



**SYNOPSIS OF REPORTS RELATED TO
PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENT
WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION
(ParlCSONET)**

Development of ToR and the setting up of CSO-Parliamentary Network (PARLCSOINET) Steering Committee.



In a bid to improve the working relationship between Parliament and CSO as partners in development and foster the need for a national mapping process and engagement by both CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) and Parliament. WFD supported the parliament of Sierra Leone and conducted two days Parliamentary CSO Engagement Workshop and Development of ToR for the operation of Parliament CSO Network Steering Committee, on the 16th & 17th November 2022 in Freetown. A total of 67 participants including, CSOs, Members of Parliament and Parliamentary leadership and staffers; CSOs within the Western Area, plus 2 from each district were convened to critically discuss issues of citizens participation in parliament and cementing a strong relationship for Parliamentary CSO engagements. The event also deliberated on the CSO Parliament Network Terms of Reference (ToR) and set up the Steering Committee that will continue to strengthen healthy relationship between such engagement. The steering committee will ensure effective and substantive exchanges of information, consolidate gains, and prioritize needs and aspirations between Parliament and CSO as representatives of the people. In providing the opportunity for citizens to access Parliament and have knowledge of its operations, Parliament will address the needs of its citizens through its actions. The engagement resulted in some recommended actions to be taken that are gears towards cementing a sustainable collaborative relationship through an established network known as ParlCSOINET. The event was climaxed with the opening of the Parliament CSO's office by the Speaker of Parliament.

Capacity Building for Parliament CSO Network members on the law-making process, post-legislative scrutiny, and corporative dialogue



Following the establishment of the Parliament and Civil Society network and the opening of the CSO's office for Parliamentary CSO engagement, a capacity building training for CSOs was prioritized and conducted on the 13th and 14th of December 2022 in Freetown to improve the knowledge and skills of the CSOs to fully engage the space of governance, democracy, and legislative affairs. A standard capacity-building package was developed and delivered to increase over 50 CSO members' knowledge of policy, legislative scrutiny, and dialogue for effective engagement with parliamentarians. To deliver the training, a training Manual was developed through the Centre for Strategy and Parliamentary Studies, and it comprises of diverse topics such as Citizens' Participation in Public Hearing, Committee and Legislative Hearing Proceedings, Parliamentary Oversight and Reporting, Inclusive and accountable Political Process, and Advocacy & Constructive Engagement in CSO Parliamentary Collaboration. These topics were delivered by a team of experts who strengthened the skills of ParlCSO.net members and provided them with the ability to train other CSOs. This means that these resources will form part of their knowledge products for future engagements with the Parliament CSO network.

The training also increased the knowledge of members of the ParlCSO.net on the law-making process, post-legislative scrutiny, and corporative dialogue. The initial engagements revealed that there has been a widening gap for CSOs in participating in policy and legislative review processes; to maintain a fair engagement between both parties, the capacity building also focused on law-making, legislative review, and corporative dialogue. With the training evaluation conducted, it is evident that the training increased the knowledge of Parliament CSO network members on law-making processes, legislative review, corporative dialogue, and post-legislative work that will enhance increased engagements with Parliament and provide long-term support to the Network. It is expected that the training will position the

network as a go-to network for legislative review and scrutiny, as well as improve the capacity of the members to collaborate and advocate on behalf of the citizens of Sierra Leone.