



SEND
SIERRA LEONE
Working to promote good governance and
equality of men and women in Sierra Leone



Trócaire

 **Irish Aid**
Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

PRESS RELEASE

OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE TRAINING AND ACCOMPANIMENT MANUAL FOR ASPIRING WOMEN CANDIDATES

The Radisson Blu Hotel, Freetown, Sierra Leone, will witness the “Training and Accompaniment Manual for Aspiring Women Candidates”. The event, which takes place on June 23rd, 2022, will host distinguished guests from the Government of Sierra Leone, the Parliament of Sierra Leone, CSOs, and the media. With funding from Irish Aid, Trocaire and SEND Sierra Leone have collaboratively developed and designed this Manual as part of activities under the Women’s Voice and Leadership programme. The Manual will be officially launched by the Ambassador of Ireland in Sierra Leone, Amb. Claire Buckley.

Joseph Ayamga, Country Director of SEND Sierra Leone, commented on the need to ensure more women have the opportunity to participate in formal governance spaces. “While women represent over half of the Sierra Leonean population, they make up less than 20% of people in elected governance positions. That is untapped potential that if supported can contribute towards democratic governance in Sierra Leone. From our experience, the political participation journey for women can be one of obstacles and hardship, but we operate under the assumption that women are strong and hard-willed. The aim is to train women leaders that are resilient champions for their rights and the rights of the people.”

The Manual is the product of the learnings of the 2018 election cycle and the research recommendations that came after, which Irish Aid supported. This resource has been envisioned by Civil Society Organizations interested in empowering women on the political stage. As women embark on a journey towards participation and leadership, particularly those vying for political positions in the upcoming election cycle, the manual and support from Trocaire partners will be a critical tool to ensure their success. Building on previous resources and consultations with women and stakeholders in 2021 have informed the development of nine sections in the manual which covers governance systems, deciding to run for office, strategies to overcome barriers women face, skills development among others.

Ellen Donnelly, Programme Manager, Trócaire Sierra Leone announced; “Following the official launch of the manual, CSOs will be invited to a Training of trainers to orientate them on the accompaniment approach outlined in the resource. Trócaire will fund NGOs operating in five districts across the North and West of Sierra Leone to roll out the programme over the next 6 months with 250 Aspiring Women Candidates and we hope that the colleagues in the sector working on similar strategies will adopt the manual.”

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SEND Sierra Leone is a non-governmental organisation duly registered under the laws of the Republic of Sierra Leone with a vision to contribute to a Sierra Leone where people’s right and well-being are guaranteed. SEND’s thematic areas of intervention include community development, WaSH, health, nutrition/agriculture, climate change adaptation measures, women’s empowerment and education across the Bo, Bonthe, Kailahun, Kambia, Kenema, Kono, Port-Loko, Pujehun and Western Area Urban and Rural districts in Sierra Leone.

Trócaire was established in 1973 and is the official overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Trócaire’s work in Sierra Leone focuses on empowering women and girls through improving livelihood opportunities, promoting and enabling women’s participation in leadership and governance, and addressing gender-based violence in Northern and Western Sierra Leone.

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