

Exploring Success Stories in Sierra Leone.

MDG 3 – Gender Equality



PACER is an Oxfam project, which stands for Promoting a Culture of Equal Representation. It supports women aspiring to be elected to public office. John visited the PACER project to find out about achievements in gender equality – ensuring women have the same opportunities as men and they are not discriminated against. In the past girls and women have been treated unfairly and not given the same rights as men. This can make it harder for women to carry out normal tasks.

This is what John found:



PACER's belief is that having more women involved in parliament and local government will directly lead to a positive change in the lives of poor men and women.

The photo shows Haja on the right, elected the local council of her area in 2008. She is now in charge of the council's finance committee. Haja told me about the barriers facing women – first girls fall behind in school and this leads to adult women not having the confidence to speak up in public. Six women supported and trained by Oxfam are now part of Koinadugu Council.

Throughout the country, 14.5% of the places in the Sierra Leone parliament are held by women – the national target is 30%.

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BEFORE

- How would you feel if you were a woman who didn't have the same rights as the men around you?
- What was one reason why women didn't have the confidence to speak up?

AFTER

- What do you think the women in this community are aiming to achieve?
- If the target is reached – and 30% of parliament in Sierra Leone is made up of women, how will this help women and girls in the future?
- What knock on effects could having women's voices heard have in Sierra Leone?