



CHAMPIONING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

BONTHE DISTRICT CHAIRPERSON'S ENDURING LEGACY



*In Bonthe District, women's participation in politics and decision-making processes has been minimal. Traditional leadership roles such as town chiefs, section chiefs, and paramount chiefs are predominantly held by men, and political involvement often requires substantial financial resources, further limiting women's influence. **The socio-cultural environment and traditional practices have continued to disempower women, hindering their ability to connect, share resources, and support each other effectively.***

ASSIATU CONTEH'S JOURNEY

Assiatu Conteh's journey from Bonthe to the United Kingdom and back to her roots is a testament to her resilience and determination. Born and raised in Bonthe, *Assiatu pursued education and opportunities abroad*, yet remained deeply connected to her homeland. *Her return in 2023 was marked by a commitment to transforming her community, particularly by empowering women and addressing the challenges* of poverty and inadequate infrastructure.

POLITICAL AMBITIONS AND CHALLENGES

In June 2023, Assiatu decided to run for the *Chairperson of the Bonthe District Council, contesting against 12 men for the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) symbol*. Her decision faced skepticism and doubt, but Assiatu was unwavering, bolstered by her connections within the community and the support of the Bonthe District Women in Governance Network. Despite the fierce competition, she secured the party's nomination and launched a grassroots campaign strategy, *focusing on community engagement and mobilization*.

CAMPAIGN STRATEGY AND VICTORY

Assiatu's campaign involved *traveling extensively across Bonthe, listening to citizens' concerns and rallying support for her vision of inclusive leadership*. She leveraged her network to mobilize resources, build bridges across political divides, and engage with the community. Her

dedication and strategy paid off, resulting in a *landslide victory in the June 2024 elections*. Her triumph sent a powerful message of hope and empowerment to women in Bonthe and across the nation.

LEADERSHIP AND IMPACT

As Chairperson of the Bonthe District Council, Assiatu prioritized transparency, accountability, and community development. She initiated projects such as the *fish farming initiative in Norgorbabullum chiefdom to create sustainable livelihoods and address food insecurity*. Her advocacy attracted international donor funding, leading to infrastructural improvements and technical assistance in the district.

LEGACY AND FUTURE

Assiatu's most enduring legacy lies in her commitment to nurturing the next generation of women leaders. Through her leadership and advocacy, she has inspired many women to aspire to positions of in-

fluence. By encouraging participation in the Women in Governance Network, she is building a platform for collective empowerment and solidarity.

In Assiatu Conteh, Bonthe District has found not just a leader but a champion of women's rights, community development, and inclusive governance. Her journey from humble beginnings to political prominence exemplifies determination, resilience, and a steadfast commitment to serving others.

CONCLUSION

Assiatu Conteh's story is a powerful reminder that no challenge is too great, no dream too ambitious, and no barrier insurmountable when faced with courage and conviction. Her leadership is a beacon of hope and a catalyst for transformative change in Bonthe District and beyond.

