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PRESS RELEASE
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IPU Engages MPs and Stakeholders in Raising Awareness on Gender Base Violence

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Sierra Leone Chapter, in collaboration with the Sierra Leone Parliament, has at the end of March 2016, engaged various community stakeholders and MPs in the Western Area on raising awareness on gender based violence and stigmatization of Ebola survivors.

Delivering the keynote address and official launch of the one day dialogue forum, the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Chernor Bah, praised the IPU and Parliament for their support to the educational sector on the issues of gender based violence in the country. Hon. Bah noted that violence against women and girls cuts across our society and urged all to take the training very seriously.

The Chairperson of IPU Sierra Leone, Hon. Rosaline Jariatu Smith, appreciated and welcomed participants to the training programme whilst explaining the importance of the IPU project in the country.



Hon. Patrick L. Kargbo addressing participants on domestic violence

Various speakers introduced topics such as gender laws enacted by Parliament, domestic violence, national and international legal frameworks to tackle violence against women and girls, stigmatization of Ebola survivors, and sexual based violence.

Stakeholders and Members of Parliament appreciated the training and promised to replicate what has been learnt among community members whom they represent in the Western Area. In like vein, the IPU



A group picture of participants

focal person, Hon. Smith, promised to extend the programme across the country in order to educate the general public on laws relating to gender based violence.

IPU Takes Gender Advocacy to Kenema

As a result, the IPU team visited Kenema in the Eastern Region, where it met stakeholders at the Chinese Farm Hall in Kenema City.



IPU Chairperson Hon. Rosaline Smith addressing participants in Kenema

Giving background information on the project, the IPU Chairperson noted that the organisation is an international umbrella body of Parliaments around the world geared towards the promotion of good governance and democracy. Hon. Smith also averred that in order to promote good governance in Sierra Leone, the IPU has resolved to support a project on gender based violence and raising awareness relating to stigmatization of Ebola survivors. Hon. Smith said that they have completed similar training for MPs and stakeholders in the western Area, noting that it was now time for the Eastern Province.

IPU member, Hon. Patrick L. Kargbo did a power point presentation on the Domestic Violence Act of 2007 and the Sexual Offences Act, 2012. On post Ebola stigmatization, members of the IPU body appealed to participants to encourage Ebola survivors and avoid any form of discrimination against them.

Altogether, participants appreciated the education program and promised to spread the IPU message on gender based violence throughout their communities.