

NDI Advocacy Partners Join Ebola Fight | IREDD Releases First
Periodic Performance Report of Lawmakers

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NDI-Liberia E-Newsletter

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NDI Advocacy Partners Join Ebola Fight

The participation of local communities in Liberia's current Ebola combat will serve as a key drive in curtailing the deadly disease. Already, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), over 5,000 people have died in 9 countries, with Liberia recording a little over 2,800 of these deaths.

In order to help the battle against this ravaging disease, NDI's three advocacy partners – the Liberia CSOs Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Network (WASH), the Southeastern Women Development Association (SEWODA), and the CSO Consortium on Natural Resource Management (NRM) -- will be rolling out an initiative to assist the residents of 16 communities to take preventive measures against the virus.



The project's overall goal seeks to: increase efforts within 16 communities to contain the disease; facilitate the development of community-based action plans; create opportunities for engagement with legislators; and gather information on citizens' experiences on the performance of the healthcare sector, in order to gather information for follow-up initiatives like legislative investigations and public hearings. International organizations such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the WHO have predicted more Ebola-related deaths by January 2015 across Liberia. In an effort to curb this prediction, NDI, with funding support from the Embassy of Sweden, will work with its three advocacy partners in six counties in a total of 16 communities: Montserrado County (7), Bong County (2), Maryland County (2), River Gee County (3), Bomi County (1) and Margibi County (1) The anti-Ebola program is targeting 320 local community leaders from the 16 communities and will serve as a vehicle to bring together residents, who will lead the efforts of conducting brainstorming sessions for the development of robust action plans.

Partners will also organize workshops on the danger of the deadly Ebola virus disease and will use Behavioral Change Communication (BCC) materials to sensitize communities about: prevention; reporting of early signs of the disease to medical staff; and avoiding contact with persons suspected of being infected with Ebola, among others. NDI's partners will build on their current relationships with their member organizations to mobilize targeted communities. All three groups have successfully worked with diverse groups from various communities across the country, but will focus their anti-Ebola initiative on the 16 selected communities and their leaders.

IREDD Releases First Periodic Performance Report of Lawmakers

Legislative monitoring by civil society is essential to contribute to the transparency and accountability of the performance of the legislature and individual lawmakers. It is against this backdrop that NDI, through funding from the Embassy of Sweden, supports the legislative monitoring activities of the Institute for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD) and the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (JPC). Both CSOs have experience in this field

and have been monitoring the legislature since the beginning of this year. In October, IREDD released its first performance report of the legislature. JPC will publish its first report later this month.

IREDD's report, which covers January to July 2014, scrutinizes the performance of each of the 30 senators and 73 representatives during all 48 sessions of the Senate and 49 sessions of the House of Representatives. The monitoring targets the three cardinal responsibilities of the legislature: lawmaking, oversight of the executive, and representation on behalf of their constituents.



According to IREDD's findings *"the Liberian legislature remains under-equipped" and "operates in a state of paralysis with clerical professional staffs' performance continuing to be hindered by the unavailability of basic office equipment such as printers, photocopiers and printers' ink."* While there has been *"incredible"* budgetary support from international partners, *"staff continues to experience deplorable working conditions, thus creating documentation constraints and inefficiency within the legislature."*

The report states that the overall attendance of legislators sees the Senate top the House of Representatives at 83.73% compared to 76.6%. Senators Fredrick Doe Cherue (UP - River Gee) and Mathew Jaye (UP - River Gee) attended all the 48 sessions. Other senators with high plenary attendance include: Joseph Nagbe (APD - Sinoe), Henry Yallah (NDC - Bong) and Adventus D. Gueh (LDP - River Cess).

APD = Alliance for Peace & Democracy
CDC = Congress for Democratic Change
Indep = Independent
LDP = Liberia Destiny Party
LP = Liberty Party

NDC = New Deal Movement/National Democratic Coalition
NDPL = National Democratic Party of Liberia
NPP = National Patriotic Party
NUDP = National Union for Democratic Progress
UP = Unity Party

In the House of Representatives Zoe Emmanuel Pennue (Indep - Grand Gedeh) got the highest in plenary attendance: 48 out of the 49 sessions held. Others with high attendance marks include: Thomas Fallah (CDC – Montserrado), Abraham V. Corneh, III (Indep – Montserrado), William V. Dakel, Sr. (NDC – Montserrado), Garrison Yealue, Jr. (NUDP – Nimba) and Francis Paye (NDC River Cess).

When a lawmakers attends a session he or she is able to speak. Senator Fredrick Doe Cherue (UP – River Gee) spoke 89 times, followed by Peter S. Coleman (CDC - Grand Kru) who spoke 88 times. In the House of Representatives Prince K. Moye (UP - Bong) spoke 115 times. He is followed by Jeh Byron Brown (LP – Grand Bassa) who spoke 70 times.

Lawmakers have the right to initiate a bill. During the first seven months of this year 32 bills were recorded at the legislature. Nine (28%) came from the Executive; 7 (22%) from the Senate and 16 (50%) from individual representatives. Johnson Chea (NDC - River Gee), Moses Kollie (UP – Lofa), Hon. J. Byron Brown (LP – Grand Bassa), and Mariama Fofana (UP – Lofa), introduced the highest numbers of bills.

Writing a letter to the legislature is another tool a lawmaker can use to put an item on the political agenda. In the monitored period, 20 letters were introduced by members of the Senate and 39 by members of the House of Representatives. In the Senate Geraldine Doe Sheriff (CDC – Montserrado) wrote five letters, followed by George Tengbeh (UP – Lofa) with four. Representatives Larry P. Younguoi (NUDP – Nimba) and Ben Fofana (UP – Margibi) wrote four such communications each.

The next E-Newsletter will feature the monitoring report of JPC, which focusses on different areas of observation, such as the institutional openness of the legislature and the performance of lawmakers in their constituencies.

More information is included in IREDD's report and its summary. The seven page summary of the report can be found [here](#). Later this year the full version of the report will also be available at this web address.

Legislative Spotlight Radio



Every Wednesday and Thursday Legislative Spotlight Radio

The NDI-sponsored Legislative Spotlight radio program is broadcast live on Truth F.M. 96.1 every Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. The show is rebroadcast every Thursday at 11:00 a.m. on Radio Veritas 97.8 F.M. Look out too for the magazine version on community radio stations in all 15 counties. Please tune in!!!!



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