   | Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment    |
| JSRS .....   | Justice Sector Reform Strategy             |
| MoGCA .....  | Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs    |
| NNGO .....   | National Non-Governmental Organisation     |
| SGBV .....   | Sexual and Gender Based Violence           |
| SME .....    | Small and Medium Enterprise                |
| SLP .....    | Sierra Leone Police                        |
| SLA .....    | Service Level Agreement                    |
| UN SDG ..... | United Nation Sustainable Development Goal |

## SECTION 1

### INTRODUCTION: About LEWAF and MANDATE

#### a. About LEWAF

LEWAF is a National Non-Governmental Organization (NNGO) and since 2014, has been working directly in suburban communities that are mostly deprived and remote to *tackle violence against Women and Girls in Sierra Leone*. In these communities, intimate partner violence, Sexual and Gender based violence (SGBV); unequal social norms; structural inequalities; persistent stereotypes and bias gender roles has remained unprecedented. These poor and vulnerable Women and Girls remains stifle in economic poverty, unpredictable social protection, ignorant of laws and their civil liberties; and lacks confidence and capacity to actively participate in decision making processes in the governance of their homes, communities and country.

That is why, since 2014 or so, LEWAF has adopted four ‘*Program Strategies*’ that speak directly to national and international mandates on “*ending all forms of Violence and inequality against Women and Girls... and are valued, dignified and respected in their households and communities where they live and refer to as a home*”.

#### b. Mandate – What we do: These four program strategies are:

1. **Gender Equity:** Seeking to challenging attitudes, beliefs and practices that oppress Women and Girls in their Homes and Communities. Under this program, men and boys are the primary targets. The strategic objective is “**to reduce all forms of discrimination and inequality against vulnerable women and adolescent girls**” (UN SDG 5: Promote Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls)
2. **Economic and Social Empowerment:** Seeking to enhancing Women’s LIVELIHOOD opportunities and SOCIAL PROTECTION that reduces women’s ‘Chronic dependency’ and apparent vulnerability’. Under this program, women and Men (spouses); and adolescent girls are the primary targets. The strategic objective is “**To improve women’s access to and control over economic resources and social support network for self-reliant**”. (UN SDG 5: Promote Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls)
3. **Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights:** Seeking to educate, advocate, sensitize and raise awareness on family health and wellbeing. Under this program, women and Men (spouses); and adolescent girls are the primary targets. The strategic objective is “**To improve access to sexual reproductive health rights and services for vulnerable**

**women and adolescent girls in deprived communities”.** (UN SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for ALL at all ages)

4. **Access to Justice and Legal Empowerment.** Seeking to creating the opportunity for poor Women and Girls have Access to Justice for their own problems and are better using the law, the legal system, and legal services to protect and advance their rights and interests. Under this program, Women and adolescent Girls are the primary targets. The strategic objective is **“to improve access to responsive and accountable community-based justice and social support services for vulnerable women and adolescent girls in Sierra Leone”** (UN SDG 16: Provide Access to Justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels).

### **c. Program Theory of Change**

IF WOMEN understand their rights and have the capacity to advocate for those rights (*Legal Empowerment/Education*) with strong financial independent; (*Economic and Social Empowerment*) AND are given unhindered space in their homes and communities for inclusiveness and accountable decision-making; (*Gender Equity – MALE/Community Acceptance and Recognition*) THEN, Women are more likely **to overcome barriers on their full participation to achieving sustainable Peace and Development** in their Homes, Communities and Sierra Leone writ large.

## SECTION 2

### OUR WORK IN 2024

*The Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs*

#### a. The Context

In January 2024, LEWAF worked with the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs through a 'Service Level Agreement' (SLA), to implement a project title ***“EXPANDING EASY Access to Financial and Justice Services for Women survivors of SGBV and vulnerable Women in Western Area Urban and Rural districts”*** The project duration was **16 months** – starting **1<sup>st</sup> February 2024** and ended **31<sup>st</sup> May 2025**. Other key actors supporting the implementation of this project included: Sierra Leone Legal Aid Board; Sierra Leone Police - Family Support Unit; Magistrate Courts and Local Courts; Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone; Community Authorities – tribal Chiefs, Headmen; Women’s groups and LEWAF established ‘Community-based Justice Advocates’ (CBIAs).

The project has 3 (three) Expected Specific Outcomes:

- i. **Specific Outcome 1: Women’s Economic and Social Empowerment ENHANCED**
  - a. 1000 Women are having easy access to affordable financial services.
  - b. 50 Women owned profitable business ventures.
  - c. 200 Women owned properties – household assets etc.
- ii. **Specific Outcome 2: Security & Access to Justice for Women and Girls PROMOTED.**
  - a. 100 Cases of SGBV pursued and resolve.
  - b. 50 Men are taken action to prevent SGBV against women in homes & communities.
- iii. **Specific Outcome 3: Women’s Legal Empowerment PROMOTED.**
  - a. 500 Women have knowledge and awareness of their human rights.
  - b. At least 500 Women are using the law to solve day-to-day community Justice Problems.

#### PROJECT GOAL

**To overcome barriers to Women’s FULL participation in Sustainable Development in the Western Urban and Rural Areas.**

## b. Project Achievements: The Progress Analysis

### i. **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 1: Women's Economic and Social Empowerment ENHANCED**

During project implementation, the strategy looks at two components that are essential to achieving this outcome. The first is the **Economic Empowerment component** and the second is the **Social Empowerment component** – *NETWORK of Women for Safety and Social Support*.

For ease of content reference, both components have been titled as **a** AND **b** respectively. Thus, caption '**a**' analysis our achievement on the Economic Empowerment component AND on page 16, caption '**b**' analysis our achievements on the Social Empowerment component.

#### a. **Women's Economic Empowerment ENHANCED**

**SUSTAINED Community-Grown Financial Services PROMOTED – 1009 Women** now having **EASY** access to **AFFORDABLE** financial services in 13 Sub-Urban communities in Western Area Urban and Rural districts.

The progress analysis begins with evidence-based quotation from the *Sierra Leone's GEWE Policy Pg8*.



*“Women are the majority among the poorest of the poor in Sierra Leone. They also experience unequal or limited access to financial services. They find it very difficult to obtain loan for larger business ventures due to the rigid and sometimes gender-based discriminatory conditions included in the collateral requirement and high interest rate on loan. The Government of Sierra Leone has revamped the social Safety Net program through which cash is transferred*

*to the poor household... There are also NGOs that operates microcredit schemes for women. However, due to the magnitude of the need, there is still a long way to go to reach more communities”.* (Ref: Sierra Leone's GEWE Policy Pg8).

### **Meeting with Community Stakeholders AND Community Members**

The intervention started by identifying the communities. As per project requirement, a total of 20 communities were targeted – 10 communities from the western area RURAL district and 10 communities from western area URBAN district.



Through community stakeholders and local authorities from each of these communities, massive community meetings were organised. At each of these meetings, LEWAF explained its General mandate as NNGO but specifically its Economic and Social

Empowerment (EaSE) program for Women. To authenticate the relevant and credibility of this EaSE program, LEWAF laid credence on *GEWE Policy* and its related Act of 2022 in which, one of the government priority focuses has remain creating the enabling environment were ***poor and deprive Women in Sierra Leone particularly Women living in remote communities have easy access to affordable financial services without rigid conditions and collateral.***

Hence, in line with the UN SDG 5: ***Promote Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls;*** and by extension the ***GEWE policy and its related Act of 2022 of Sierra Leone,*** LEWAF's EaSE program directly seeks to enhance Women's LIVELIHOOD opportunities and



SOCIAL PROTECTION that reduces women's 'Chronic dependency' and apparent vulnerability', clearly aiming at ***improving women's access***

***to and control over economic resources and social support network for self-reliant.***

***Photo above: community meeting in Koya Rural - New London 555 Community, Western Area RURAL district.***

At each of these community meetings, almost **98 percent** of the participants were women as they remain our primary target and ultimate beneficiaries. A critical session of the meeting

was the orientation on Economic empowerment component to participants. The aim was to ensure that PARTICIPANTS are Knowledgeable on the concept, strategy and benefits. Also, the orientation covered the operational principles and procedures of the EaSE activity. To generate informed decision-making and self-willingness to be a beneficiary, three operational principles were made clear as follows - the WILLINGNESS:

1. To be part of a group.
2. To attend group meetings once a week and be able to save money voluntarily.
3. To abide by operational rules and regulations as agreed in group constitution.

At the end of all the community meetings, a total of 13 communities were enrolled - 6 communities from the western area RURAL district and 7 communities from western area URBAN district. ***The table on page 9 shows the full list of 20 Women's Groups enrolled.***

### ***Setting up the Women into groups***

In these 13 communities, a total of 1009 (exceeding project target) self-willing women showed interest and were subsequently enrolled into the project.

To be able to maintain decorum, attentiveness and effectiveness during meetings, all 1009 women were set-up into groups. In an ideal situation and as per project design, each group should comprise of 50 women. However, it was noticed that MORE women living in some sections within a community opted to join the project as compared to other communities. For instance, women in Koya Rural – Lovers Corner Community; Waterloo Rural - Jui-Grafton Community; Allen Town community – EAST; Murray Town Wharf Community and Pamuronko Community – EAST were happy for the project and participated in real numbers.

On the other hand, even though the community meetings were successful with high number of women attending, at the end, few women showed interest resulting to only ONE group being set-up - like in Waterloo Rural - Rokel community; Koya Rural – 4-mile Community; 3-mile Community; Grass Field Community – EAST; Consider Lane Community; Gassama Street – EAST; Kissy Looking Town Community etc. Curious to learn more about their lack of interest compare to other communities mentioned above, the women stated three reasons why they were not too enthusiastic and opted-out despite their poor living condition.

1. Individuals forming private boxes claiming to empower these women end up running away with all their money they have saved.
2. The systems where they do normally make complaints or expresses their grievances are mostly not responsive due to lack of evidence and illegitimacy of perpetrators.
3. Give seed money: They expected LEWAF to give them SEED MONEY to start their savings.

**Table 1: List of the 20 Women's Groups enrolled.**

| WESTERN AREA RURAL DISTRICT |                        |                                          |            |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------|
|                             | NAMES OF CWSLA GROUPS  | SECTIONS/LOCALITIES                      | # OF WOMEN |
| 1                           | We Go Make Am          | Koya Rural – Lovers Corner community     | 60         |
| 2                           | Good Faith             | Koya Rural – Lovers Corner Community     | 50         |
| 3                           | Grateful Women         | Koya Rural – Lovers Corner Community     | 47         |
| 4                           | Strong Together        | Waterloo Rural - Rokel community         | 49         |
| 5                           | Na We for Say          | Koya Rural – 4-mile Community            | 50         |
| 6                           | Kankalay               | Waterloo Rural - Jui-Grafton Community   | 50         |
| 7                           | Concern Women          | Waterloo Rural - Jui-Grafton Community   | 50         |
| 8                           | Unity Sister (Disable) | Waterloo Rural - Jui-Grafton Community   | 55         |
| 9                           | We Go Betteh           | Koya Rural - New London 555 Community    | 50         |
| 10                          | Positive Women         | Koya Rural – 3-mile Community            | 50         |
| Freetown Western Area Urban |                        |                                          |            |
|                             | NAMES OF CWSLA GROUPS  | SECTIONS/LOCALITIES                      | # OF WOMEN |
| 11                          | Try En See             | Grass Field Community - EAST             | 38         |
| 12                          | Sabenty                | Consider Lane Community - EAST           | 50         |
| 13                          | Promising Women        | Allen Town - Kola Tree community – EAST  | 61         |
| 14                          | Together As Wan        | Allen Town community – EAST              | 52         |
| 15                          | Prospect Women         | Gassama Street - EAST                    | 50         |
| 16                          | Stand Strong           | Kissy Looking Town Community – EAST      | 54         |
| 17                          | Women With Action      | Murray Town, Wharf Community - WEST      | 55         |
| 18                          | Successful Women       | Murray Town, Cockle Bay Community - WEST | 50         |
| 19                          | Hands Together         | Parmuronko Community - EAST              | 38         |
| 20                          | Woke For Betteh        | Parmuronko Community - EAST              | 50         |

### ***Distribution of TOOL-KITS***

To commence the Saving and Loaning activity of these groups in their various communities,



LEWAF procured and distributed 20 sets of toolkits to each group. The package included a metal box, passbook for each member, ledgers, padlocks, calculators, pens, stamp pads and ink, money bowls, rulers; money bags etc. The toolkit has three practical relevance and benefits:

1. It ensures all transactions conducted are transparent & accountable without ambiguity.
2. Every penny contributed/saved by the participants remain safe and secure at-most.
3. Each participant is able to SELF-ASSESS her progress, e.g. how much she has saved or

loaned etc. Which means, even the most illiterate can participate with convenience.

Also, as required by the Government of Sierra Leone, LEWAF offices in-general and specifically its Economic and Social empowerment department has been well positioned and capacitated to providing the required services. These services include but not limited to the following: (1) Conducting regular group monitoring and inspection to make sure that all activities are going-on as planned. (2) Drop-in service for women to learn and/or get more information/clarifications. (3) Receiving official complaints from aggrieved members. (4) Keeping data and records for reference by government, partners and beneficiaries etc for improved service delivery. (5) Organising fun-fair and social interaction events for women participants every year. At this stage, it is critical to state that the existence of an identifiable office space and the legal status of LEWAF has proven to be an existential glamour of hope and credibility, apparently giving women the confidence of their safety and security in participating in the EaSE program.

Thus, the Legal status of LEWAF and institutional existence and visibility, CONVERSELY shows the vast contrast in the first two reasons (mentioned on page 8) why most women were not enthusiastic and subsequently did not join despite their poor living condition.



#### ***The weekly meetings by Women.***

In total, 20 groups of Women were set-up and each group clearly identifiable by UNIQUE NAMES. The names were jointly chosen by the women participants and LEWAF each symbolising their long-term aspiration and vision. For instance - Good Faith, Strong Together, Unity Sister, Positive

Women, Promising Women, Women with Action, Hands Together etc. According to the project strategy, these groups met once a week for a period of 11 months, which is 48 weeks



to do their voluntary saving. ***Photo above right: women have weekly savings meeting.*** Within these 48 weeks period, each woman participant is opportune to have EASY ACCESS to LOAN money from their groups primarily either to start a small-scale business venture or expand their business portfolio. ***Photo left: woman receiving loan from the chairlady.*** At the end of the 48 weeks, all the

money saved and interests generated on loans taken and repaid, including other incomes

like fines paid (for instance being late to meeting, phone rings during meetings) etc. are pulled together ready to be shared-out amongst all the women of a group.

### ***The SHARE-OUT Ceremony.***

This share-out ceremony has always been a **memorable** and **joyous** celebration day for the Women. After 48 weeks of participation in the Savings and Loaning activity, ALL the Women are set to received their SEED money saved. Also, this is the time the women begin their journey to actualized their dreamed livelihood business opportunities like opening of shops.



**a. 42 Women out of 50 targeted by the project, now owned profitable business venture**

For all the women, this money is considered a start-up capital for their dream livelihood ventures and practical road to SELF-RELIANCE and RESTORATION of their VALUES, DIGNITY and RESPECT in their homes and communities. Thus far, 42 women out of 50 women targeted by the project have now upgraded their business portfolios from petty (hand-to-mouth) venture to owning and operating shops.

From practical experience, it is often the case that it normally takes a year or more for these women to fully upgrade and settle down in profitable businesses. So, the evidences this report is show-casing below are both past and present beneficiaries of the EaSE activity.

See below some PHOTO EVIDENCES and what they said... directly quoted:

**Zainab Kamara**

Grafton Community, Western Area Rural District

Zainab now owns and operating assorted Electronics and Electrical shop.

Zainab is a member of **JUSTICE WOMEN** group.



**QUOTE**

*"I am a war widow and have lived in displaced camp in Grafton since the end of the war in 2002 surviving on hand-outs with my children. Today I have this shop after 5 years of joining the LEWAF Economic Empowerment program. It's really a source of restoring my hope" END.*

### Adama Dumbuya

Texaco Community, Eastern Freetown Western Area Urban

Adama now owns and operating a printing shop. Adama is a member of **NEVER GIVE UP** group.



#### QUOTE

*"You see on my T' Shirt – NEVER GIVE UP. In life never give up on achieving your dream, all what is needed is the reliable and sustained opportunity – and LEWAF has done just that. I have been in LEWAF Economic Empowerment program for 5 five years with successful share-out each year and taking home a cumulative*

*amount of \$2,000 in total. Today I have a printing shop business"* END OF QUOTE

### Memunatu Kargbo

Rokel container Community, Western Area Rural District.

Memunatu owns and operating a shop. Memunatu is a member of **VISION** group.



#### QUOTE

*"When you fail to plan, then you plan to fail...my VISION over the past 3 years is to upgrade my business from Petty wooden box to own a big shop... my participation on LEWAF Economic Empowerment program for three consecutive years has actualize my long-term VISION...all thanks to LEWAF"* END OF QUOTE

**Susan Sawaneh**

Kissy Community, Eastern Freetown Western Area Urban  
Susan is a member of **STAND STRONGE** Women's group.



*Quote: I have been contributing into 3 books every week. After share-out in 2024, I bought a Motorbike (aka Okada) for commercial purpose. And guess what? I actually created a Job for my Husband's brother. In actual fact, the Economic Empowerment is one benefit but what I found so intriguing is how my economic strength created that sense of recognition of my value in the home. My husband sees me more of an asset than a liability...i have regain my full dignity and respect in my home. LEWAF is a source of making dreams a reality." End of Quote.*

**b. 200 Women targeted by the project, now owned a property – House hold assets**

**Ester Turay**

Grafton Community, Freetown Western Area Rural District.

Ester is a member of **BONDAYELLA (means ‘ONE FAMILY’)** women’s group.



Quote: *I started building this house 7 years ago and my only reliable and sustained source of income is from my participation on LEWAF Economic Empowerment program. Once you have a plan and the opportunity is available to you. it's a blessing in disguised.*

*Make the most of it when you are alive.”* End of quote.

**Nadiatu Kamara**

Checsil Community, Freetown Western Area Rural District

Nadiatu is a member of **WOMEN WITH DIGNITY** group.



Quote: *“When you have a plan or a dream in life and you have no reliable opportunity to bring your dream or plan to reality, it's a slow poison that kills mentally and physically. Always waking up and seen this house is a whole source of happiness for me and my family, especially my children. Joining the LEWAF Economic Empowerment program since 2020 has been a life changing opportunity for me.”* End of Quote.

## b. SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT STRENGTHENED

**STRENGTHENED NETWORK of Women for Safety and Social Support – 88 Women** have benefited from support during project period in Western Area Urban and Rural districts.

On the Social Empowerment trajectory of the EaSE program, the concept around the Women making one group and meeting together in one place every week is to provide that **SAFE SPACE** where these Women will know each other, speak-out their common problems they face daily in their homes and communities; and discuss ideas of supporting each other.

The SAFE SPACE eventually galvanized their commitment to bond together, generate and manage their own internal resources to be supporting each other both financially and physically at the time of DIRE NEED. To actualize the generation of internal funds in readiness to responding to a member faced with any challenge, the membership unanimously agreed to make contributions of an agreed amount each week when they converge to do their savings. This is referred to as SOCIAL FUND package. To minimize ambiguity in the operation of the social fund package, three (3) characteristics has stood-out, clearly defined by all group memberships:

1. The problem that attracts financial support clearly define by group membership.
2. The amount of money to be given in support clearly tagged to each problem agreed.
3. Each member **MUST** participate in physical support to demonstrate solidarity.

During the period of project implementation, in total, **88 WOMEN** have benefited from social support from their groups. The categories of supports have included - funeral condolences, wedding ceremony, child naming Ceremony, theft by house breaking, disasters like fire accident and flooding during the raining season etc.

**Hulaimatu Mansaray – Fire Accident**



**Kadiatu Kamara - Burial Condolence**



## ii. SPECIFIC OUTCOME 2: Security & Access to Justice for Women & Girls PROMOTED

### ACHIVEMENTS

#### a. BRINGING JUSTICE SERVICES TO THE DOOR STEP OF THE POOR: Expanding Community Legal Services in Rural Communities through the PLATE model.

***“Legal aid is integral to the entire access to justice goals. It circumvents the high costs***



***of going to court, it guides people with legitimate justice issues through complicated legal processes and allows them to obtain justice. The provision of legal aid is intended to help make justice seeking more accessible. Despite its central role in the justice sector, evidence indicates that legal aid centers are either too far away from remote communities and vulnerable groups.....”*** REF: [Sierra Leone's Justice Sector Reform Strategy \(2024-2030\)](#)

LEWAF is an accredited Legal Aid Service provider in Sierra Leone and currently operating four mediation offices.

1. Freetown Western Area Urban – Calaba Town community in East-end of Freetown.
2. Western Area Rural District – Waterloo community.
3. Kayamba Chiefdom – Moyamba Town.
4. Kori Chiefdom, Moyamba District, Mokonde, Njala.



In all these localities, the model of legal aid services provided is referred to as the ‘PLATE’ model legal aid service. The PLATE model legal aid services stand for:

1. Paralegal Service – community legal clinic, awareness raising programs etc.

2. Legal Advice and Information Service.
3. Alternative Dispute Resolution Service.
4. Trauma Recovery Service.
5. Education on Gender Laws – Legal Empowerment.

In working towards achieving the *project* Specific Outcome 2: Security and Access to Justice for Women and Girls PROMOTED. The project target of **100 SGBV Cases** to be resolved and closed was limited to two offices (1) Freetown Western Area Urban – Calaba Town community in East-end of Freetown and (2) Western Area Rural District – Waterloo community.



The functioning of LEWAF “**case data-based system**” and the ‘**visitors sign-in registers**’ were both fundamental to sourcing the empirical data that have substantiated the assertions towards the achievement of specific outcome 2 over the last 16 months of project implementation, that is, between **1<sup>st</sup> February 2024** and **31<sup>st</sup> May**

**2025.** Below are the outcomes analyses:

- **186** people **PHYSICALLY VISITED** the paralegal offices for services.
- **129** cases **OFFICIALLY ADMITTED** by Social Workers.
- **84** cases were **RESOLVED AND CLOSED** through ADR methods.
- **4** cases **REFERRED** to the formal court in collaboration with SLP for litigation.
- **7 victims** received **FINANCIAL AID** to secure medical report for police investigation.
- **4 weeks** – the average **TIME TAKEN** to resolve and close a case.

This achievement strategically aligns with **Specific Outcome 1: Increased Equal Access to Justice for All Through a People-Centered Approach of the Sierra Leone's Justice Sector Reform Strategy (2024-2030)**, particularly complementing the implementation of activities:...**1.3.1** Establish legal aid offices/outpost in populated and hard to reach communities; **1.4.3** Set-up mediation centers across the country; and **1.4.5** Raise awareness about ADR as an access to justice mechanism in the country.

## b. One MEN GROUP Set up – called ‘Sengbe Pieh’ MenCare

During the mobilization of men in the communities, it was clear that men are the majority



perpetrators of SGBV, but they also acknowledge that they are in the strong position to STOP the violence. Taken our mobilization campaign messages on the opposite direction by asking this question... *as a son or brother in your family, how do you feel if another man physically battered your mother or sister respectively?*

The overwhelming answers was ‘I will revenge’ for my mother or sister.

The consequences of violence were analyzed and discussed to men participants. In the end,



31 men took interest to join the campaign to prevent violence against women and girls in homes and communities. They agreed to be called ‘**MenCare**’. To make them steadfast and be more formidable, LEWAF introduced the Economic Empowerment approach and supplied them with toolkits were the MenCare group also meets once a week to do their

savings. It is at these weekly meetings the men receive training sessions on common topics



including - gender roles and expectations, gender-based violence and consequences; the gender laws such as Domestic Violence Act. Sexual Offences Act, Property rights etc.

Altogether, two community campaigns - raising awareness on SGBV organized by MenCare.

### iii. SPECIFIC OUTCOME 3: Women's Legal Empowerment PROMOTED

*“Access to justice for marginalized and vulnerable Women and Girls is an enormously widespread problem. Lack of access to using the law prevents these vulnerable populations from taking part in and benefitting from the huge developmental and economic advances of recent years. Legal empowerment programs can achieve this by helping the poor to better use the law, the legal system, and legal services to protect and advance their rights and interests as citizens and economic actors”. REF: Making the Law Work for Everyone VOLUME I Report of the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor (2008).*



Under this outcome, all the 500 women already targeted by the project has continue the Legal Education session. Unfortunatley, the Legal education session is 2 months behind the expected end duration. This has been due to majority of the women participants pre-occupation into extra domestic affiars beyound control. It is expected that by September 2025, the women would have completed the learning session.



The photo left is a replica of how the assessment of whether learning has taken place will be conducted through an open field legal exhibition.

In the end, it is expected that all the 500 women learners will be using their new legal knowledge to be solving day-to-day Justice problems in their communities.

### SECTION 3

#### EVIDENCE BASED STATISTICS; CHALLENGES; RECOMMENDATIONS AND TAKEAWAY

##### a. Evidence Based Statistics on Specific Outcome 1

1009

Women now having EASY access to  
SUSTAINED financial services

\$1 = Nle23.0

Total Amount of **MONEY GENERATED** by ALL the 20 Women's groups.

Nle3,056,673.00

\$132.898.00

Total Amount of **MONEY DISBURSED IN LOAN** by ALL the 20 Women's groups.

Nle2,548,000.00

\$110,782.00

1005

Women **BENEFITED FROM LOANS** in their group  
Demonstrating the *EASY* access to *AFFORDABLE* financial services.

Average amount of **SEED MONEY RECEIVED** by each woman after SHARE-OUT

Nle3,029.41

\$131.695.00

## b. Challenges

### Economic and Social Empowerment:

- **Demand out-way supply:** The visible impact of the EaSE activity is attracting more vulnerable women in these and other new communities to join the scheme; but LEWAF do not have predictable and sustained corporate funding partnership. **As reinforced by GEWE policy (p8)** quote *“However, due to the magnitude of the need, there is still a long way to go to reach more communities”* end of quote.
- **Women lack advanced techniques and skills** - to upgrade to productive business investment reaching to the level of Small and Medium Enterprise.

### Access to justice and Legal Empowerment:

- Advanced capacity of Paralegals and Social Workers to meet the current standard and techniques in delivering ADR services.
- High cost of litigation in the formal court system beyond ADR.

## c. Recommendations from ‘Women beneficiaries’ and ‘Community Stakeholders’.

1. Establish ‘*Business Development Skills*’ (BDS) and *Entrepreneurship* learning opportunity for Women.
2. Create flexible additional funding opportunities to support *women that have completed trainings in BDS and Entrepreneurship* to UPGRADE to SMEs.
3. Institutionalised trainings to advance the knowledge of Paralegals/Social workers working for community justice service providers.
4. Build capacity and support NNGOs providing community justice services particularly for Women and other vulnerable populations living in suburban communities.
5. Readily accessible HUMAN RIGHT LAWYERS for PRO-BONO litigation services.

## d. Takeaways

1. More poor and vulnerable women in communities where the project was implemented do not have access to affordable economic opportunities and flexible financial services; that are **SAFE, SECURED** and **CREDIBLE**.
2. Poor women lack knowledge in utilising formal financial services. That is why when these

women ultimately secure loans from formal financial institutions, (most often out of ***‘innate desperation for survival’***); the DEFAULT in loan repayment has always remain **high**. Eventually, when these women become victims and are pursued, they abandon their homes and families for safety. This has always followed with humiliation and rejection thus, posing a BARRIER for more women to seek financial lending support. This has ultimately presented a barrier to Women’s FULL participation in sustainable peace and development of their communities.

3. To combat women’s economic and social poverty, long-term investment, strategic partnership and collaboration is a key strategy.
  4. Majority of people living in rural communities engage more with the informal justice system and get their justice needs met outside the formal court system.
  5. A robust case management data-base system is an essential tool to support evidence-based policies.
  6. The existence of an identifiable and legitimate organisation has proven to be an existential glamour of hope and credibility, apparently giving women the confidence of their safety and security in participating in the EaSE program.
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# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION



## Partnership with WHI

Lady Ellen Women's Aid Foundation in 2024 signs a Memorandum Of Understanding with World Hope International on Women Empowerment

## Grassroot Justice Network



LEWAF is a CORE member of the Grassroot Justice Network - Africa (GJN-Africa). In 2024, LEWAF Director JOINS other core network members in Banjul, Gambia. Together, the team presented evidence-based cases to the Commissioners of the African commission on Human and Pupils right (ACHPR) and the UN Special rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers; advocating for the integration of Legal Empowerment at the ACHPR.



## Partnership with SLP

partnership with Sierra Leone police in tackling violence against Women and Girls in Sierra Leone .

## Solidarity and Felicitation

*Thanks to the hard working and dedicated team of LEWAF*



*Above: Mohamed Bobor Jalloh - Executive Director*

*Special thanks to MoGCA, Community Stakeholders AND Johannes for the valuable support*

*Below: Cross Section of Staff based in Freetown Western Area Urban.*

