



Executive Summary by Mrs. Gladys G. Brima, National Co-ordinator.

In 2004 we started a slow but steady impact creation journey - to improve the socio-economic situations of girls and women by supporting girls access to education girls in Taïama – Kori chiefdom.

From what became visible (successes made and challenges that we were faced with), we became more determined to “work the walk” in a more focused and sustained manner.

Thus, between 2006 and 2007, we set the parameters for pioneering a better informed process that would enable us better actualize our dream of a better world for women and girls in rural societies in Sierra Leone. During this period, the initiative metamorphosed: from responding to educational needs/rights of deprived girls to establishing sustainable structures to respond to the emerging needs and aspirations of women and girls in post-war Sierra Leone in a more comprehensive manner through the development of a three year ((2008-2010) strategic and business plan focussing on:

- 1) Girls Education and Empowerment Programme,

- 2) Women’s Economic Security ;
- 3) Women Peace and Security and
- 4) Women and Governance
- 5) Creation of Women Resource centres.

An estimated 135,00 Euros for the work involve over the years but only about 29.6% of this total was raised from individuals and organisations through The Rev. Fr. Bles and the St. Andrews working group in Holland.

Today we can proudly say the year 2008 in particular, marked a significant turning point in the lives of these girls and their mothers (in particular) and many other women and girls in similar situations in the entire southern region.

Through these supports and remarkable commitment by staff and committee members, we can today boast of:

- total ownership of the organisation by members/stakeholders (Board, staff and community people)
- existence of management structures and systems from board, secretariat to community levels
- sustained activities e.g. organisation has enough groundnut seeds for expansion into other communities in 2009
- Organisation has working relationship with local government structure
- Valuable assets from secretariat and community levels for continuity – Heading key women’s rights coalitions/networks at regional and national levels.

- Increased regional and national recognition and respect

The above realities have worn the organisation the credit of been registered as a national women's human right's organisation – with mandate to operate nationally and apply for bigger funding within and externally.

For sure we can proudly say that we have worked, learnt and laid solid

foundation upon which we can all build for the emancipation of women and Girls in ost-war Sierra Leone.

There is nothing more satisfying than embarking on a fruitful life resuscitating journey like this.

What is coming into force, is the incredible collective power of women united for sustainable Peace and development.

Brief History of Women's Partnership for Justice and Peace (WPJP)

Our History:

What necessitated the formation of an organisation like this were informal discussions where Gladys G. Brima - current co-ordinator (while serving as Gender Programme officer of Network Movement for Justice and Development - NMJD) would engage with other women to reflect on the deplorable situation and circumstances of women and girls (i.e. limited access to education/high school drop-out, increased prostitution, sexual exploitation and abuse in schools and communities, rape, wife beating, denial of property rights etc. with impunity) particularly after the ten years war of mayhem and destruction – that relegated the country to the last place on the league table of least developing countries in the world (Ref. 2007 UNDP Human Development Index). A situation that caused peacelessness for most women/mothers.

The results of these engagements were:

- a) the feeling of hopelessness on one hand and
- b) the urge to initiate a programme that will restore hope and maintain the dignity of women/girls, on the other hand.

Consequently, in 2004, the founder and current national co-ordinator launched a girls scholarship scheme and awareness raising outreach programme in her rural home (Taiama) to stimulate parents to send their daughters to school, on one hand, and to encourage girls stay in school to the end, on the other. Results of these activities were very impressive but challenging as well, which called for a more focused and sustainable engagement that did not fit into the mandate of NMJD. Towards the end of 2005, Gladys resigned from her formal position within NMJD to contributing to the post-war efforts in her rural home (Taiama) by providing leadership for the initiative .

It was from this backdrop that the idea to form what is today called Women's Partnership for Justice and Peace (WPJP) emerged, officially registered and launched as a community-based organisation in April 2007. The organisation's hard work, geographical coverage and impact on the lives of women and girls in the southern region (at large) has won it the national NGO status (with mandate to operate nationally) and registered on 15th October 2008.

As an organisation, we strongly believe that “until the human rights of women/girls are equally guaranteed, there is no justice or peace anywhere”