



2007 PROMOTING INFORMATION AND VOICE FOR TRANSPARENCY ON ELECTIONS: REPORT ON POST-ELECTION EVALUATION EXERCISE

The Post-Election of the Promoting Information and Voice for Transparency on Election (PIVOT) programme was developed as an umbrella structure bringing partners with a diversity of experience and approach together under a common goal. The purpose of the PIVOT programme was ***‘to support free, fair elections by improving citizens’ ability to engage effectively in the electoral process through enhanced capacity of media and civil society’***.

SFCG, in partnership with BBC World Trust, was responsible for voter and civic education through the development of messages and radio slots, capacity building of local radio stations, and co-production of new programmes to support non-violent elections. Furthermore, SFCG was tasked with training in balanced and unbiased elections reporting and enabling media collaboration for messaging and reporting. Lastly, SFCG engaged in outreach activities including issue based debates and activities with women and youth in communities.

PIVOT & SFCG STRENGTHENED REPRESENTATIVE POLITICAL PARTIES

There is one activity which can be attributed solely to PIVOT. For the first time, candidates were asked to state their policies to the people in the form of public forums and debates, through a facilitated combination of PIVOT partners working with communities, political parties, and using the radio to broadcast. No other donor funded projects targeted this important aspect of voter education; informing voters about candidates from an issue based perspective.

Different partners were involved, such as the work of WFD in working with political parties on the delivery of their manifestos to the public, through BBCWST training on election reporting and ***SFCG staging the public forums and debates in communities and broadcasting these to gain a greater reach, while enabling listeners to text or phone in with questions and comments***. These debates were often followed up within communities and further discussions held.

“This is how synergy should work and has enabled valuable evidence to be gathered on the answers candidates gave, and promises made to the electorate that can be used to hold them to account in the future.”

SFCG HELPED INCREASE WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN ELECTORAL PROCESS

Although relatively few women stood for election, the majority of people spoken to were publicly in favour of women participating, and many said they wanted more women to stand as they might ‘make a better job of it’. Women spoken to, for example, the chair of the Market Women’s Association in Kabala, said she wanted to stand for local election and was being encouraged to do so through the activities of women’s groups, including 50/50. Women said that they feel part of the process and they know how to vote through listening to the radio and organisations coming to tell them what to do. Women were particularly encouraged by hearing women’s voices on the radio discussing the elections and seeing women officiating in the polling stations. ***Outreach support was given by SFCG and CSOs to women and youths and through 50/50 grassroots to engage women in participating in the election process and giving them a voice.***

PIVOT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a sample of recommendations for the broader PIVOT programme:

1. Move to developing approaches to civic and political education and away from general election messages, such as non-violence. These were successful in last election and PIVOT now to build on growing confidence of electorate to fully participate in political process;
2. Ensure the local election basket fund programmes further support accountability and responsive element and develop clear information sharing strategy with all election stakeholders, to avoid duplications of effort and over bombardment of similar information to the public;
3. Establishing accountability links with aspirants and candidates to enable post local election accountability
4. All partners to analyse the evidence they have and *together*, to strategise on how they will work with civil society to ensure effective use of this evidence, including time lines, training needs for targeted groups and development of accountability lines.

Source: This document is a summary of, and taken directly from “Promoting Information and Voice for Transparency on Elections: Report on Post-Election Evaluation Exercise” by Alison Lochhead, Annie Longley, Joseph Batty, and Smita Choraria. A copy of this document can be acquired at <http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/sierra.html>, or by contacting Nick Oatley, Director Institutional Learning at Search for Common Ground at noatley@sfcg.org

John Marks
President
Search for Common Ground
1601 Connecticut Avenue NW | Suite 200
Washington, DC 20009 | USA
Tel: +1 202 777 2222 | jmarks@sfcg.org

Search for Common Ground in Sierra Leone
44 Bathurst Street
Freetown, Sierra Leone
Phone: +232 (22) 223-479
Fax: +1 (202) 232-6718
E-mail: ffortune@sfcg.org
rbesant@sfcg.org



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