Richard Fanthorpe
Andrew Lavali
Mohamed Gibril Sesay

Decentralization in Sierra Leone: Impact, Constraints and Prospects

Decentralization Research Team

Acknowledgments

Executive Summary

Purpose of the Study

This study was commissioned by DFID to assess:

- The impact of decentralized structures (local councils) on the delivery of pro-poor development, particularly the delivery of basic services and on opportunities for poor people to articulate their voice.
- The institutional strategies and power relationships that affect local councils' capacity to fulfil this design purpose.

Specific questions addressed in the study:

- Have local councils had a material impact on development outcomes in terms of the delivery of basic services?
- Have local councils improved pro-poor decision making and enhanced poor people's voice in local level political structures?
- To what degree have local councils used their power to deliver development outcomes that would not otherwise have taken place?
- To what degree have established local power networks – particularly chiefs – been affected by the establishment of local councils?
- What are the major constraints upon making local councils more powerful actors in delivering pro-poor development and enhancing poor people's voice in local decision making?
- How do local people and civil society groups perceive local council operations, particularly in comparison and contrast to existing chieftaincy structures?

Approach and Methodology

The research had four components:

- Literature review
- Key informant interviews
- Focus group discussions
- Quantitative survey of 600 questionnaires covering four districts: Bo, Bombali, Kono and Western Area Rural District (WARD)

Conclusions - Responses to the Research Questions

Have local councils had a material impact on development outcomes in terms of the delivery of basic services?

- The quantitative data does not provide a conclusive answer to this question. For example, the National Public Services Survey (NPSS) of 2007 found that there was substantial improvement between 2005 and 2007 in all sectors in which local councils managed decentralized functions, especially in health generally and primary health in particular. De-concentration was relatively advanced in the health sector when the decentralization programme began and these data are indicative of a positive impact of decentralization. The results of the 2011 NPSS are not yet available.

- Education, not health, scores highest in the present study's survey. This finding may reflect the devolution of education functions to local councils since 2007 and the recent spate of council-funded school building work highlighted in the FGDs.
- In the final analysis, the conclusion reached by earlier studies still applies: decentralization has been consistent with substantial improvements in local services, but it is almost impossible to isolate the material impact of the programme in a country still undergoing extensive, donor-supported post-war reconstruction.
- Qualitative data are highly indicative of decentralization's material impact. Local councils have built or rehabilitated schools, PHUs, slaughter houses, market enclosures, drinking water supplies, sanitary facilities and feeder roads, distributed seeds to ABOs, improved waste management in towns and played a key role in the rollout of the free health care scheme for pregnant and nursing mothers and small children.

Have local councils improved pro-poor decision making and enhanced poor people's voice in local level political structures?

- The Sierra Leonean public recognizes that local councils are trying to deliver services and many FGD participants had a clear view of the theoretical benefits of decentralization, i.e. that it represents an institutional mechanism to make government aware of local development needs and to satisfy those needs. However, the problem lies in translating theory into practice.
- On the plus side, the simple fact that Sierra Leone now has a fully fledged system for inter-governmental transfers represents significant progress from the pre-war situation. A point emphasized by devolved MDA staff is that in the old days of central control, some districts might receive a much bigger share of resources than others. Under decentralization, each district has guaranteed funds for local services and decisions over the allocation of these funds are made locally.
- On the minus side, patronage politics continues to predominate in Sierra Leone. Local councils are under pressure from other authorities, notably MPs and chiefs, for access to their resources or for a share of the political credit for their programmes.
- Enhancing the voice of poor people in local government can also be more apparent than real. Local councils' diligence in public consultation continues to be monitored and assessed at the centre, but enhancing the voice of the poor in local government has little intrinsic value unless it leads to concrete action. This is the fundamental problem with the WDCs. In some areas (notably WARD), local councils might do better by developing forums with local CSOs and CBOs.
- Political pressure from above and below has nevertheless encouraged local councils to concentrate on their unique selling point. The councils in Bo District are currently expanding the horizons of local government in Sierra Leone. For them, the key challenge is to ensure that their planning maps and amenities databases are recognized by other agencies as authoritative. These initiatives do not generate a great deal of pro-poor decision making as yet, but they certainly have the potential to do so.

To what degree have local councils used their power to deliver development outcomes that would otherwise not have taken place?

- The system of fiscal transfers from central to local government guarantees a minimum level of services in all districts, which did not happen before decentralization. However, only a small proportion of this funding is discretionary.
- The only way to measure the unique impact of decentralization with any precision would be to a) quantify the actual delivery of local council services and projects over a multi-year cycle; b) trace the decision-making processes in local government that have (or have not) produced concrete development outcomes; c) compare these outcomes with the local development work of NGOs and other agencies.
- Such an exercise would reveal how many local development needs identified in WDC meetings are included in district development plans and how many of those are actually funded. If WDCs are found to be ineffective in generating concrete development outcomes, other instruments (e.g. CBO/CSO "learning alliances") could be tried instead.
- The fact that LGFD interlocutors describe local councils' development plans as "wish lists" also illustrates the need for further analysis of the funding responses to these plans and what they reveal about local councils' *de facto* decision-making powers.
- Ironically, it is local councils' lack of power and discretionary control over resources that is driving the innovations seen in Bo District and the determination of councillors across the country (particularly women councillors) to champion the development needs of their wards. We are seeing here the fragile beginnings of a new ethos of local government in Sierra Leone.
- At present, the councils' honest intent to deliver development and services seems to be winning them as much popular support as the benefits they are actually delivering. Consequently, if a unique development dividend has emerged from the first seven years of decentralization it is more cultural than material.

To what degree have established local power networks – particularly chiefs – been affected by the establishment of local councils?

- When decentralization began, donors were inclined to view chiefs as an entrenched "feudal" elite, predisposed to capture resources from the local councils. However, a distinction must be made between lower ranking chiefs, the vast majority of whom are socially embedded in the villages and neighbourhoods in which they exercise governance, and paramount chiefs who exercise executive, administrative and judicial powers as state agents. Power networks involving paramount chiefs are invariably linked to the centre.
- The fact that some sections of the governing elite are interested in strengthening old modalities of "indirect rule" may be a testament to the success of decentralization and the relative impermeability of its regulatory and monitoring mechanisms. But it also reflects the desire of the governing elite to reassert the power of the central state, especially in opposition strongholds.
- It is not technically feasible for government to transfer significant service delivery responsibilities from local councils to the chiefdoms. Furthermore, re-centralizing service delivery would alienate large sections of the public as well as international donors. It would be particularly damaging to the reputation of an APC government, both domestically and internationally, to de-activate local councils a second time.

- Paramount chiefs have begun to reach their own accommodations with local councils. Some paramount chief councillors are rarely seen in council, while others play an active role in council business. However, some aspects of this accommodation are not conducive to good governance.

E. What are the major constraints to making local councils a more powerful actor in delivering pro-poor development and enhancing poor people's voice in local decision making?

- The most pressing constraint is successive governments' insistence on conserving the executive and administrative powers of chiefs. Without effective tax authority, the councils cannot develop a social contract, as elected service providers, with taxpaying voters and service consumers. Furthermore, they are dependent on the cooperation of chiefs to obtain land for projects, which compromises their planning authority.
- Lack of payroll devolution has hampered coordination between elected councillors and technical staff, with some of the latter seeing the councils as little more than funding agencies.
- Endemic poverty has also constrained the effectiveness of local councils in delivering services and enhancing the voice of poor people. Rural people have become used over generations to surviving with little or no government assistance and that isolation has helped to dampen demand for services. A local culture of "self-help" remains strong.

F. How do local people and civil society groups perceive local council operations, particularly in comparison and contrast to existing chieftaincy structures?

- Many poor Sierra Leoneans have a clear view of the local councils' design purpose. They are also aware that local councils are closely audited and monitored and therefore operate with a high degree of fiscal and administrative probity. However, many remote communities have seen little in the way of council services and are not therefore inclined towards a positive view of the councils.
- Even when interviewees expressed approval of the services provided by local councils, they tended to reserve strong criticism for councillors as individuals. Common complaints were that councillors are rarely seen in their wards, that they call meetings with nothing to announce in the way of benefits and that they tend to lose interest in council work when they find they can't make any money from it. In short, the provincial populace tends to assess local councils as development agencies and councillors as patrons.
- Deference towards chiefs is greatest in remote agrarian communities but declines sharply in urban areas. The exception to this pattern is Kono District, whose historic diamond industry and unique identity politics enabled chiefs to amass wealth and influence as political brokers. However, more than 50% of survey respondents in Kono were in favour of transferring responsibility for revenue collection from chiefs to local councils. These results suggest that public deference towards Kono District's powerful and wealthy chiefs is as much pragmatic as it is ideological.

Conclusions - Regional variations in local governance

A factor that came out clearly in the research was that each of the four survey districts has a distinctive social and economic configuration and power relationships, all of which affect local councils' interactions with their publics.

- **Bo District** has always been close to the state. It has a long history of commercial agriculture (mainly coffee, cacao and palm oil) and grassroots investment in modern education. This last factor came out strongly in the FGDs held in the district: participants often focussed on the mechanics of council contracting and resource disbursement and subjected all service providers to critical scrutiny.
- **Bombali District**, by way of contrast, remains one Sierra Leone's poorest districts. It is a district of isolated agrarian communities, many of which have very limited access to services and which remain heavily reliant on chiefs for day to day governance. Local councillors in Bombali tend be more socially embedded in their wards than their counterparts in other districts and thus more inclined to champion local development needs.
- **Kono District** has been a centre of artisanal and industrial diamond mining for more than half a century. Chiefs became powerful brokers in the mining economy, authorizing the local settlement of rich and poor migrants and serving as middlemen between mining investors and landowners. While some FGD participants in Kono expressed reverence for the institution of chieftaincy, others tended to view chiefs as powerful political actors who have to be brought on board if development efforts in the district are going to be successful.
- **WARD** represents the rural areas of the capital district (Western Area), but has no paramount chiefs. The post-war influx of population into the Freetown area has spilled over into WARD and generated considerable demand for land for housing and market gardening. Fishing is also a major village industry. Economic opportunity and geographical mobility in WARD translates into a high density of CSOs and CBOs. However, many of these groups tend to seek out resources and information at the centre, whether directly or through patrons, rather than engaging with the local council.
- While decentralization in Sierra Leone is a national programme, there is a case for targeting specific types of support to different districts, e.g. direct project funding in Bo, support to councillors' mobility and planning capacity in Bombali, support to a multi-agency approach (i.e. above the level of chiefdoms and local councils) to development in Kono and improving the interface and interaction between CSOs and local councils in WARD.

Abbreviations

ABO	**Agribusiness Organization**
APC	**All People's Congress**
BCC	**Bo City Council**
CBO	**Community Based Organization**
CCFC	**Central Chiefdom Finance Clerk**
CLoGPAS	**Comprehensive Local Government Performance Assessment System**
DecSec	**Decentralization Secretariat**
DSDP	**Decentralized Service Delivery Project**
CSO	**Civil Society Organization**
CTAP	**Chiefdom and Tribal Administration Policy**
DFID	**Department for International Development**
ENCISS	**Enhancing the Interface and Interaction between Civil Society and the State to Improve Poor People's Lives**
EU	**European Union**
FGD	**Focus Group Discussion**
GoSL	**Government of Sierra Leone**
IFAD	**International Fund for Agricultural Development**
INGO	**International Non-Governmental Organization**
IRCBP	**Institutional Reform and Capacity Building Project**
LGA	**Local Government Act, 2004**
LGFD	**Local Government Finance Department, MOFED**
MCC	**Makeni City Council**
MDAs	**Ministries, Departments and Agencies**
MLG	**Ministry of Local Government**
MP	**Member of Parliament**
MOFED	**Ministry of Finance and Economic Development**
NGO	**Non-Governmental Organization**
NPRC	**National Provisional Ruling Council**
PHU	**Primary Health Unit**
PIU	**Project Implementation Unit**
PMDC	**People's Movement for Democratic Change**
RUF	**Revolutionary United Front**
SLPP	**Sierra Leone People's Party**
UNDP	**United Nations Development Programme**
WARD	**Western Area Rural District**
WDC	**Ward Development Committee**

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1. Introduction

DFID Sierra Leone and other donors have been supporting a long term project to re-establish decentralised governance in the towns and districts of Sierra Leone. Local councils have now been in operation for seven years and are set to receive greater fiscal transfers from central government. With options now opening up to channel additional resources through decentralised local councils, this study was commissioned to assess: a) the impact of local councils on the delivery of pro-poor development, particularly the delivery of basic services and on opportunities for poor people to articulate their voice; b) the institutional strategies and power relationships that affect local councils' capacity to fulfil this design purpose. The fundamental question here is whether elected local councils have provided a more effective means – or perceived to be more effective – of delivering development outcomes and responding to the needs of the poor.

The specific questions addressed in the study are:
- Have local councils had a material impact on development outcomes in terms of the delivery of basic services?
- Have local councils improved pro-poor decision making and enhanced poor people's voice in local level political structures?
- To what degree have local councils used their power to deliver development outcomes that would not otherwise have taken place?
- To what degree have established local power networks – particularly chiefs – been affected by the establishment of local councils?
- What are the major constraints to making local councils more powerful actors in delivering pro-poor development and enhancing poor people's voice in local decision making?
- How do local people and civil society groups perceive local council operations, particularly in comparison and contrast to existing chieftaincy structures?

Approach and Methodology
The research had four components:
1. A review of the literature on local government reform and decentralization in Sierra Leone, including comparative references to international literature on local government reform in post-conflict states.
2. Key informant interviews with policy makers and opinion formers at the national level and local council leaders and operatives in the districts.
3. Focus group discussions with local councillors and representatives of decentralization's target population, notably women and youths.
4. Quantitative survey of four districts in Sierra Leone to ask people about their experiences of local councils, local council service delivery, their ability to engage and participate in local council governance structures and how they view their interaction with chiefdom governance structures.

The four districts included in the survey are: Bo, Bombali, Kono and Western Area Rural District (WARD). The selected districts capture socio-economic and political differences between north and south, metropolitan and provincial areas, areas with a history of mining and in-migration and those with history of small-holder farming and out-migration. The salient characteristics of the four districts are:
- **Bo,** a district containing Sierra Leone's second city of the same name. Bo District benefits from a comparatively strong private sector and has a long history of grassroots investment in modern education. It is a stronghold of the SLPP.

- **Bombali,** a relatively poor northern district with a long history of out-migration. The district's trans-regional trading economy has yet to recover from the civil war. Makeni, the district and provincial capital, is located close to the southern border of the district. Bombali is a stronghold of the APC.
- **Kono**, a diamond mining district with a long history of in-migration, heightened identity politics, organized civil society and governance controversies associated with mining. The district has a long history of political activism over Kono-specific concerns and is a notable "swing" constituency in national politics.
- **WARD**, a new entity representing the rural and peri-urban locales of the capital district (Western Area). Post-war migration to Freetown area has spilled over into WARD and generated considerable demand for land, both for housing and market gardening. Economically opportunity and interest-based associational life are currently much stronger in WARD than in the provinces. The Western Area is another "swing "constituency in national politics, albeit with historical leanings towards the APC.

Further information on the socio-economic and political characteristics of these districts can be found in Section 6.1.

The timeframe and budget of the research limited the quantitative survey to 600 questionnaires, 150 to each district. Respondents were selected using random sampling methods (See Section 5.1 for further details). This exercise was designed to yield data on attitudes towards decentralization at a level above that of the focus group; a national survey would have required a much larger sample in order to achieve statistical significance. With that caveat in mind, some of the questionnaire questions were designed to overlap with questions included in the National Public Services Survey carried out by the Evaluations Unit of the Decentralization Secretariat in June and July 2011. The intention here is to facilitate comparison between the outputs of the two surveys.

Report Structure
Successive sections of the report analyse findings from the four research components and concludes with responses to the main research questions. A full version of the literature review is annexed along with the tabulated survey results.

2. Literature Review: The Political Economy of Decentralization in Sierra Leone[1]

Summary Findings from the Literature Review

Why decentralization was fast-tracked in Sierra Leone

- Within international development, democratic decentralization has acquired a dual rationale: a) improving development planning and service delivery *(*poverty reduction and good governance); b) reincorporating alienated populations into national bodies politic (peacebuilding).
- This dual rationale was particularly pertinent to Sierra Leone. Several studies identify the over-concentration of political, administrative and economic power in the capital Freetown as a root cause of rural poverty and the chaotic civil war of the 1990s.
- An additional reason to decentralize was to reform/replace the archaic and conflicted system of governance in the provinces, inherited from colonial "indirect rule". Chieftaincy, the backbone of this governance system, appeared to be undergoing a terminal crisis of popular legitimacy at the end of the war.
- Decentralization had been national policy in Sierra Leone for many years and the political will for decentralization after the civil war seemed strong.

Early successes of decentralization

- A new Local Government Act (LGA) was ratified in February 2004.
- Inaugural local council elections were held in May 2004.
- Donor support to decentralization was channelled through a PIU with a strong change management team.
- By 2007, Sierra Leone had a fully functional tier of town and district councils, a new and well-regulated system of fiscal transfers from central to local government, increased investment in local services and regular production of participatory development plans.
- In 2008 a second round of local council elections was successfully completed.

Emerging constraints

- While appearing to share international donors' rationale for decentralization, the GoSL was in fact returning to an old model of local government in which elected district and town councils serve as development planning agencies and chiefdoms remain in place to maintain law and order at the grassroots.
- Donors accepted this division of functions, seeing it as an opportunity to put decentralized structures in place quickly and ring-fence them from political capture by chiefs.
- The drawback of this policy compromise was that it left key governance functions, especially local revenue collection and land use management, in the hands of chiefdom authorities. Local councils and the chiefdoms were left to compete for authority and resources within the same political space.
- Oligarchy still has adherents in Sierra Leone. The line ministries have been slow to release control over functions scheduled for devolution and the Ministry of Local Government has tended to leave the championing of decentralization to its PIU while guarding its historical prerogatives in the supervision of chieftaincy affairs.

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[1] Annex 1 contains a fuller version of this review with bibliographic references.

- In a period of extensive post-war reconstruction, the resources controlled by local councils have been tiny compared to the international development assistance fast-tracked through line ministries and NGOs. This has lessened the political impact of decentralization.

Recent Political and Policy Developments

- Successful post-war reconstruction has seen the revival of electoral competition between regionally and ethnically aligned political parties, which has also led to the revival of the old political strategy of using chiefs as vote banks.
- Party political issues have also begun to affect relations between central and local government, prompting the current government to revive the colonially-wrought post of District Officer to "bring local councils to heel."
- Recent GOSL policy on local government has diluted some of the powers granted to local councils under the LGA of 2004 and focussed on building institutional capacity in the chiefdoms.
- Some commentators fear that decentralization could now be reversed while others argue that current GoSL policy represents a belated reaction to the fact that the "genie" of decentralized democracy is out of the bottle. It is more likely, however, that recent policy developments represents an attempt by the GoSL to accommodate competing political interests rather than a concerted political strategy to return to the modalities of "indirect rule". It is extremely doubtful that any government of Sierra Leone could now abolish elected local government and survive politically.

The policy literature on decentralization in Sierra Leone identifies the over-concentration of political, administrative and economic power in Freetown as the root cause of the civil war of the 1990s. The argument here is that the Sierra Leonean state became increasingly localized and self-serving in the pre-war era, leaving the rural poor to fend for themselves. The war began in an environment of collapsing social trust and escalated chaotically as large numbers of marginalized youths were drawn in. For international donors supporting post-war reconstruction in Sierra Leone, decentralization always included the explicit peacebuilding aim of redressing the impoverishment, exclusion and alienation of the rural masses.

Three further factors clinched donor support for a fast-track decentralization programme when the civil war ended:

1. Decentralization had been a declared policy of both military and civilian governments of Sierra Leone during the civil war years. National political will for decentralization therefore seemed strong.
2. Local government in Sierra Leone prior to the war had changed remarkably little since the days of colonial "indirect rule". It comprised of a system of field administration, coordinated by District Officers, and chieftaincy structures at the local level. The conservation of these structures in the post-colonial era helped to keep the formal state small and thus amenable to oligarchic control. It also enabled chiefs to accumulate considerable power as political brokers and thus served as a suppressant to mass political mobilization. Widespread protest against chiefs' governance in NGO-led forums at the end of the war convinced development agencies that chieftaincy was deeply implicated in the governance failings that had led to the war, that it was undergoing a terminal crisis of popular legitimacy and that a modern and democratic system of local government was urgently needed to secure peace and stability in Sierra Leone.

3. Unlike other countries emerging from post-Cold War conflicts, there was no perceived need in Sierra Leone to construct a decentralized political framework specifically to facilitate the peaceful co-existence of ethnic, religious or regional factions. Identity politics never featured prominently in the Sierra Leonean war and none of the wartime militias made much headway in peacetime politics. With GoSL support for decentralization assured, the programme was launched as a purely technical exercise, managed by a World Bank's Institutional Reform and Capacity Building Project (IRCBP).

A new Local Government Act (LGA) was ratified in 2004 and a fully functional system of elected, service-orientated local councils was rapidly put in place. However, it was soon apparent that the GoSL and its international development partners had differing visions of decentralization:

1. One the one hand, the GoSL had no intention of abolishing the chiefdoms and looked to the past for its model of decentralization. In the 1950s, the colonial government set up elected District Councils to serve as planning authorities and managers of overseas development aid. The chiefdoms were left in place under this policy to continue their historic functions in maintaining law and order and were not affected by the de-activation of these councils in 1972. After the war, GoSL policy makers still tended to view decentralization as the restoration of this lost tier of local government and, along with it, the historic division of functions between elected councils and chiefdoms.

2. On the other hand, the chiefdoms had no place in donors' vision of a modern, efficient and democratically accountable system of local government. Nor were donors willing to support a decentralization programme that was amenable to political capture by chiefs.

The ensuing policy compromise saw the administrative, legal and fiscal ring-fencing of the new local government system from other governmental agencies, especially the chiefdoms. This arrangement helped to ensure that best governance practice would prevail in the new system, but militated against overall administrative coherence.

For example, the chiefdoms have retained their original tax raising and land management functions under decentralization. In an effort get local councils and chiefdoms working together effectively, the Local Government Act establishes local councils as the highest authorities in their localities with the power to claim a precept on taxes collected by the chiefdoms. Paramount chiefs were given a limited number of *ex officio* seats on local councils. They were also given seats on Ward Development Committees (WDCs), which were designed to facilitate grassroots participation in development planning. However, these arrangements have not prevented bitter disputes from arising between local councils and chiefdom authorities over revenue collection and planning authority.

Part of the problem here is that the legacy of colonial attempts to build administrative capacity in the chiefdoms remains intact on the statute. Chiefdom governance became thoroughly de-formalized after Independence and chiefs are now only able to exercise administration through social networks. For example, the organization of local tax collection relies on the social embeddedness of lower ranking chiefs and their personal connections to the paramount chief. From a bureaucratic point of view, the present system of local tax collection is woefully inefficient. But from chiefs' point of view it is emblematic of their personal authority.

Local rivalries between chiefdoms and elected councils are mirrored at the national level. For example, the contract staff of the IRCBP tended to champion the local council system while the civil servants of the Ministry of Local Government (MLG)[2] tended to guard their historical prerogatives in the supervision of chiefdom governance. The line ministries generally have proven reluctant to relinquish control over functions scheduled for devolution. The Director of DecSec observed at a public conference marking the completion of the IRCBP in June 2011 that a little over thirty of the 80 functions originally scheduled for devolution in 2004 have yet to be released by their parent ministries.

Fear of armed conflict in Sierra Leone has receded considerably in recent years and the return of multiparty elections has rekindled historic rivalries between Mende-aligned southern districts supporting the SLPP and Temne and Limba-aligned northern districts supporting the APC. Concerns are growing among donors that the return of party political competition has also prompted a revival of elite interest in chiefs as political brokers (especially as vote banks) and that the GoSL's commitment to decentralization is beginning to wane. Recent policy developments fuelling these concerns include:

1. In 2009, the Minister of Local Government announced the freezing of the local council precept on chiefdom revenues for the previous year and a drastic reduction in future precepts, taking advantage of statutory powers not repealed by the LGA.
2. In July 2010, the GoSL announced its decision to bring back District Officers and their colonially-wrought powers of fiat in local governance. Again, advantage was taken of old legislation (in this case the Provinces Act, originally drafted in 1933) not repealed by the LGA. Part of the GoSL's justification for this decision was that opposition-controlled councils were governing in their supporters' interest, not in the public interest, and that a central government agent was needed in all districts to maintain public trust.
3. The GoSL's National Decentralization Policy, published in September 2010, states that local councils shall be the "highest development and service delivery authorities" in their localities, not the highest political authorities as stated in the LGA of 2004.
4. The GoSL's new Chiefdom Governance and Tribal Administration Policy (CTAP), still in draft form, emphasizes that the chiefdoms are an "integral part of the governance of the state of Sierra Leone" and that "mutual trust between chiefs and their people is essential for social cohesion". The new policy includes plans to build capacity the chiefdoms so that they can carry out development work and to make paramount chiefs, not local councillors, chairs of WDCs. It also emphasizes that chiefs collect local taxes on the authority of central government and that the centre has the final say over the distribution of local revenues.

Any new capacity building programme in the chiefdoms is likely to exacerbate rather than reduce competition between local authorities. Furthermore, reviving the instrumentalities of colonial "indirect rule" in the provinces is an inherently risky strategy given that the old system of authoritarian politics was, according to most analyses, responsible for Sierra Leone's descent into civil war. This strategy is also likely to alienate international donors. New support for decentralization arrived in 2009 in the form of the World Bank's Decentralized Service Delivery Project (DSDP), which channels direct support to local councils in several key sectors. Donors will be deterred from supporting decentralization if

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[2] The official title of Sierra Leone's local government ministry has changed twice since 2004. To avoid confusion, a simplified name is used this report.

the effectiveness of the local councils is being consistently undermined by competition from non-democratic political authorities.

It is possible that the backward-looking trend in recent GoSL policy on local government is a reaction to the success of the decentralization programme. It may, for example, represent a rearguard strategy by conservative elements in government (especially the mainstream civil service) who have yet to come to terms with the fact that the "genie" of local democracy is out of the bottle. But it is also possible that current GoSL policy on local government is being driven by insecurity rather than resurgent authoritarianism. Sierra Leone's governing classes know full well that the country does not currently generate sufficient resources to satisfy mass demand for wage employment and services. The government may therefore be trying to ensure that: a) chiefs can still manage social expectations, and influence voting behaviour, among the rural poor; b) local councils, with donor support, can offer services and democratic accountability to the better educated and better off. The danger remains that national policy makers are misreading social and political currents in the countryside and that a commitment to democratic governance and participatory development for all Sierra Leoneans is now the only political project likely to secure peace and prosperity in the long term: hence the commissioning of the current study.

3. Findings from Key Informant Interviews

Summary Findings from Key Informant Interviews

The challenges of institutionalizing change management

- While change management culture remains strong in the Local Government Finance Department, it has failed to embed in the Ministry of Local Government.
- Decentralization currently lacks a "champion" at the heart of government. The IMC on decentralization is not effective and the wide-ranging powers invested in Sierra Leone's executive presidency encourage competitive, behind-the-scenes policy lobbying. The conservative turn in recent GoSL policy towards local government is reportedly the result of civil service lobbying.
- Senior civil servants and MPs tend to be critical of local councils and protective of chiefs' interests. This attitude reflects the fact that many elite Sierra Leoneans retain strong personal and political interests in their chiefdoms of origin. Unlike the chiefdoms, local councils don't provide the governing elite with easy entry points for political influence and wealth generation.
- Local council leaders report that they are under constant pressure from chiefs, MPs, senior civil servants and other elite actors for access to council resources and/or a share of the political credit for council programmes.
- There is dismay in both SLPP-led and APC-led councils at the impending return of District Officers.
- In spite of the general lack of enthusiasm for decentralization among the governing elite, no elite interlocutor considered it either feasible or desirable to go back to the old system of centralized administration.

Political Drivers of Bureaucratic Rationality

- Some local councillors are frustrated patrons, claiming that the provincial poor expects them to distribute resources as personal favours but that the lack of salaries and the rules and regulations of local government prevent them from fulfilling these expectations.
- However, other local councillors are making use of the fact that decentralization has created a formal mechanism for assessing and satisfying local development needs. If they can't serve as patrons they can lobby, legitimately, for scarce resources on behalf of their communities.
- The two SLPP-led councils in Bo District have been exploring every possible avenue to build their technical and administrative capacity, making use of direct funding applications to donors, twinning arrangements with overseas councils and pooled grants.
- With the SLPP in opposition nationally, SLPP-led councils are clearly seeking to restore the political fortunes of the party through good performance in local government. Local councils cannot compete with central government for power and resources, so the SLPP-led councils are exploring the political possibilities of rational-bureaucratic best practice instead.
- Devolved MDA staff are potential allies in this rational-bureaucratic endeavour. They are enthusiastic supporters of decentralization (or rather, de-concentration as guaranteed by decentralization) because it guarantees resources to each district. In the past, centralized resource distributions were haphazard and susceptible to re-direction for political ends. Guaranteed resources and relative autonomy in decision-making are cited by devolved MDA staff as major sources of professional fulfilment.

3.1. The Challenges of Institutionalizing Change Management

A point emerging repeatedly from interviews with key informants at both the national and district level was that fast-tracking decentralization under the management of a discrete project implementation unit (PIU) has disadvantages as well as advantages in respect of good governance outcomes, especially in a small country like Sierra Leone where state agencies have often been used as instruments of patronage.

On the positive side, the legacy of the change management culture of the IRCBP, highlighted in the World Bank literature (see Annex 1), is very much alive in the Local Government Finance Department (LGFD), a former sub-unit of the IRCBP now mainstreamed into the Ministry of Finance (MOFED). A point emphasized by LGFD staff was that every transfer of resources to local councils and every item of local council expenditure is fully accounted for. They also emphasized that everyone in government benefits from fiscal decentralization, including the line ministries, and could not see any way of reversing the process without causing chaos. They went on to argue that administrative and fiscal decentralization is the only programme likely to satisfy the new service and accountability demanding "political class" that has emerged in Sierra Leone since the civil war.

On the negative side, highly qualified and motivated change management staff may only remain in post for as long as donors are prepared to fund their contracts. The LGFD, and contract staff elsewhere in MOFED, are in a strong position due to Sierra Leone's dependence on external budget support. DecSec has been less fortunate. DecSec staff were interviewed shortly before the closure of the IRCBP and while some were already guaranteed further employment within the DSDP, others were facing an uncertain future. A MLG insider reported that there "no great enthusiasm" in the ministry for mainstreaming DecSec. The Minster's stated view was that he was waiting to hear from donors as to whether there will be further technical support to the MLG for decentralization.

Senior DecSec staff expressed considerable frustration over their dealings with their colleagues in the MLG. Everyone in government from the President downwards is talking about change and reform, noted one interviewee, but the mainstream civil service lacks innovative thinking and is often "on a different planet". Another interviewee characterized the MLG as a secretive organization that keeps formal channels of communication to other MDAs to a minimum.

A related issue raised by interviewees was that decentralization currently lacks a powerful "champion" in government. An SLPP council leader observed that the drawback of having an executive presidency is that decisions are always made at the top and that everyone else fights to get the president's attention. He had recently heard President Koroma refer to decentralization as an "experiment", and for him that remark illustrated one of the main drawbacks of managing decentralization through a donor PIU. Local councils, he pointed out, have yet to enjoy the same constitutional protections as paramount chieftaincy. He feared that the decentralization process was vulnerable to reversal.

DecSec interviewees made the same point when noting that the potentially pivotal role of decentralization in delivering the service improvements set out in President Koroma's headline policy, the Agenda for Change, is rarely mentioned in government communiqués. The Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on decentralization should be pushing the decentralization programme forward, they argued, but it is chaired by the Vice-President and people who want to influence policy tend to go directly to the President. In their view, the

policy of reinstating District Officers is a prime example of civil servants getting the attention of the President and "getting their way".

The Minister of Local Government also observed that the permanent secretaries who comprise the majority of IMC members have not been very energetic in identifying points for action. Given that the Minister had remarked earlier in the same interview that ministries have been dragging their feet over the devolution of functions because they don't want to lose control over resources, it would appear that the IMC's work is being stalled by its members' self-interest.

The lack of enthusiasm for decentralization displayed by some central government interlocutors was often accompanied by a defence of chieftaincy. For example, a senior civil servant interviewee was extremely critical of the local councils' lack of financial self-sufficiency after seven years of operation. He also complained that local councils receive grants for functions that have yet to be devolved and that he and his fellow officials "just sit here" in Freetown and don't monitor the councils' activities. These points might have had some force if DecSec and the LGFD had not been established, or if the local councils had not been obliged to share meagre local revenues with the chiefdoms.

This particular interviewee also argued that local councillors have not been sufficiently respectful of fact that paramount chiefs report to central government, not to them. Another interviewee, an SLPP MP, made a similar point. He claimed that most local council Chief Administrators are not of a sufficiently high calibre to carry out their responsibilities effectively and argued that they should not be allowed to authorize withdrawals from chiefdom bank accounts while the local councils also claim a precept on chiefdom revenues. He went on to claim that the chiefdoms have been suffering considerable hardship as a result of revenue sharing. His proposed solution was to shift the balance of decision-making power in the local councils away from bureaucrats and towards elected officials. To that end, he argued that MPs should become *ex officio* members of local councils.

The Local Government Minister also voiced criticism of local councillors. Too many councillors, he claimed, expect big salaries and generous expense allowances when in reality being a councillor is not employment but voluntary public service.[3] But when asked how he saw the future of decentralization, the Minister emphasized that the chiefdoms should be brought back into the local government fold. Chiefs, he noted, live with their people and their key role in government cannot be ignored. The MLG is currently trying to identify the services that chiefdoms can usefully carry out on their own. The main constraint on capacity building at this level, he acknowledged, is local revenue shortage. More people, he believed, would be prepared to pay taxes if revenues were reinvested in community development.

There was talk even in DecSec that the local councils lacked the capacity to do much more than monitor the work of the devolved MDAs; the implication being that the councils were responsible for this capacity shortfall rather than government as a whole. There was no corresponding mention of the chiefdoms' lack of inherent capacity to carry out administrative functions.

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[3] According to one MLG insider, the ideal local councillor, in the eyes of many civil servants, is a retired civil servant.

Two points emerge here. First, many members of Sierra Leone's governing elite continue to identify, politically, with their chiefdoms of origin. Elite "sons of the soil" often serve as chiefdom councillors and tend to visit their home chiefdoms frequently to participate in social events. For example, the dignitaries attending a recent (June 2011) paramount chieftaincy election in Biriwa chiefdom in Bombali District included a former APC Minister, another leading APC politician and former party treasurer, the Bombali District Council chairman, two Bombali District councillors, the Biriwa representative of the Western Area Limba Tribal Headman network, a Freetown-based insurance executive, several middle-ranking army and police officers and the mother of President Koroma. Members of the governing elite may regard the paramount chiefs of their home chiefdoms as patrons, clients, allies or political opponents depending upon their family backgrounds and personal affiliations within the highly factionalized world of chieftaincy politics. But the point at issue is that many members of the Freetown elite are intimately involved in centre-local networks anchored by chiefdoms and don't have the same connection to local councils.

As the Biriwa example indicates, there has been some crossover between the old system of centre-local politics and democratic decentralization. The district council chairman and district councillors mentioned above not only double as chiefdom councillors but are also descendants of Biriwa chiefdom ruling houses. The Kono District council chairman is another case in point. She is a noted patron of girls' formal education, making private donations to local schools; but she also sponsors girls' traditional initiation ceremonies. The fact remains, however, that local councils are subjected to close bureaucratic oversight and, unlike the chiefdoms, are not going to provide members of the national elite with easy entry points for political influence and wealth generation.

Second, the colonially-inherited apparatus for supervising chieftaincy is the very opposite of rule-bound governance in its emphasis on direct administrative fiat: hence the interest, for some in government, in protecting chieftaincy and bringing back District Officers. According to the Minister of Local Government, civil servants had been lobbying for some time to bring back District Officers. At first he had opposed the idea on the grounds that it would "create difficulties over the hierarchy of authority". But eventually he had been convinced by colleagues that the local councils had become overly politicised and that District Officers were needed to look after central government interests in the provinces. The example he gave here was the SLPP-led Pujehun District Council's much publicised refusal to host a formal reception for a touring Vice-President in 2009. The Minister also emphasized that the post of District Officer was merely de-activated when decentralization began, not abolished. The implication here was that reinstating the post was an executive matter rather than a legislative one. However, this argument overlooks the fact that the post of District Officer is of colonial origin and never has been the subject of statutory definition. Colonially inherited legislation (e.g. the Provinces Act, Cap 60) does not establish the powers and functions of District Officers; it merely identifies when and where they exercise their fiat (see Annex 1).

All local councils visited by the research team reported that they had come under pressure from other political actors for access to their resources or for a share of the political credit for their programmes. MPs in particular were described by several interviewees as "envious bystanders" in the decentralization process. One council leader remarked that it would be a disaster if MPs became *ex officio* members of local councils because they would be constantly postponing meetings in order to carry out their parliamentary duties. Another recalled that a Resident Minister had recently made a public speech in which he claimed that the council was about to spend millions of Leones to develop a commercial plantation. The

figure quoted in the speech represented the council's entire agriculture budget for that year and the council leader concluded that the Resident Minister had either misunderstood the council's funding structure or was simply making mischief.

The return of District Officers was viewed with consternation in both APC and SLPP-led councils. SLPP councillors argued that reintroducing District Officers was a waste of resources, which would be better spent on teachers' salaries. APC councillors expressed concerns that District Officers would "interfere in the development of the district" and argued that council chairman and mayors have an electoral mandate that should not be subordinated to a central government appointee. An APC council leader also stated bluntly that reinstating District Officers could "kill decentralization". The President, he believed, was receiving bad advice from people who were out of touch with post-war changes at the grassroots. Furthermore, if MPs wanted to get involved in local council business all they had to do was resign their seats and stand in local elections.

The local councils and chiefdoms remain competitors for local resources. It was reported in all councils that chiefdom authorities had taken the MLG's intervention, first to suspend the council precept on revenues collected by the chiefdoms and then to greatly reduce it, as a pretext to stop handing over any revenues to local councils.[4] It was also reported in one urban council that the local chiefdom Treasury Clerk was collecting rate demands from property owners and telling them that they didn't have to pay. District councils have been exploring the possibility of levying property rates in rural areas, but councillors reported that there is considerable public opposition to it. People tend to argue that no government has introduced rural rates before and so question their legitimacy. One councillor recalled ruefully that she had broached the issue of property rates in her remote rural ward and was told that if she continued with that talk she would be "banished". Again, the incoherencies of conserving two competing spheres of local authority are apparent.

Even so, the research team encountered a more relaxed relationship between chiefs and councillors than was reported at the start of the decentralization programme (See Annex 1). Many councillors now appear resigned to the fact that they are never going to get significant revenue from the chiefdom precept. As one council leader remarked, "there is no point in worrying about what you don't have". He went to state that he would happily waive the precept on chiefdom revenues if his council was allowed to collect royalties on new mining developments and biofuel plantations. It was reported in all councils that paramount chiefs lobby regularly for a stake in construction contracts because these often make provision for local materials (e.g. sand, stones and timber) and unskilled labour inputs. The chiefs take the money and then organize the labour and collections of materials as unpaid "community contributions". Such arrangements may help to explain the more relaxed atmosphere.

In the final analysis, the research team found no sign of any concerted strategy to roll back decentralization and return to the modalities of "indirect rule. Even critics of the local councils acknowledged that decentralization is "a good idea" and that "nobody in their right senses would go back to the old system." The Minister of Local Government shares this view. He emphasized in his interview that the GoSL wants rural communities to be viable and understands that "modern governance calls for strong local participation". Decentralization, he went on, "has been given a fair trial": the language of development is now used by everyone and the people see local councils as legitimate agencies of government. Central

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[4] This problem was also reported by DecSec interviewees

government might have acted recently to "bring local government to heel", he went on, but he had reminded colleagues that the LGA was the law and that the APC's last election manifesto had contained an explicit commitment to decentralization.

In the short term, the most likely scenario is that GoSL policy makers will continue with their attempts to accommodate competing political interests in local government. While this will continue to militate against policy coherence, they will also leave local councils with some space to develop their own political-administrative niche. The discussion now turns to the local councils' strategies for dealing with outside political pressure and resource constraints.

3.2 Political Drivers of Bureaucratic Rationality

Local councillors and council leaders interviewed by the research team were understandably keen to list the local projects they had successfully implemented. These success stories included secondary school science laboratories refurbished with DSDP support in Makeni, a new Junior Secondary School in Koidu, the visit of a free eye and dental clinic to Kono District, the conversion of an old colonial-era sports club into a civic and leisure centre in Bo and numerous schools, Primary Health Units (PHU's), market enclosures, water wells, and sanitary facilities either built or refurbished with council funds in rural areas.

But all interlocutors at this level expressed frustration that local council responsibilities and resources were not greater. Councillors complained that even when councils build schools or PHUs, there may not always be sufficient funds for furniture, equipment or salaried staff. Furthermore, it was hard for them to get across to the public that they are only responsible for some services and not others. Many councillors had overseen maintenance projects on feeder roads in their wards and had then found members of the public asking why, when they had paid local axes, the councils weren't also repairing badly eroded main roads. Councillors therefore felt aggrieved that they were shouldering blame for problems outside their control.

A council leader argued in a similar vein that if local government was "truly independent", it should be a simple matter for a council to be informed of a broken culvert on a rural road, send out an engineer to cost the repairs and then hire a contractor to carry them out. The interviewee was alluding here to the fact that the Sierra Leone Roads Authority (SLRA) still takes charge of all repair works that are beyond the capacity of a gang of labourers armed with picks and shovels. The SLRA's reluctance to devolve functions to the local councils has prompted some commentator to suggest that money is easily siphoned off from road contracts and that the contracting process remains centralized for that specific reason (e.g. Robinson, 2010). But the fundamental problem here is that the original Local Government (Assumption of Functions) Regulations of 2004 do not allocate the local councils any greater responsibilities in road maintenance than verge cutting, pothole filling and ditch clearing.

Another complaint from local councils was that other development agencies, whether governmental or non-governmental, rarely keep them informed of their activities. Some councillors spoke of encountering contractors in their wards who told them, curtly, that it wasn't their business to ask questions. NGOs, it was alleged, often neglect to inform local councils of their activities even though Sierra Leone's National Decentralization Policy requires NGOs to register with them. Many INGOs working in Sierra Leone are indeed reluctant to cooperate closely with the local councils for fear that political interests will compromise their own core values and operating standards (Fanthorpe, 2009). When this point was put to the councillors, they retorted angrily that local councils are more rigorously monitored than any other governmental agency and so deserve greater respect.

Here lies a key political dilemma for local councillors. On the one hand, they do not control sufficient resources, personally, to amass political capital as patrons. The research team heard many complaints from councillors that their allowances (currently 250,000 Leones per month), are inadequate and that they have to draw upon private income to carry on working. They argued that being a local councillor should be a full-time, salaried job. A councillor, they pointed out, is a "public name". Poor people flock to them for assistance in resolving their problems and needs (e.g. especially emergency medical expenses) and if they don't have resources they will soon lose public respect. Several councillors claimed that colleagues are ashamed to visit their wards because they have nothing to offer their people. One councillor went so far as to observe that while she accepted the fact that the LGA forbids councillors from having a financial interest in council contracts, councillors will never have the authority the LGA grants them on paper if they can't implement projects. Another asked the research team to tell donors that if local councillors can't control resources by legitimate means, they might be tempted into corruption.

Some politically well-connected councillors are, in fact, making names for themselves as patrons. For example, a councillor met by the research team is the APC youth leader for Bombali District. By chance, one of the community FGDs was held in this councillor's ward. He was highly praised by the young men for forwarding job applications to London Mining PLC (whose main operation is in neighbouring Tonkolili District) and seeing many local youths hired. Elite networks are also benefitting from the council-managed scheme for lease-hiring tractors to Agribusiness Organizations (ABOs). The research team encountered two of these new tractors while travelling in the provinces. One was seen parked in the compound of a paramount chief in Koidu, bearing the logo of an ABO chaired by the chiefs' wife. The other was seen arriving in a remote northern village where the local council chairman has family. No impropriety is being implied here, but as a local councillor who chairs a women's farming cooperative remarked: "tractors are not meant for poor people".

On the other hand, councillors are also aware that that democratic decentralization has a unique selling point, distinct from patronage politics. Several interviewees observed that decentralization is the only system that allows local needs to be identified and minuted at the WDC level, taken to council, incorporated in local development plans and then met when funds allow. If councillors couldn't deliver fast-track development to their wards, they could at least play by the rules and champion local needs. "We councillors are grassroots people who see to the problems of our people", said one female councillor with a long career behind her in rural school teaching. Another female councillor with a CBO background spoke with visible emotion about the frequently fatal outbreaks of dysentery in her remote rural ward. There were few watercourses in the area, and they were all used for washing, drinking and waste disposal. If only the local council could prioritize water well construction in that area, she went on, lives could be saved. A third female councillor, again with a CBO background, spoke of the exodus of able bodied youth from the rural faming economy and the impact it was having on the availability of food products in urban markets, especially palm oil. She felt that central government should be making greater use of councillors' local knowledge.

The two Bo councils are actively seeking to develop this unique selling point. For example, Bo City Council (BCC) has been expanding its planning capacity with technical and financial support from twinned councils in the UK (Warwickshire City Council and County Council). This partnership has enabled BCC to draw up an accurate planning map using GIS and satellite imagery. The idea is to delimit planning zones to ensure that: a) rubbish dumps and other waste accumulating sites are not located next to homes and food growing areas; b)

schools, slaughterhouses, cemeteries and other necessary amenities are optimally located. The main constraint here is the BCC's current lack of authority to implement urban planning. The Local Government (Assumption of Functions) Regulations of 2004 only devolve "data collection" in respect of land use and strategic planning to local councils. Furthermore, the authority to issue building permits, also identified as a function to be devolved in the Regulations, has yet to be ceded to local councils by the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment. The BCC Mayor and Chief Administrator reported that they have found it possible to make planning decisions through negotiation with the Lands Ministry, the Bo area paramount chief and local landowners. However, their fear was that when District Officers return they will invoke their historic powers of adjudication over land and boundary disputes to intervene in these already complex negotiations and, quite possibly, disrupt them.

Another case in point is Bo District Council's use of the internet to make direct applications for donor funding. These efforts have recently borne fruit in the form of an EU-supported water and sanitation project. Furthermore, the council has recently pooled funds from the capacity building components of several project grants to develop a local amenities database that records the location and condition of all schools, clinics, water wells and water pumps in Bo District. The database uses software developed by a Canadian volunteer who had previously been working with urban councils on the computerization of property cadastres. As far as Bo District Council is concerned, the significance of this initiative is twofold. First, it enables the council to win wider public recognition as a service delivery and planning authority; second, it encourages development NGOs working in the district to consult with the council and align their work to council development plans.[5]

With the SLPP in opposition nationally, the SLPP-led councils are clearly seeking to restore the political fortunes of the party through optimal performance in local government. A point made by councillors in Bo was that the APC administration in Freetown would never allow local government to control resources to such an extent that they became more popular than central government. But that constraint only encourages them to explore the political possibilities of rational-bureaucratic best practice.[6] As one SLPP councillor pointed out: "there is a reason why we work. We won't just leave things, sit down and say we are not the government in Bo. As we are in opposition that (i.e. working hard) will make us come out of opposition and become the leading agency. By working hard you can do something for your people to bring development".

As far as the promotion of bureaucratic rationality is concerned, local councils have potential allies in devolved MDA staff. Resisting payroll devolution ensures that line ministries can treat local councils as little more than disbursement agencies. However, senior MDA staff interviewed by the research team were generally enthusiastic about decentralization (or rather, de-concentration as guaranteed by decentralization) on the grounds that it channels unprecedented volumes of resources to their sectors and gives them greater autonomy in administrative decision-making. For example, the Deputy Director of Education in Kono described the relationship between his department and the two local councils as a productive one. The department agrees activity plans with the councils and these are incorporated into district development plans. A dedicated funding stream ensures that education department

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[5] The research team was shown the education section of this database, which left a sobering impression given that Bo is one of Sierra Leone's more prosperous provincial districts. According to the database, 57% of all teachers in Bo District are unqualified, 39% do not receive salaries and only 14% are female.

[6] i.e. governance as a technical endeavour, impersonally discharged.

staff no longer have to travel all the way to Freetown for authorization of stationary orders and vehicle repairs. For him, the great advantage of decentralization was that "Kono Education Department is now in charge of its own destiny".

District medical staff in Bo took a similar view. The disbursement of funds through the councils might be slower than they would like and the health department doesn't always coordinate with the local councils over activities funded from other sources (e.g. donors and NGOs). But for them, the present system is far preferable to the old system of direct disbursement from the Health Ministry in Freetown. As one member of the district health staff put it:

> ....through working with the councils we can access funds. Before, another side (i.e. district) might even get everything. The Ministry would always be saying how to do this and how to do that and not all districts would be supplied. Now, money is tied to activities that are implemented and monitored. Before, resources planned for one area might be transferred to another side for political ends.

Bo District health staff also emphasised that having guaranteed funds enabled them to take pride in their work as health professionals. They wanted to be judged on their professional performance and insisted that they would be happy to work in any district of Sierra Leone.

Ministry of Education staff in Bo shared this view. While complaining that they were not getting enough support from the local councils for teacher payroll verification, they argued that it was better for education funding to come through the councils rather than directly from the Ministry in Freetown. The local council "knows what is happening on the ground" and there are "no strings tied to State House" (i.e. no politically motivated funding allocations).

Increasing bureaucratic rationality at the local council level emerges here as a strategic response to external political pressures and resource constraints, not just a governance regime imposed from above. Ultimately however, the success of the local councils' struggle for material impact and relevance will depend on the support they receive from the public. It is to this issue that attention now turns.

4. Findings from Focus Group Discussions

Summary Findings from Focus Group Discussions

Perceived Insufficiencies in Public Services

- FGD participants were appreciative of recent improvements in local services brought about by decentralization. But they also emphasized that these services remain insufficient to satisfy local needs and claimed that they are often subject to mismanagement. A common complaint was that poor people often have to pay for services that are supposed to be free (e.g. primary education) and that many amenities are either incomplete (e.g. no furniture in new schools) or prone to resource shortages (e.g.no drugs in PHUs).
- There remain many remote communities in rural Sierra Leone whose access to public services of any kind is minimal.

Self-Help and Patronage

- Many services and amenities are organized locally on a self-help basis, especially education.
- There is an entrenched assumption in rural areas that welfare and services are as likely to come from benevolent patrons as from public institutions.

Criticisms of Local Councillors

- Because the resources local councils currently deliver are insufficient to satisfy perceived needs, and because local councillors do not have the means to operate as patrons, FGD participants' views on councillors tend to be negative.

The Political Geography of Chieftaincy

- Local views on chiefs tend to vary according to livelihood and geographical location. Remote rural communities rely on chiefs for social protection and for authorization of property rights. Consequently, they tend to be strong supporters of the status quo where chiefs' powers and responsibilities are concerned. Smallholder farmers also look to chiefs for governance in peri-urban settings although better educated wage workers tend to put more trust in local councils. Deference towards chieftaincy declines sharply in urban areas where economic opportunities are greater and self-organized associational life stronger.
- Kono District represents an exception to this pattern due to the wealth and decision-making power chiefs accumulated during the peak years of diamond mining.

Support for Decentralization in Principle

- In spite of the criticisms levelled at local councillors, FGD participants were very much in favour of decentralization in principle. In their view, the main benefit of decentralization is that it makes government aware of local needs and "gives voice to the voiceless."
- Even in Kono District, local councils rather than chiefs were FGD participants' preferred agencies for delivering services. A fear expressed in Kono was that without local councils, taxes, market dues and shop licences will increase.

4.1 Perceived Insufficiencies in Public Services
FGD participants in all districts were appreciative of recent improvements in local services brought about by decentralization. But they also emphasized that these services remain insufficient to satisfy local needs and claimed that they are often subject to mismanagement.

For example, a youth leader and the secretary of a WDC almost came to blows during one FGD in Bo District when the former, complaining that people pay local tax but never see anything in return, alleged that that public funds are being depleted by corruption. By way of example, the youth leader pointed out that government was supposed to subsidizing primary education. If that was the case, why was the local primary school still demanding fees from parents? The likely explanation, the youth leader went on, was that the subsidy was being diverted into private pockets before it reached the school. He offended the WDC secretary by naming the paramount chief and local councillor as ringleaders in this alleged corruption.

Similar suspicions were voiced in other FGDs in Bo District. For example, in one area not all local ABOs are benefitting from council seed rice distributions. This omission led an unsuccessful contestant for the SLPP nomination in the last local government elections to accuse the sitting councillor of selling off some of the rice. Another claim voiced in Bo FGDs was that local councils favour certain contractors because they get kickbacks from them, and consequently refuse to acknowledge complaints if the work is substandard. MDA staff were similarly accused of favouring certain contractors, and it was also claimed that local council Chief Administrators receive orders from Freetown to favour particular contractors.

However, a further point raised in these FGDs was that public suspicion towards governmental authorities has become habitual and may be fuelled by misunderstandings as much as demonstrable wrongdoing. For example, it was pointed out that when a contractor builds a school classroom but does not supply any furniture, it might mean that furniture was not included in the contract. But local people might still assume that councillors and teachers had sold off the missing furniture for private gain before it reached the school.

The most frequent comment on local services in all of the FGDs was that there were simply not enough of them. In Makeni for example, FGD participants reported that the government hospital rarely has sufficient supplies of drugs and people have to pay for them out of their own pockets. Primary education is supposed to be free but it was claimed that people are paying between 6,000 and 10,000 Leones per year in supplementary fees. Participants acknowledged that education is underfunded and needs support, but also pointed out that teachers who are not paid by government tend to lack motivation. One youth reported that a lesson scheduled for an hour may only last for 40 minutes and parents who don't pay extra for stationary and text books may find their children refused entry to exams. Participants also emphasised that some services are beyond the financial reach of ordinary people. Farmers may have been invited by government to form ABOs and pool resources to lease-hire tractors, but poor villagers cannot afford them. One ABO in the Makeni area reportedly rents out its machine for 80,000 Leones per hour.

In Kono, the city council was praised for building a new junior secondary school, and the local councils' school scholarship scheme was also spoken of approvingly. Seed distributions to ABOs also received a favourable mention and a women's group reserved special praise for the recently introduced free health care scheme for pregnant and nursing women and children under five. But again, FGD participants emphasized that the benefits of decentralization are overshadowed by problems that have yet to addressed, e.g. overcrowded and under-resourced schools and the fact that PHUs in remote areas often run out of drugs and equipment.

A woman's farming cooperative in WARD also spoke approvingly of free health care for nursing mothers and small children and praised the local council's work in building schools and PHUs. WARD was the only survey district in which it was mentioned that CBOs are

sending project funding applications to local councils. WARD's geographical proximity to Freetown, and its relative prosperity and economic diversity compared to other districts, gives its population many advantages in accessing development information, forming interest-based associations and pursuing development opportunities.

Yet there remain many remote communities in Sierra Leone whose access to public services is minimal. For example, the research team visited a remote village in Bombali District that has an abundance of farm land and a full complement of young people but no amenities whatsoever (i.e. no water wells, pumps, latrines or drying floors). There is a community-supported school in a village nearby that caters for classes one through five. Children attending class six have to make a five-hour round trip to the section headquarters, whose tiny missionary-sponsored primary school has a total enrolment of just over 400. Until very recently, three lessons were held simultaneously in each of this school's two (now four) cramped classrooms, with adjacent classes facing in opposite directions. The nearest secondary school is ten miles further away.

While the inhabitants of this village had heard about district councils they claimed they had never received anything from them. The term "ward development committee" meant nothing to them. Whenever they have problems that they can't settle among themselves they go to the local section chief (who happens to be the grandson of the late 19th century warrior-chief who captured and settled their forebears). The section headquarters remains their main link to the outside world and the only external benefit they could remember receiving was mosquito nets distributed from the nearest PHU, which is again located in the section headquarters.

4.2 Self-Help and Patronage
Two striking findings common to all districts were: a) the large number of services that are organized locally on a self-help basis; b) an entrenched assumption that welfare and services are as likely to come from benevolent patrons as from public institutions. For example, the view of decentralization emerging in an FGD held in a peri-urban settlement in Bombali District was that it is merely one among several potential sources of benefits, none of which can be entirely relied upon. The local councillor was praised for helping local youth find work with London Mining (see Section 3.2 above) and for bringing a sanitation project to the township. But he had not responded when villagers wrote to him to ask for assistance for repairs to a bridge over a local feeder road. The villagers had therefore clubbed together and paid for the repairs themselves. Furthermore, the township has a junior secondary school that was built as a result of a community initiative at the end of the civil war. The school has received support from the Ministry of Education's donor-funded Sabubu project, but none of the sixteen teachers at the school are on the Ministry's payroll. The school charges parents 20,000 Leones for each of its 468 pupils per term yet remains popular among local farmers because it allows them to educate their children close to home, thus ensuring that they are on hand to help with farm work in the evenings.

FGD participants' greatest commendations were reserved for individuals with a strong track record in philanthropy, regardless of what political office they might hold or whether in fact they hold political office at all. One case in point is a local councillor in Bo District who uses part of his private wealth, amassed from mining, to support communities through the pre-harvest "hungry season" and to enable poor people to meet medical expenses and tax demands. This councillor and the local paramount chief, a lecturer at Njala University who currently holds one of the seats reserved for chiefs on Bo District Council, are also noted for collaborating in writing project proposals to donor agencies.

WARD, which like Bo is a relatively prosperous district, also has a high density of patrons Examples cited in FGDs include: 1) an MP with a degree in agriculture who supplies donor-sourced seed and technical knowledge to youth farming cooperatives; 2) a village headman who supports market gardening groups and has recently obtained project funding from the National Commission for Social Action for a new market building; 3) a businesswoman and government contractor who has secured funding, partly out of her personal income and partly from donor sources, to build and maintain three local schools with a total enrolment of 600. As these examples indicate, WARD's numerous interest-based associations tend to look first to individuals with a direct connection to central government for support, not to the local councils.

3.3 Criticisms of Local Councillors

Because the resources local councils currently deliver to the public are insufficient to satisfy their needs, and because local councillors do not have the means to operate as patrons, FGD participants' views on councillors tended to be negative. For example, it was argued in one FGD in Bo District that local councillors are not given sufficient incentive to do their work. Since they are not paid salaries, they tend to concentrate on their day jobs in Bo city and are rarely seen in their wards. It was also noted that local councillors had expected to accrue wealth and prestige from managing development projects and have now become disillusioned after discovering that the regulations prevent them from implementing projects personally.

In Kono, party political competition was reported to have had an adverse effect on the quality of local councillors. The APC won many parliamentary seats in the district in 2007 and some local councillors have recently switched allegiance from the SLPP to the APC. FGD Participants in Kono complained that the leading parties often give nominations to loyalists who have no real interest in, or aptitude for, local council work. It was also claimed that some councillors lack the education necessary for effective monitoring complex processes like drug procurement, and that they are in the habit of awarding contracts to family members with no concern for quality of service. The public, participants went on, soon loses confidence in councillors who don't deliver on promises of development. Some SLPP councillors in Kono reportedly feel politically marginalized and have stopped visiting their wards.

However, FGD participants in all districts acknowledged that the public is predisposed to think the worst of local councillors even when there is nothing concrete upon which to base these judgements. In WARD for example, FGD participants reported that when a local councillor calls a public meeting, people expect to hear about a new project. If no such announcement is forthcoming, they tend to lose interest in attending further meetings or suspect that the councillor is embezzling project funds. A male youth in Makeni observed that councillors often grumble that they are not given the resources they need to do their jobs effectively. Yet in his opinion, they should receive more credit for at least trying to champion local development needs.

4.3 The Political Geography of Chieftaincy

With the exception of Kono District, local views on chiefs tended to vary according to livelihood and geographical location. For example, the remote village in Bombali District has no access to any governance on a regular basis except that provided by chiefs and elders. When the villagers were asked whether they had ever voted in local council elections, they replied that they all had. The call to vote had been relayed to them from the section headquarters, whose above-mentioned school also serves as the local polling station. Before the latest poll, the village elders had been called to a meeting in the chiefdom headquarters and shown the candidate the "big people" expected them to vote for. If the matter had been

left to them, they went on, they might have voted for a different candidate since no elected councillor has ever visited them. But, for them, an order from chiefdom authorities is law.

Another settlement visited by the research team is located on the main provincial highway near Makeni. The focus group interviewed there included smallholder farmers and school teachers. When asked who was their preferred political authority to manage a hypothetical micro-credit scheme, the farmers opted for a chief on the grounds that chiefs always "know what is going on" in a village. However, the teachers opted for a local councillor on the grounds that councillors represent an entire ward and are thus better placed to ensure that resources are distributed fairly. Farmers objected strongly to the idea that local councils should take over responsibility for local revenue collection from chiefdom authorities. "We all have our culture", said one; "chiefs are the government in the villages, not the government in Freetown, and central government authority in the villages goes through chiefs". If chiefs didn't get their rebate from local tax, the farmer continued, they would have to make a living by other means and wouldn't be able to do their jobs. Furthermore, paying tax is subject to chiefs' law and people would not pay tax to anyone else.

Even so, all participants in this particular FGD agreed that they do not pay much attention to chiefs when deciding on which candidate to vote for in local and national elections. "Chiefs are not so powerful now that we have democracy", remarked one teacher.

Views expressed by youths and market women in an FGD in Makeni town were a further step removed from those expressed in the remote village. When asked which was their preferred political authority to manage a local development project, the market traders opted for the local council while the youths opted for the Ministry of Youth, Education and Sports on the grounds that the Ministry caters specifically for youth interests. There was little reverence for chieftaincy in this focus group. One youth pointed out that he was "not one day aware of chiefs getting involved in devolvement". All chiefs did, he claimed, was sit in their compounds waiting to serve summons on people so that they could make money from cases. All participants were in favour of local councils taking over local revenue collection. That reform, they reasoned, would make it more likely that local revenues would be reinvested in development. Furthermore, they went on, people could vote out a badly performing councillor, but they couldn't vote out a chief.

In Kono District, chiefs remain key political players even in urban areas, having accumulated wealth and decision-making power over land and settlement rights during the peak years of diamond mining. FGD participants in Kono reported that chiefs are now brokering land transfers for the agricultural rehabilitation projects, financed by IFAD and other international agencies. It was claimed that chiefs often hold up these investments in search of kickbacks, in contrast to the alacrity with which they once made land available to diamond capitalists. Some chiefs allegedly make it a local "byelaw" that they should always be the main contractor for projects undertaken in their chiefdoms. If contracts aren't awarded to them, the project will not happen. Participants criticised this behaviour on the grounds that work undertaken by unpaid "communal labour" gangs organized by chiefs is often of poor quality.

Yet there was little support among Kono focus groups for the idea that local councils should take over revenue collection (See section 5.8, however). One participant observed that it is chiefs who have the authority at the grassroots. Handing tax collecting responsibilities to the local councils would, others claimed, place an extra administrative burden on them and leave chiefdom authorities with nothing to do. Another participant noted that chiefs have a "popular

mandate". If they are encouraged, they will encourage their people to pay tax to support development. But if they are discouraged, they might sabotage the development process.

When asked why chiefs are still revered in Kono district, the District Youth Chairman, who had convened the FGD in Koidu, replied that chiefs represent the interests of their people in the same way that local councillors represent the interests of political parties and MPs represent the government. Chiefs' swear oaths of allegiance to their people in the society bush and are thus subject to laws distinct from the laws of the state. By that reckoning, he concluded, "chiefs are the authorities in this land".

4.4. Support for Decentralization in Principle

Finally, in spite of the many criticisms levelled at local councils in the FDGs, participants were very much in favour of decentralization in principle. The general benefit of decentralization, most participants agreed, was that it makes government aware of local needs. "Decentralization gives voice to the voiceless" explained one teacher in the roadside settlement near Makeni. For him, the district council represents an accessible governmental agency that "community volunteers" (i.e. unverified and unpaid teachers) like himself can link to and from which they can gain confidence. A District Youth Committee leader in WARD made the same point when noting that the local council represents the "face of government" that grassroots CSOs can talk to. It is noteworthy here that some donor-supported projects (especially ENCISS) have made specific efforts to facilitate engagement between District Youth Committees and local councils, which may explain why this particular relationship is stronger than that between WARD council and other CSOs. Some participants in Bo District went so far as to suggest that if the local councils were de-activated again by an APC government, it could bring back another war.

Even in Kono District, local councils rather than chiefs were FGD participants' preferred agencies for delivering services. The councils, they pointed out, were designed for development and could send planning officers to the grassroots to learn of the people's needs and report back to government. Some participants added that since chiefs were also part of the councils, they remained involved in the development process. A contented and engaged chief would be happy to provide land for projects. A fear expressed in Kono was that without local councils, taxes, market dues and shop licence fees would increase. The reasoning here was that decentralization represents a government subsidy on local services and without it people would be forced to pay more for the limited public services they do receive.

Considering the outputs of the FGD exercise as a whole, it is apparent that even in Kono District the governance demands of people who do not rely on chiefs to authorize their land and social rights, i.e. those in wage employment and living in towns, lean towards modern, accountable bureaucracy. But we can clearly see the attraction, for Sierra Leone's political elite, of conserving chiefdom governance in remote areas. The political equation here is not so much an exchange of rural votes for state patronage as vote harvesting that exploits remote rural communities' dependency on chiefs for social and economic protection. But since local demand for "traditional" and "modern" governance also depends on individual livelihood and other specificities (e.g. the imbrication of diamond mining and localized identity politics in Kono), there is no clear dividing line between them. On the plus side, continuing economic development in Sierra Leone may one day shift the balance of public demand decisively in favour of modern governance or, more likely, a new political settlement in which chiefs retain community leadership roles but don't exercise executive or administrative powers. On the minus side, Sierra Leone's political elite currently shows no inclination to take a lead on this

issue, preferring instead to accommodate competing political interests in local governance even if that leads to policy incoherence.

5. Findings from the Questionnaire Survey

Summary Findings from the Questionnaire Survey

Characteristics of Survey Respondents

- Comparing the reported occupations of the 608 survey respondents to national census data indicates that the survey sample is skewed towards wage workers and the professional classes. This skewness reflects the fact that the vast majority of poor farmers are scattered in off-road villages that are difficult for a small team of researchers on a limited budget to access.
- On the plus side, the sample is skewed towards those members of the provincial population who are most likely to have had first-hand experience of local council activities. On the minus side, relatively well educated and prosperous people are likely to have political connections to the centre and a relaxed view of chieftaincy.

Perceptions of Local Authorities and Service Providers

- When respondents were asked which political authority has brought the most development to their localities, local councils received the greatest credit. Regional differences were nevertheless apparent. Central government scored highly in WARD, the closest district to Freetown. Local councils scored particularly highly in Bo District, which may reflect recent efforts by SLPP-led councils to restore the party's popularity through good performance in local government.
- A slightly different pattern emerged when respondents were asked which political authority they looked to first for development, regardless of actual performance. Again, local councillors scored highly in Bo District and comparatively highly in WARD. Chiefs scored highest of all political authorities in Bombali District, despite the fact that local councils outscored them in respect of actual service delivery. This last result probably reflects a problem of access to local services in remote rural areas rather than low levels of satisfaction with local councils. Chiefs scored highly in Kono and WDC members received low scores in all districts.
- The vast majority of respondents reporting knowledge of development activity also reported having benefitted for that activity, implying that people are inclined to deny knowledge of development activity from which they have not personally benefitted.
- NGO's scored highest on measures of satisfaction and trust, followed by traditional authorities, local councils and central government. Local councils received many low scores in this exercise, which supports the findings from the FGDs that public support towards local councils is qualified due to endemic poverty and expectations of patronage.
- 55% of respondents reported knowledge of local council development plans, with slightly higher than average scores among older people and men. The greatest single source of information on local council development plans is local radio.
- Satisfaction in local councillors was measured by asking respondents to agree or disagree with the statement that their councillors are doing a good job. Satisfaction in councillors was highest in Bo District and lowest in WARD. Older people were more likely to agree with the statement than younger ones. Males were also more likely to agree than females. Again, we are seeing the "SLPP effect" in Bo and the effects of WARD's geographical proximity to Freetown.
- Satisfaction in WDCs was measured by asking respondents to select from one of five categories ranging from very satisfied to very unsatisfied. Only 19.8% of respondents

expressed moderate or high satisfaction with WDCs. The highest score was in Bo District followed by Kono, WARD and Bombali.

- 76.9% of respondents in the survey reported that their councillors were not related to paramount chiefs or headmen by blood or marriage. In a second exercise, 84.1% of respondents in the three provincial districts stated either that their local councillors were not from a chiefdom ruling house or that they did know whether they were or not. These figures differ markedly from the results of the IRCBP's Decentralization Stakeholder Survey of 2008.

- When respondents were asked what they would do if a chief or headmen advised them to vote for a particular political party, 89.0% stated that they would vote according to their own preference. These data suggest that provincial chiefs no longer have the influence over voters they once had. Yet it must also be borne in mind that the survey is skewed towards better educated and better off groups in the provincial population.

- Overall, 66.9% of respondents agreed that their local council was supporting education in their community, 46.9% agreed that the local council was supporting health services and 47.1% agreed that the local council was supporting agriculture. However, there were significant regional differences. Bo respondents scored all sectors highly; Kono and Bombali respondents scored education highly but health and agriculture much lower, while WARD respondents returned low scores for all sectors.

5.1 Characteristics of Survey Respondents

The characteristics of the 608 respondents are shown on Tables 1.1 to 1.8. Data from the 2004 national census show that crop farming, hunting and forestry accounted for 64% of the workforce in Bo District, 78% in Bombali, 66% in Kono and 16% in WARD. In Bo District, the next largest employment sector was trade and repairs (12%), followed by services (11%). In Bombali, the next largest employment sector was also trade and repairs (11%). In Kono District, the next largest employment sector after farming was mining (15%) followed by trade and repairs (9%) and services (7%). In WARD, the largest employment sector was trade and repairs (40%), followed by services (22%) and fishing (11%). Education, separate from the "services" category, occupied for 3% of the workforce in WARD, 2% in Bo, 1.5% in Bombali and less than 1% in Kono.

The occupations reported by survey respondents show a similar regional pattern to the census data. For example, "business" (broadly corresponding to "trading and repairs" and "services" in 2004 census), is the most frequently reported occupation in WARD, while "farming" is the most frequently reported occupation in the other districts. Mining is a frequently reported occupation in Kono District, likewise fishing in WARD. However the survey sample is clearly skewed towards wage workers and the professional classes when compared to the national census data. Teachers, government employees and NGO workers are overrepresented in the survey, particularly in Bo and Kono, while farmers are underrepresented.

Data obtained from the Development Assistance Coordination Office showed that 62.2% of Sierra Leone's population in 2006 had never been to school, 24.6% finished their education in primary school, 10.6% finished their education in secondary school and 2.6% finished at the tertiary level. Comparing those figures with those shown on table 1.6 again reveals an overrepresentation of people educated to secondary and tertiary level, although more than 30% of the survey sample reported never having attended school.

To some degree, the differences between the census data and the survey sample may reflect the fact that in 2004, Sierra Leone was still in the early stages of recovery from a devastating civil war and that education and wage employment has expanded rapidly since them. But the most likely explanation for the skewed results of the survey are: a) the vast majority of poor farmers are scattered in off-road villages that are difficult for a small team of researchers with limited time and budget to access; b) researchers may favour (not necessarily deliberately) informants who are most comfortable responding to questionnaire surveys.

On the plus side, the sample is skewed towards those members of the provincial population who are most likely to have had first-hand experience of local council activities and thus to have formed an opinion about them. On the minus side, relatively well educated and prosperous members of the population are more likely than the rural and urban poor to have professional and political connections to the centre and a relaxed view of chieftaincy. Rather than add statistical weightings to the sample, the following analysis of the survey results is undertaken with these caveats in mind.

5.2 General Perceptions of Development and Service Providers
When respondents were asked which political authority has brought the most development to the locality (Table 2.1.1), local councils received the greatest credit with a 39.9% score. Regional differences were nevertheless noticeable. Central government scored highly in WARD (45%), the closest rural area to Freetown. MPs also scored highly in WARD (23.8%), but this was due in part to the presence of a very popular and hard working parliamentarian in one of the sample areas. Local councils scored highly in Bo District (55.6%), which may reflect the recent efforts of SLPP-led councils to rebuild the party's political popularity through good performance in local government (See above, Section 3.2). Local councils outscored traditional authorities by a considerable margin in Bombali district (50.6% to 14.9%), which is the least urbanized and prosperous of the four survey districts. Traditional authorities scored comparatively highly in Kono District (34.7%), which reflects chiefs' historical pre-eminence in diamond governance

When the age and gender of respondents was taken into consideration (Tables 2.1.2 and 2.1.3), it was found that younger people tended to credit central government with the best development performance while older people gave greater credit to local councils and traditional authorities. Women, on the other hand, tended to give greater credit than men to local authorities as development providers. A possible explanation for these differences is that young people are the most interested in jobs, men are the most interested in national politics and women are the most interested in local services.

A slightly different pattern emerged when respondents were asked which political authority they looked to first for development, regardless of actual performance (Table 2.1.4). Again, local councillors scored highly in Bo District (64.1%) and comparatively highly in WARD (35.1%), despite the relatively high score of MPs (23.8%) for reasons given in the last paragraph. Interestingly, chiefs scored highest of all political authorities in Bombali District (49.3%), despite the fact that local councils outscored them in reported delivery of services (Table 2.1.1). This last result probably reflects a problem of access to local services in remote rural areas rather than low satisfaction with local councils. Chiefs again scored highly in Kono (56.7%) and WDC members received low scores in all districts.

Younger people were again more likely than older people to look to central government figures (and chiefs) for development. Women were also more likely than men to look to

chiefs for development although local councillors scored higher than chiefs among both sexes (Tables 2.1.5 and 2.1.6).

The next series of tables (Tables 2.2.1 to 2.5.6) present data on respondents' knowledge of, and satisfaction with, the services provided by NGOs, central government, local councils, and traditional authorities. Personal knowledge of NGO projects was affirmed by 73% of the sample, followed by central government (60.5%), local councils (59.5%) and traditional authorities (26.6%). More than 90% of respondents reporting knowledge of NGO projects had also reported having benefitted personally from them. Similar figures were obtained for the other agencies and this suggests that there may be a political element in reporting knowledge of development activity: i.e. people are inclined to deny knowledge of development activity from which they have not benefitted personally.

Satisfaction with the performance of agencies delivering development and services was measured by asking respondents to select from one of five categories ranging from very satisfied to very unsatisfied. NGO's scored 60.6% in the moderately and very satisfied categories, followed by traditional authorities (46.9%), local councils (40%) and central government (37.9). Local councils scored 34% in the moderately and very unsatisfied categories, followed by central government (29.2%), traditional authorities (24.7%) and NGO (20.7%). A similar exercise measuring trust in agencies' willingness to listen to local development demands gave NGOs a score of 51.8% in the moderately and very trusted categories, followed by traditional authorities (37.5%), central government (29.6%) and local councils (26.3%). Local councils scored 40.4% in the moderately and very distrusted categories, followed by central government (33.3%), traditional authorities (28%). These results support the above-noted findings from the FGDs in suggesting that public opinion towards local councillors is qualified: i.e. local councils are respected as representatives of "good governance" but councillors don't deliver enough benefits to be respected as patrons.

Younger people and women were slightly less likely than older people and men to trust NGO's willingness to listen to their development demands and more likely than older people and men to trust central government. Trust in local councils was slightly higher among older people and men as compared to younger people and women and trust in traditional authorities was highest among older people.

5.3 Participation in Development Planning
The next set of tables (Tables 3.1.1 to 3.1.8) measure local participation in development planning. Overall, 54.9% of respondents reported knowledge of local council development plans, with slightly higher than average scores among older people and men. The greatest single source of information on local council development plans is local radio, followed by family members and traditional authorities. While 28.8% of all respondents reported that they regularly participate in some form of planning meeting, the scores for WARD and Bombali were considerably lower than Kono and Bo. Older people were more likely to participate regularly in planning meetings than younger ones and men were more likely to participate regularly than women. NGO-led meetings scored highest among planning meetings attended (51% of multiple choice responses), followed by Village Development Committee (VDC) meetings (46.8%), meetings convened by chiefs and headmen (39.6%) and meetings convened by local councils (38.2%). WDC meetings scored highly in Kono District (41.1%) as compared to a survey average of 21.7%.

5.4 Perceptions of Local Councillors

Tables 3.2.1 to 3.2.12 present data on public perceptions of local councillors. A majority (63.5%) of respondents reported that their local councillor lived in their neighbourhood as opposed to the district headquarters or Freetown (a common complaint against the 2004 intake of local councillors was that they didn't live locally). 40.6% of all respondents reported that they had been called to a meeting by their local councillor (a similar score to that shown on Table 3.1.8.), with Kono District scoring highest, followed by Bo, WARD and Bombali. There were no differences between age groups in respect of reported participation in these meetings but men were more likely to participate in these meetings than women.

Satisfaction with local councillors was measured by asking respondents to agree or disagree with the statement that their councillors were doing a good job. Overall, 38% of respondents agreed with that statement, 23.7% were neutral and 38.3 disagreed. Satisfaction with councillors was highest in Bo District (60.8%) and lowest in WARD (27.8%). The corresponding figures for Kono and Bombali were 35.3% and 27.9% respectively. Older people were more likely to agree with the statement than younger ones. Males were also more likely to agree than females. Again, we are seeing here the "SLPP effect" in Bo and the influence of WARD's political and geographical proximity to Freetown.

When asked whether the councillor originally elected in 2004 was re-elected in 2008, only 22.9% of respondents answered in the affirmative. The rate of re-election was highest in Bombali District, followed by Bo, Kono and WARD. When asked whether the current councillor is doing a better, similar, or worse job than the old one, 61.4 respondents in Bo District and 40.6% in Bombali reported a better job. Conversely, 49.2% of respondents in WARD and 44.4% in Kono said their current councillor is doing a worse job.

When respondents were asked to identify the criteria by which they judge the performance of current and former councillors, the highest scores were for personal attributes of individual councillors, whether they showed a commitment to local development and whether they lived and worked locally. When asked whether local councillors were more accountable to their political parties or to the local community, 39.6% of all respondents answered "local community", 31.6% answered, "political party" and 28.8% declined to give an answer. Respondents in Bo District and WARD were more inclined to answer "local community", while those in Kono and Bombali were more inclined to answer "political party". These results are consistent with other findings suggesting that local government under opposition party leadership is resurgent in Bo, local councils are overshadowed by Freetown in WARD, party-political competition is relatively intense in Kono and that local councils have yet to make an impact on the many isolated rural communities in Bombali.

5.5 Perceptions of Ward Development Committees (WDCs)

Tables 3.3.1 to 3.3.12 present data on public perceptions of WDCs. A majority of respondents (66.9%) said that they had heard about WDCs. Older people were more likely to have heard about WDCs than younger people and men were more likely to have heard about them than women.

When asked whether they could name a WDC member other than the local councillor and paramount chief, 44.7% of respondents answered in the affirmative. The highest score was again recorded in Bo District, followed by Kono, Bombali and WARD. When asked how their WDC members had been chosen, 41.1% described the procedure as set out in the LGA but 48% reported that they did not know. Most respondents reported that they had never seen

a WDC notice board, although 41.3% reported that they had been informed in the past at that a WDC meeting was taking place. Again, Bo District scored highest on this question, followed by Kono, Bombali and WARD. Only 26.1% of respondents reported that they had participated in a WDC meeting (as compared to the 21.7% indicated on table 3.1.8). Bo District scored highest followed by Kono, Bombali and WARD. These figures yet again indicate the relative vibrancy of local government in Bo and the fact that WDCs are overshadowed by self-organized CBOs/CSOs in WARD.

Respondents were also asked whether they have ever been asked by WDC members to supply communal labour (an explicit provision of the LGA). Only 17.1% of respondents answered in the affirmative; the highest incidence was reported in Bo District (26.1%), followed by Kono (18.7%), Bombali (12.3%) and WARD (11.3%).

Satisfaction in WDCs was measured by asking respondents to select from one of five categories ranging from very satisfied to very unsatisfied. Only 19.8% of respondents expressed moderate or high satisfaction with WDCs. The highest score was in Bo District followed by Kono, WARD and Bombali. Asked to pinpoint strategies for improving the performance of WDCs in a multiple choice exercise, 94.7% of respondents chose to recommend more WDC meetings in different locations, 75.6% recommended payment of WDC members' expenses and 72.8% recommended that WDCs should be given operating funds.

When asked who should chair WDCs, (Table 3.3.12), 38.3% of respondents stated that it should be the local councillor, 19.9% stated that it should be the paramount chief or headman, 5.6% stated that it should be the local MP and 36.2% didn't know. These results do not indicate strong popular demand for paramount chiefs' chairmanship of WDCs as proposed in the draft CTAP.

5.6 Perceptions of Traditional Authorities
Data on public perceptions of traditional authorities (chiefs and Western Area headmen) is presented in Tables 3.4.1 to 3.4.6. A majority of respondents (80.2%) said they had heard about development committees convened by chiefs and headmen. Kono District scored highest followed by WARD, Bo and Bombali. Most respondents said that they could name a member of such a committee and 88.8% answered in the affirmative when asked whether these committees had women and youths' representatives. This last figure probably reflects the influence of NGO-led, "rights-based" approaches to development in rural Sierra Leone over the last decade.

When asked to pinpoint the activities of these committees in a multiple choice exercise, 80.8% of respondents agreed that they resolve disputes and keep order, 73.9% agreed that they organized village and neighbourhood cleanups and 74.6% agreed that they dealt with official and private visitors to the community.

When asked about the content of chief and headmen's directives in a multiple choice exercise (Table 3.4.6), 82.3% of respondents agreed that they concerned local taxes and revenues, 64.9% agreed that the concerned communal labour, 56.3% agreed that they concerned entertaining visiting politicians and VIPs and 27.2% agreed that they concerned commercial land leasing. When asked specifically about traditional authorities' calls for communal labour (Tables 3.4.5), 95.9% of respondents in Kono District, 75% of respondents in Bombali, 67.6% of respondents in WARD and 35.5% of respondents in Bo agreed that they had

received a direct order from a chief of headman to perform communal labour. The average score was 68.7%, which is the same order of magnitude as the 64.9% figure shown on Table 3.4.6. These data indicate that chiefs and headman are still controlling communal labour, even through clause 96(1c) of the LGA specifically states that WDCs should "organize communal labour and voluntary work". The overall responses also confirm that chiefs and headmen continue to play a leading role in community-level governance.

5.7 Traditional Authorities' Political Influence on Voters
Tables 4.1 to 4.8 present data on perceptions of traditional authorities' political influence on local councils. Table 4.1 shows that 76.9% of respondents in the current survey reported that their councillors were not related to paramount chiefs or headmen by blood or marriage. In a second exercise (Table 4.2), 84.1% of respondents in the three provincial districts stated either that their local councillors were not from a chiefdom ruling house or that they did know whether they were or not.

These figures differ markedly from the IRCBP's Decentralization Stakeholder Survey of 2008 (IRCBP, 2011), which reports that 47% of the 2004 intake of councillors and 51% of the 2008 intake were members of ruling families in their chiefdoms. According to the same survey, 34% of the 2004 intake of councillors and 38% of the 2008 intake also reported that they were related by blood or marriage to a paramount chief. The small size of the present study's questionnaire survey may be producing skewed results here, although it is noteworthy that the IRCBP survey obtained its information directly from councillors. It is possible that local councillors emphasize their connections to chieftaincy in order to appeal to rural voters (and win party nominations) while these connections are little interest to employed and better educated voters who are more concerned with councillors performance in office. This is the group whose opinions are overrepresented in the questionnaire survey.

When asked about local councillors' working relationship with chiefs and headmen (Table 4.3), 54.6% of respondents said that they worked well together while 43.0% reported that they worked separately.

The next set of exercises examines chiefs and headmen's influence over voting in local and national elections. When asked about chiefs and headmen's level of activity in advising people to vote in local council elections (Table 4.4), 29.9% of respondents said they were moderately to very active and 70.1% said they were minimally active to inactive. When asked about the reasons for chiefs and headmen's endorsement of particular candidates, when it occurred (Table 4.5), 46.7% of respondents stated that it was due to the close relationship between them and 21.8% stated that it was due to party political affiliations.

When asked about chiefs and headmen's level of activity in advising people to vote in national elections (Table 4.6), 28% of respondents stated that they were moderately to very active and 71.9 % said they were minimally active to inactive. When asked about the reasons for chiefs and headmen's endorsement of particular candidates, when it occurred (Table 4.7), 54.2% of respondents stated that it was due to party political affiliations and 37.9% stated that it was due to the close working relationship or personal friendship between them.

When respondents were asked what they would do if a chief or headmen advised them to vote for a particular political party (Table 4.8), 89.0% stated that they would vote according to their own preference. These data suggest that provincial chiefs no longer have the influence over voters they once had. Yet it must also be borne in mind that, as noted already, the survey

population is skewed towards the better educated and better off groups in the provincial population. Unlike poor farmers in remote villages, these groups do not depend so much on chiefs to authorize land rights and communicate information on development and services.

5.8 Tax Authority and Service Delivery
Tables 5.1 to 5.9 present data on respondents' views on the relationship between duty to pay tax and the duty to deliver services. When asked whether they were willing to pay tax (table 5.1.), 86.2% of respondents answered in the affirmative. WARD scored highest followed by Bo, Kono and Bombali. WARD is the only district in the survey where local taxes are collected directly by the councils. When asked to predict the consequences of putting local councils in sole charge of local revenue collection (Table 5.3), 30.3% of respondents stated that it would be a change for the better, 33.4% stated that it would be a change for the worse, 21.6% said there would be no change and 14.7% stated that they didn't know.

Surprisingly, a change for the better scored much higher in Kono than any other district, especially Bo. These results may reflect a relaxed attitude to chieftaincy in relatively prosperous Bo District and the fact that public deference towards Kono District's powerful and wealthy chiefs is more pragmatic than ideological.[7] Older people and women are more likely to regard putting local councils in charge of all local taxes as a change for the worse (Tables 5.4 and 5.5) than younger people and men. When respondents were asked to pinpoint the reasons for their answers in a multiple choice exercise (Table 5.6), 70.7% of respondents agreed with the statement that taxes should fund local services yet 66.5% agreed with the statement that tax collection is the responsibility of traditional authorities and 65.5% agreed with the statement that people would refuse to pay tax to anyone except chiefs.

Finally, respondents were asked whether they were receiving local council services. Overall, 66.9% of respondents agreed that their local council was supporting education locally (Table 5.7), 46.9% agreed that the local council was supporting health (Table 5.8) and 47.1% agreed that the local council was supporting agriculture (Table 5.9). However, there were significant regional differences. Bo respondents scored all sectors highly; Kono and Bombali respondents scored education highly but health and agriculture much lower, while WARD respondents returned low scores for all sectors. Once again, the "SLPP effect" in Bo and the proximity of central government in WARD is visible in these results.

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[7] It is possible that the focus groups interviewed by the research team, and perhaps CBOs in Kono District generally, have closer links to chiefs than in other areas and that their views on chieftaincy are not wholly representative of the Kono public at large.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Regional Variations in Local Governance

A factor that came out clearly in the research was that the four survey districts each have distinctive social and economic configurations and power relationships that affect local councils' interaction with their publics. These regional characteristics are now summarized.

Bo. As Sierra Leone's second city and former headquarters of the colonial provincial administration, Bo has always been close to the state. Bo District has a long history of commercial agriculture (mainly coffee, cacao and palm oil) and grassroots investment in modern education. This last factor came out strongly in the FGDs held in the district. Participants often focussed on the mechanics of council contracting and resource disbursement and subjected all service providers to critical scrutiny. Bo is the heartland of the SLPP and it is the SLPPs current status as the opposition party at the national level that underlies SLPP-led local councils' determination to deliver services at maximum efficiency and forge independent relationships with international donors. This is an example of the governance outcomes decentralization was designed to foster.

Bombali, by way of contrast, remains one Sierra Leone's poorest districts. In the colonial period, it was a major source of rural migration to Freetown and diamondiferous areas of southern and eastern Sierra Leone. Makeni, the district and provincial headquarters, is located in the far south of the district on the main highway linking Freetown to Kono. Away from Makeni and the main roads, Bombali is a district of isolated agrarian communities which have very limited access to services and remain heavily reliant on chiefs for day to day governance. It is only in Makeni that we begin to encounter critical assessments of chiefs' governance and demand for more modern forms of governance. But it is noteworthy that councils scored highly throughout Bombali as actual deliverers of services despite low scores, compared to chiefs and other political agencies, on measures of satisfaction and trust. Clearly, Bombali respondents seem to be expecting more from local councils than they can currently deliver, while their assessments of chiefs' governance answer to other criteria. Interestingly, the Bombali District councillors met by the research team tended to be more socially embedded in their wards than their counterparts in other districts (remote rural areas are not attractive to would-be patrons) and thus more inclined to champion local development needs. In Bombali District, local councils' relationship with their public seems to be developing along different lines from Bo. While Bombali is an APC stronghold, this emerging relationship has little to do with party politics.

Kono District has been a centre of artisanal and industrial diamond mining for more than half a century. Chiefs became powerful brokers in the mining economy, authorizing the local settlement of both rich and poor migrants and serving as middlemen between mining investors and landowners. Indeed, the mining economy did not engender class-based politics as much as a politics of recognition for indigenous Kono rights and entitlements. Even today, Kono District represents a political constituency that the major political parties feel the need to court rather than rely upon for support. The district suffered badly during the civil war and the rapid decline of artisanal mining has created new development challenges. Land, including mined-out sites, is now much in demand for farming and chiefs' political brokerage is as prominent as ever. While some FGD participants in Kono expressed reverence for the institution of chieftaincy, others tended to view chiefs as powerful actors whose interests have to be accommodated if development efforts in the district are going to be successful.

WARD differs again from the other survey districts. There have never been government-recognized chiefs in the Western Area, only elected headmen at the village level and

representatives of the Western Area's Tribal Headmen in the towns. Unlike chiefs in the districts, headmen do not currently have ex-officio seats on local councils in the Western Area. The post-war influx of population into the Freetown area has spilled over into WARD and generated considerable demand for land, both for housing and market gardening. Fishing is also a major village industry. However, the 2004 census shows that, government, services, trading and construction accounted for 70 per cent of all workers living in rural localities in the Western Area. Economic opportunity and geographical mobility in WARD translates into a high density of CSOs and CBOs. However, many of these groups tend to seek out resources and information at the centre, whether directly or through patrons, rather than engaging with the local council. Respondents in WARD tended to return low scores for local councils on measures of trust and satisfaction, but these results may reflect the vibrancy of self-organized associational life in WARD rather than the actual performance of the local council.

A general conclusion here is that while decentralization in Sierra Leone is a national programme, there is also a case for targeting specific types of support to different districts, e.g. direct project funding in Bo, support to councillors' mobility and planning capacity in Bombali, support to a multi-agency approach to development in Kono and improving the interface and interaction between CSOs and local councils in WARD.

6.2 Responses to the Research Questions

A. Have local councils had a material impact on development outcomes in terms of the delivery of basic services?

This question was previously addressed in the World Bank's study of the first (2004-2008) phase of decentralization (Zhou, 2009). The study analysed the results of the 2007 National Public Services Survey and found that there was substantial improvement between 2005 and 2007 in all sectors in which local councils managed decentralized functions, especially in health care generally and primary health care in particular. De-concentration was relatively advanced in the health sector when the decentralization programme began and these data are indicative of a positive impact of decentralization. The study also found that reported access to benefits from local council projects was 11-12 percentage points higher in wards in which a local councillor was resident as compared to wards represented by a local councillor domiciled in Freetown or another district. This evidence points, weakly, to an enhanced local voice in decision-making and resource allocation in locales where councillors are most likely to be active. However, it must also be noted that the "rapid results" discretionary grant scheme, designed to kick-start decentralization in 2004-05, was particularly amenable to alignment with patronage politics.[8]

The results of the 2011 National Public Services Survey have yet to be finalized and it was not possible, at the time of writing, to use the national survey to cross-check the results of the present study's much smaller survey. It is noteworthy, however, that education, not health, scores highest in this study's survey. This finding may reflect the devolution of education functions to local councils since 2007 and the recent spate council-funded school building work highlighted in the FGDs. Yet in the final analysis, the conclusion reached by the World Bank study still applies: decentralization has been consistent with substantial improvements in local services, but it almost impossible to isolate its material impact in a country still undergoing extensive, donor-supported post-war reconstruction.

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[8] A question for another occasion is whether the "rapid results" approach gave a false impression of local councillors' capacity to deliver resources to their supporters and whether councillors' public reputation is still suffering as a result.

For example, in the first phase of the decentralization programme the resources controlled by councils in key sectors (notably education, health and agriculture) were tiny compared to the donor funds being channelled through line ministries. The DSPD project literature notes that while transfers to local councils increased from 3.9% of domestic revenues in 2005 to 6.9% in 2008, these ratios remain low compared to other developing countries where transfers to sub-national governments are around 24% of revenue income. Total transfers in Sierra Leone represent only 0.7 percent of GDP, as compared to developing country averages of 2 percent of GDP (World Bank, 2009).

While the quantitative data is not definitive, anecdotal and qualitative data is highly indicative of decentralization's material impact. Local councils have built or rehabilitated schools, PHUs, slaughter houses, market enclosures, drinking water supplies, sanitary facilities and feeder roads, distributed seeds to ABOs, improved waste management in towns and played a key role in the rollout of the free health care scheme for pregnant and nursing mothers and small children. Local councils have also delivered high profile projects on an *ad hoc* basis, e.g. the rehabilitation of school science laboratories in Makeni.

Another indicator of the material impact of local councils is the fears expressed in one of the Kono FGDs that losing the local councils would result in a substantial increase in local taxes. The designers of decentralization in Sierra Leone may have had greater ambitions for it than as a method for subsidizing local development, but these fears indicate a nascent sense of public ownership over the local councils

While grassroots demand for water wells, pumps, latrines, schools and PHPs currently outstrips supply, decentralization has clearly created a resource distribution structure that can reach rural areas. It is noteworthy, for example, that the only external benefits received by the remote village in Bombali District were internationally donated mosquito nets distributed by the local PHP. This particular PHP, originally built by Roman Catholic missionaries, was not in use before the civil war. A nurse was in post by 2003, but it was not until the decentralization programme got underway in 2004 that the PHP was supplied with a working refrigerator and a full complement of drugs and medical equipment. Having a nurse permanently in post also helps villagers decide on the best course of action when medical emergencies arise and when drugs are not available locally.

B. Have local councils improved pro-poor decision making and enhanced poor people's voice in local level political structures?

A point emerging throughout the research is that the Sierra Leonean public does indeed recognize that local councils are trying to deliver services even when they complain that these services are insufficient to satisfy their needs. Many FGD participants had a clear view of the theoretical benefits of decentralization, i.e. that it represents an institutional mechanism whose purpose is to make government aware of the development needs of the people and to satisfy them. Yet the problem lies in translating theory into practice.

One the one hand, the simple fact that Sierra Leone now has a fully fledged and monitored system for inter-governmental transfers represents significant progress from the pre-war situation. A point emphasized by devolved MDA staff is that in the old days of central control, some districts might receive a much bigger share of resources than others. Under decentralization, each district has guaranteed funds for local services and decisions over the allocation of these funds are made locally. The system is far from perfect. There is still talk of

headquarters issuing orders to local staff over the management of functions that are supposed to be devolved and coordination between MDAs and councils has a great deal of room for improvement. But at least Freetown newspapers are no longer full of stories of Minsters unilaterally securing donor funds to build schools or hospitals in their provincial home areas and then getting embroiled in protracted fights with other top politicians seeking to have these amenities re-located to their areas.

On the other hand, patronage politics continues to predominate in Sierra Leone. Local councils are under pressure from other authorities, notably MPs and chiefs, for access to their resources or for a share of the political credit for their programmes. The notion that powerful politicians can arrange for resource allocations to the councils to be blocked if they don't get benefits from them was aired in some FGDs. Paradoxically, many grassroots interviewees reserved their greatest praise for benevolent patrons who deliver resources to their communities. Local councillors are often frustrated precisely because they don't control sufficient resources to operate in this manner.

A related problem here is that enhancing the voice of poor people in local government can be more apparent than real. When the Drivers of Change team visited Bo in 2005, the walls of the city council chamber were plastered with flip chart sheets from "rapid results" needs assessments. The Bombali District chairman gave the team a video tape of the same exercise. Local councils' diligence in public consultation continues to be assessed by CLoGPAS. However, enhancing poor people's voice in local government has little intrinsic value unless it leads to concrete action.

This is the fundamental problem with the WDCs. The questionnaire survey reveals that a majority of respondents had knowledge of WDCs but that levels of public interaction and satisfaction with them in all districts except Bo are very low. FGD participants, unprompted, hardly mentioned WDCs at all. Some councillors also reported that grants for WDCs, which began in 2009, have allowed these committees to operate effectively for the first time. But they also pointed out that many WDC members have to walk several miles to attend meetings and are never going to carry on doing that if they don't get at least a meal afterwards. Recent holdups in the disbursement of these grants have, they claimed, seen all WDC activity cease.[9] A point raised by members of the research team was that local councils might do better by developing relationships with local CSOs and CBOs and discussing development needs in public workshops rather than relying on WDCs. Some NGO projects (e.g. ENCISS) have focussed specifically on strategies for enhancing engagement between local councils and CSOs/CBOs, but more work needs to be done in this area.

Political pressure from above and below has nevertheless encouraged local councils to concentrate on their unique selling point, which is delivering the services identified and prioritized by the local populace. For example, when a councillor bangs a table a table at a meeting and demands action for water wells to be dug in a remote rural ward where villagers are dying of dysentery she is demonstrating, like any benevolent patron, a moral concern for a community she considers her own. But unlike other patrons she can be voted out of office if she fails to retain her constituents' confidence. Furthermore, her demands will be recorded in council minutes and will have a chance of being prioritized in council development plans. Getting the wells dug is the political and professional responsibility of the local council, not

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[9] According to figures obtained from the LGFD, transfers to local councils for the year 2011 do not include grants for WDCs.

just the moral responsibility of the individual councillor. Whatever the councils' current resource shortages, decentralization now makes it possible for local engagements between communities, politicians and bureaucrats to be regulated constructively and thus to be of benefit to the poor. These possibilities were not present in the pre-war era.

The Bo councils are currently expanding the horizons of local government in Sierra Leone. Both the city and district council have been extremely resourceful in obtaining external technical assistance to develop their planning and service monitoring capacity. In essence, they are seeking to enhance their political authority and legitimacy in an extremely competitive political environment by adopting rationale-bureaucratic best practice. For them, the key challenge is to ensure that their planning maps and amenities databases are recognized by other political and development agencies as authoritative. These initiatives do not generate a great deal of pro-poor decision making as yet, but they certainly have the potential to do so. It would be in the interest of donors to support such capacity building initiatives, especially given the lack of authoritative data on local services and amenities.

The questionnaire results indicated high public confidence in both Bo councils, but there is more at stake here than the SLPP heartland supporting councils led by its own party in a knee-jerk manner while the APC controls central government. SLPP councillors' determination to prove to the public that the party is still capable of governing effectively is a legitimate democratic ambition. It points again to the tentative emergence of a new and constructive engagement between local government and citizenry in provincial Sierra Leone.

C. To what degree have local councils used their power to deliver development outcomes that would otherwise not have taken place?
There is no definitive answer to this question for reasons already given in response to question A. As already noted, the system of fiscal transfers from central to local government guarantees a minimum level of services in all districts, which did not happen before decentralization. However, only a small proportion of this funding is discretionary.

The only way to measure the unique impact of decentralization with any precision would be to: a) quantify the actual delivery of local council services and projects over a multi-year cycle; b) trace the decision-making processes in local government that have (or have not) produced concrete development outcomes; c) compare these outcomes to the local development work of NGOs and other agencies.

For example, it would useful to discover how many local development needs identified in WDC meetings are included in district development plans and how many of those are actually funded. If WDCs are found to be ineffective in generating development outcomes, other instruments (e.g. CBO "learning alliances") could be tried instead.

Furthermore, the fact that LGFD interlocutors described local council development plans as "wish lists" illustrates the need for further analysis of the funding responses to these plans and what they reveal about local councils' *de facto* decision-making power. The research team did not inquire into decision-making processes in local government in depth, but the impression given by MDA staff was that they tend not to consult with the councils when they are not obliged to and that the process by which local councils release funds to MDAs is purely bureaucratic. Hence some interlocutors' complaints that Chief Administrators hold too much power. Again, further research into local government decision-making would allow stronger conclusions to be drawn on the relative success of de-concentration and democratic

decentralization in Sierra Leone and what measures need to be taken to strengthen one or the other or both.

The qualitative data indicates that local councils have been effective in delivering unprecedented development when directly sourcing funds from donors for specific projects (the school science laboratories in Makeni are a case in point). It is possible, however, that projects of this kind would have been implemented by other agencies in the absence of the councils. Some councils are beginning to apply to donors for project funds on their own initiative (the EU-supported water and sanitation projects in Bo is a case in point) and this is an area where locally generated knowledge of development needs can begin to make a difference.

Ironically perhaps, it is the councils' lack of power and discretionary control over resources that is driving the innovations seen in Bo and the determination of councillors across the country (particularly women councillors) to champion the development needs of their wards. We are seeing here the fragile beginnings of a new ethos of local government in Sierra Leone. At present, the councils' honest intent to deliver development and services seems to be winning them as much popular support as the benefits they are actually delivering. Consequently, if a unique development dividend has emerged from the first seven years of decentralization it is more cultural than material.

The change management culture some commentators detected among the young technocrats of DecSec and the LGFD may not survive the winding up of the IRCBP. However "champions of change" may still emerge from other sources. As we have seen, one of the APC council chairmen interviewed by the Research Team was scathingly critical about the conservative turn in recent government policy towards local government (especially the reintroduction of District Officers) and vowed to campaign at the highest level for fresher thinking when his term of office ends. Sierra Leoneans with formative political and administrative experiences in post-war local government have yet to make an appearance on the national stage. It is too early to predict whether this group will make an impact on national politics, but their future capacity to influence domestic policy on local government is certainly something to be taken into consideration by donors as they re-evaluate their support for decentralization.

Another source of change management culture is the devolved MDAs. Devolved MDA staff, particularly in health, value the autonomy gained by working away from ministerial headquarters and having a guaranteed budget that is not affected by short term political interests. While there are problems in the relationship between the local councils and the MDAs, there is no doubt of the commitment of many devolved MDA staff to decentralization (or more precisely, to de-concentration as guaranteed by political decentralization).

D. To what degree have established local power networks – particularly chiefs – been affected by the establishment of local councils?

When decentralization began, donors were inclined view chiefs as an entrenched "feudal" elite, predisposed to capture resources from the local councils. However, a distinction must be made between the lower ranking chiefs, the vast majority of whom are socially embedded in the villages and neighbourhoods in which they exercise governance, and paramount chiefs who exercise executive, administrative and judicial powers as state agents. Power networks involving paramount chiefs are invariably linked to the centre.

In recent years, paramount chiefs have been lobbying government for a greater role in development governance. This lobbying bore some fruit in the concluding clauses of the Chieftaincy Act of 2009, which include the provision that a paramount chief should serve as an "agent of development" in his or her chiefdom. Chiefs are not the only agents lobbying for an enhanced role within decentralized governance. MPs, some of whom remember the constituency development funds of the pre-war era, have also been campaigning behind the scenes for *ex officio* seats on district councils. Hence all the talk about local councils' lack of capacity as if that was a failing of the councils themselves rather than government as a whole.

Both groups, especially chiefs, have found allies in the mainstream civil service. Civil servants in the Ministry of Local Government had an uneasy relationship with the better paid contract staff of the IRCBP and gained a reputation among other MDAs for protecting their historical prerogatives as overseers of the chiefdoms. The senior civil service generally has long been campaigning for the return of District Officers. Some of the policy literature on this return leaves no doubt as to the attraction, for them, of the powers of administrative fiat embodied in this colonially inherited post (see Annex 1). These powers were originally developed for the purpose of regulating customary authority within a regime of "indirect rule".

The fact that some sections of the governing elite are interested in strengthening old modalities of "indirect rule" may be a testament to the success of decentralization and the relative impermeability of its regulatory and monitoring mechanisms. But it also reflects the desire of the governing party to assert its authority in opposition strongholds and bring councils controlled by opposition parties "to heel".

Furthermore, there remain remote populations in the provinces that rely on chiefs to authorize their land rights, whose nearest schools and PHPs tend to be located in section and chiefdom headquarters and whose primary links to the wider world are through chiefs. As we found in the case of the village in Bombali District, remote communities may consider voting as their chiefs dictate to be their duty as subjects. Governing elites in Sierra Leone have long exploited these dependencies for electoral advantage. Preserving these dependences has the additional utility, for them, of facilitating the management of popular expectations in an economy that cannot currently sustain mass education and wage employment.

However, this strategy clearly has limits. Human rights, development and good governance have become part of the political lexicon in Sierra Leone. The present government's Agenda for Change, for example, refers explicitly to the idea of a new social contract between a duty-bearing government and a socially responsible citizenry ready to pay its bills and taxes. It is not technically feasible for government to transfer significant service delivery responsibilities from local councils to the chiefdoms. Furthermore, re-centralizing service delivery would alienate large sections of the public and international donors. Sierra Leone has moved on from the time when District Offices were hubs of governmental activity outside Freetown and in any case, resources are simply not available to supply District Officers with substantial support staffs.

It would be particularly damaging to the reputation of an APC government, both domestically and internationally, to de-activate local councils a second time. What we are most likely to see in the future is further juggling of institutional reform priorities and the exercise of electoral *realpolitik*. Local councils will remain flagships of good governance and service

delivery, but they won't be allowed to become too politically powerful. District Officers may well end up playing a similar role to the District Administrators of Museveni's Uganda, serving as roving ambassadors of central government giving "political direction" to local councils (Byrnes, 1990). The CTAP is another case in point. While acknowledging the need for capacity-building reforms at the chiefdom level, it hands paramount chiefs control over WDCs and restores central government control over local revenue administration. The CTAP is all about managing competing political interests, not achieving policy coherence.

Meanwhile, paramount chiefs have begun to reach their own accommodations with local councils. Some paramount chief councillors are rarely seen in council, but others play an active role in council business. Some aspects of this accommodation are not conducive to good governance. A case in point is chiefs' reported lobbying for local council construction contracts that make financial provision for local labour and materials. The chiefs' alleged aim is to pocket the money and organize these inputs as unpaid "community" contributions. Local council leaders seem tolerant of such strategies, probably because it improves the councils' bargaining position with chiefs when they are approached to make land available for council projects. If the local councils received stronger support from central government, compromises of this kind would not be necessary.

E. What are the major constraints to making local councils a more powerful actor in delivering pro-poor development and enhancing poor people's voice in local decision making?

Elements of this question have already been addressed in the previous answer. The most pressing constraint is successive governments' insistence on conserving the executive and administrative powers of chiefdom authorities. Without effective tax authority, the councils cannot develop a social contract, as elected service providers, with taxpaying service consumers and voters. Furthermore, they are dependent on the cooperation of chiefs to obtain land for projects, which compromises their planning authority.

A second constraint is the long legacy of centralized government in Sierra Leone. Historically, the line ministries have been major political actors and controllers of human and material resources. Many ministries have been reluctant to devolve functions and some of the functions that have been scheduled for devolution (e.g. feeder road maintenance using manual labour) are unnecessarily limiting. Lack of payroll devolution has hampered coordination between elected councillors and technical staff, with some of the latter seeing the councils as little more than funding agencies. It has also created absurd situations in which, for example, teaching supervisors still employed by the Ministry of Education in Freetown complain that councillors' lack the capacity to monitor education services effectively.

A third constraint is Sierra Leone's long history of patronage politics. Present day political parties in Sierra Leone are organized on a regional and family basis, not on social class or ideological bases. A complaint aired in some of the FGDs, particularly in Kono, was that national parties tend to confer nominations in local government elections upon party activists who are more interested in furthering their political careers than championing local development needs. When they find that they cannot control significant resources, they tend to lose interest. The impression gained by the research team was that disillusioned councillors are most likely to be younger men, while enthusiastic and committed councillors tend to be older women.

The old forms of politics are also visible in the palpable resentment, in some sections of government, towards local councils controlled by opposition parties. The issue here is that opposition councils are seen to be using government funds to improve their own political standing. However, it is noteworthy than APC and SLPP council leaders are united in the opposition to the reintroduction of District Officers. A change management culture could be evolving at this level and this is something donors could usefully monitor.

Paradoxically, a final constraint on the effectiveness of councils in delivering services and enhancing the voice of poor people is endemic poverty. Rural people have become used over generations to surviving with little or no government assistance and that isolation has helped to dampen demand for services. A culture of "self-help" remains strong. The positive side of this culture is seen in community support to unregistered schools and unverified teachers. The negative side is seen in chiefs' exploitation of the willingness of communities to donate labour and construction materials to projects. As long as political interests at the centre are vested in the conservation of the isolated communitarian poor, it is going to be difficult for modern civic culture to make inroads.

F. How do local people and civil society groups perceive local council operations, particularly in comparison and contrast to existing chieftaincy structures?

As noted above, many interviewees and FDG participants had a clear view of the local councils' design purpose, i.e. to investigate local needs and do their best to satisfy them. Mention was also made of the fact the local councils are closely audited and monitored and therefore operate with a high degree of fiscal and administrative probity. However, the questionnaire survey also captured responses from people living remote areas that have seen little in the way of council services. These groups are not inclined towards a positive view of the councils. Furthermore, even when interviewees expressed approval of the services provided by local councils, they tended to reserve strong criticism for councillors as individuals. Common complaints were that councillors are rarely seen in their wards, that they call meetings with nothing to announce in the way of benefits for the people and that they lose interest in council work when they realize that they won't become wealthy from it. In short, interviewees tended to assess local councils as development agencies and councillors as patrons.

These conflicting assessments are reflected in the questionnaire outputs. On the one hand, Local councils scored highest among political authorities for actually delivering development, representing the choice of more than 50% of respondents in Bo and Bombali Districts. A lower score for local councils in Kono reflects the historic interest of central government in the local mining economy the local prominence of chiefs as political actors. The councils also received a lower score in WARD, which reflects the geographical proximity of central government and the relatively high local density of self-organized economic cooperatives and other interest-based associations.

On the other hand, local councils received low scores on measures of public satisfaction and trust. The Bombali data is remarkable in that 50.6% of respondents credited local councils for bringing the most development to their localities but only 18.9% identified the local councillor as the first political authority they would ask for development and services. Respondents in WARD and Kono also tended to favour development and service providers

with the power to get things done over and those with a specific responsibility for development.

Differences also emerged between survey districts in respect of respondents' perceptions of councillors' accountability. Bo District returned the highest approval rating for local councils on all measures. Here, 66% of respondents' agreed that their local councillor was more accountable to his or her community than political party. The reverse was the case in Kono District where 47% of respondents agreed that their councillor was more accountable to his or her political party.

Another point to emerge from the survey was that reported knowledge of development activity is closely linked to reported benefit from that activity. In other words, people who have not received benefits from a particular agency tend to deny that this agency is operating in their locality. It is likely that these responses reflect moral rather than factual judgements and again represent the historical predominance of patronage politics in Sierra Leone.

While the survey results suggest that strengthening the power of chieftaincy may not yield a governing party much in the way of extra votes, it must be remembered the survey sample is skewed to towards wage workers and the better educated. A noteworthy finding from the three FGDs held in Bombali District is that deference towards chiefs is greatest in remote agrarian communities but declines sharply in urban areas. The exception to this pattern is of course Kono District, whose historic diamond industry and unique identity politics enabled chiefs to amass wealth and influence as brokers. However, more than 50% of survey respondents in Kono were in favour of transferring responsibility for revenue collection from chiefs to local councils. These results suggest that public deference towards Kono District's unusually powerful and wealthy chiefs is as much pragmatic as it is ideological.

Annex 1 The Political Economy of Decentralization in Sierra Leone (Full Version) [10]

The Wartime Origins of Decentralization Policy

Democratic decentralization (i.e. the revival of elected local government) was a declared policy of both military and civilian governments in Sierra Leone during the civil war of the 1990s. An early rationale for this policy was set out in a consultancy study commissioned by the NPRC junta in 1994 (Zwanikken et al, 1994). The consultants noted that administrative, political and economic power in Sierra Leone had become severely over-centralized during the recently ended era of one-party rule. The APC government of Siaka Stevens had de-activated elected local councils in 1972, leaving local government in the provinces in the hands of a small field administration and chiefdom structures inherited from colonial "indirect rule". District Officers were notionally responsible for coordinating the activities of central government departments in the provinces, but the consultants observed that departmental heads tended to deal directly with headquarters in Freetown. The prevailing relationship between central government and the provinces, they noted, was that of the centre extracting resources (e.g. raw materials and taxes) with minimal return in the way of services. Such services as did exist were severely under-resourced and heavily dependent on the support of international NGOs.

The consultants went on to note that the NPRC junta had failed to articulate a vision of decentralization beyond the re-activation of the original district and town councils. In an effort to support the development of a new policy, they summarized the virtues of decentralization in a country like Sierra Leone:

- While over-centralization stultifies democratic institutions, diminishes government accountability and encourages corruption, decentralization can enhance popular participation in the government process and thereby create institutional opportunities for those outside the central state to make decisions concerning the organisation of public goods and services.
- While an over-centralized bureaucracy soon becomes overburdened and inefficient, decentralization can promote organizational and managerial efficiency by enabling each level of government to specialise in what it is most capable of doing. Moreover, it can bring government closer to the critical information it requires for delivering services effectively and help ensure that available resources are evenly distributed.
- Over-centralization alienates the populace from political and administrative systems associated with the formal state. Farmers may, for example, switch from cash cropping to subsistence production if rural infrastructure is neglected and the rural population as whole may withdraw to their "age-old tested primordial institutions in the villages". Decentralization, on the other hand, can improve governmental accountability by broadening opportunities for citizen feedback on services and imposing the discipline of the ballot box on service delivery. It can also enhance the legitimacy of government institutions by enabling people representing different groups and interests to identify with, and have a stake in, the formal processes of government. Policies are thus more likely to be subjected to genuine debate, which enables policy-makers to consider all possible options and thus produce better policy. Finally, decentralization can also provide training both to political leaders and citizens on the challenges and frustrations of democratic governance.

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[10] The analysis in this section is based on a literature review but also draws upon the lead consultant's earlier research and consultancy work on local government reform and decentralization in Sierra Leone.

The SLPP government led by Ahmad Tejan Kabbah attempted to carry decentralization forward after the return to civilian rule in March 1996. In its own policy statements, the Kabbah government emphasised its commitment to reverse the centralizing trend of past governments and to "allow people to be actively involved in their own development". It also emphasized the value of having local councils in place to advise and assist agencies engaged in post-war reconstruction and to bring public services closer to the people (GoSL, 1996; 1997). The resumption of armed conflict soon overtook these plans, and the opportunity to implement them did not arise again until the formal declaration of peace in January 2002.

Up to this point, peacebuilding had not featured explicitly among the expected outcomes of decentralization in Sierra Leone. However, the end of the civil war coincided with a new emphasis upon security and conflict mitigation within international development, prompted by the global proliferation of civil conflicts at the end of the Cold War (Duffield, 2001). Democratic decentralization became one of many mainstream development strategies answering to these new priorities (Siegle and O'Mahoney, 2006). Its "good governance" objectives, i.e. improving efficiency and accountability in local service delivery and enhancing citizens' participation in governmental decision-making, acquired a new salience as means by which social contracts between governments and citizens could be re-forged and alienated populations reincorporated into national bodies politic (Schou and Haug, 2005; Crawford and Hartmann, 2008; Scott, 2009).

The particular character of Sierra Leone's civil war gave policy makers further cause to explore the peacebuilding potential of the Kabbah government's decentralization plans. The ethnic, religious and regional factionalism so prominent in other post-Cold War conflicts was noticeably lacking in the Sierra Leone conflict. The prevailing analysis at war's end was that years of government authoritarianism, corruption and neglect had engendered a collapse in social trust. The RUF insurgency, it was argued, had provided excluded and impoverished young Sierra Leoneans with an opportunity for self-empowerment. Fighting forces on both sides had been overtaken by this imperative as soon as they started taking on new recruits and a prolonged and chaotic conflict had ensued (Richards, 1996; Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2004; Keen, 2005; Peters, 2011).

Furthermore, when aid agencies moved into the countryside to deliver aid at the end of the war, they encountered a host of grievances against chiefs. A claim frequently aired in agency-led forums was that chiefs' governance had become so despotic that it had driven large numbers of able-bodied young people out of rural areas. Some of these exiles, it was further claimed, had joined the RUF insurgents specifically to exact revenge on chiefs (Conciliation Resources, 2000; Fanthorpe, 2004a). These complaints seemed to suggest that the above-noted UNDP consultants had misread political currents in Sierra Leone; that "age-old tested primordial institutions" had also become instruments of oppression, offering the rural masses no respite from a corrupt, authoritarian state (Richards, 2005). To many commentators, it thus seemed that a modern and fully democratic local government system was urgently needed in Sierra Leone if long-term peace and ability were going to be secured (Jackson, 2007).

Decentralization was confirmed as a priority programme for Sierra Leone at the first post-war Consultative Group meeting, held in Paris in November 2002. According to a recent World Banks retrospective on the unfolding of the programme, it was agreed at the Paris meeting that the "exclusion and deprivation of the rural masses" was a fundamental cause of the civil war and that decentralization was a key strategy for redressing this problem, re-energizing local leadership across the country and opening space for popular participation (Zhou, 2009).

It is rare, in post-conflict African states, for peacebuilding to be openly recognized as an official rationale for decentralization (Crawford and Hartmann, 2008:244-5). However, the Kabbah government's submission to the meeting indicated that it was in full agreement with its development partners' analysis (GoSL, 2002). Sierra Leone's first full PRSP reiterated this peacebuilding rationale:

> The Government has already adopted decentralisation and empowerment as a key strategy for promoting good governance, consolidating peace and reducing poverty. This strategic decision is based on the recognition that a major contributing factor to the ten-year civil war was the antagonism between a large section of the population, who were marginalised from the political process and deprived of social services and economic development opportunities on the one hand and those who controlled resources through absolute power and corruption on the other. Additionally, the immense development challenges facing the nation cannot be addressed unless the entire population is mobilised to identify and own their local priorities and address these priorities through collective action (GoSL, 2005:81).

The GoSL's willingness to embrace this peacebuilding agenda clinched donor support for the programme. The World Bank focussed support on decentralization, as opposed to the broader package of public sector reforms advocated by other donors, for precisely this reason (Zhou, 2007). The Bank was in favour of a fast-track programme, similar to the "big bang" decentralization initiated in 1999 in post-Suharto Indonesia, in order to cement institutional reforms while the political climate remained favourable (World Bank, 2003). An early UNDP policy briefing also notes, enthusiastically, that "decentralization of government services and re-establishment of elected local government councils may be the most important political reform in Sierra Leone since independence" (UNDP, 2004:1).

A striking difference emerges here between Sierra Leone's decentralization programme and programmes undertaken in other post-conflict states. In Sierra Leone, there was no perceived need to construct a decentralized political framework specifically to facilitate the peaceful co-existence of former warring factions. None of the leading factions in the Sierra Leonean conflict became major players in peacetime politics: the old army and CDF disbanded soon after peace was formally declared and the RUF failed to make headway as a political party. Consequently, there were none of the protracted debates and tense negotiations over decentralization in Sierra Leone as there were, for example, between RENAMO and FRELIMO factions in Mozambique (Sitoe and Hunguana, 2005) and between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo (KIPRED, 2009). Nor did decentralization in Sierra Leone take place against a background of extreme inter-ethnic violence as in the case of Rwanda (van Tilburg, 2008). With GoSL support for the programme assured, donors were free to focus on the technical modalities of decentralization. It was not until later that the complex politics involved in local government in Sierra Leone began to make their presence felt.

Fast-Track Implementation
Progress in implementing the new programme was rapid. A government task force, supported by UNDP and DFID, coordinated expert seminars and public consultations on decentralization reforms in 2003. This work culminated in the drafting of a new Local Government Act (LGA), which was ratified by the Sierra Leone Parliament in February 2004. Local council elections were held three months later. The World Bank joined the partnership at this time and went on to serve as the main conduit for international technical and financial support to the programme.

The rollout of the programme was coordinated by the World Bank's Institutional Reform and Capacity Building Project (IRCBP) through management units located in line ministries. Fiscal decentralization was coordinated by the Local Government Finance Department, (LGFD) located in the Ministry of Finance, while administrative decentralization was coordinated through the Decentralization Secretariat (DecSec), located in the Ministry of Local Government[11]. Both units were staffed by Sierra Leonean professionals on consultancy contracts and the original plan was that they would be mainstreamed into their parent line ministries when the project was wound up. The IRCBP was originally set to run from 2004 to 2009, but additional funding from the European Union (EU) and DFID from 2006 onwards permitted an extension until June 2011.

Seven years on from the inaugural local council elections, Sierra Leone has a fully functional tier of town and district councils, a new and well-regulated system of fiscal transfers from central to local government, much increased investment in local services, regular production of participatory development plans, and a comprehensive monitoring system (CLoGPAS) rewarding the best performing councils with additional development grants. Some councils also have new office buildings and chambers. The change of government in October 2007 brought no immediate changes to the programme; incoming President Ernest Bai Koroma pledged in his inaugural address to Parliament that his administration would "strengthen local government performance through enhanced decentralization and rural development". The programme passed another milestone in May 2008 when a second round of local council elections was successfully completed.

The Compromises of the Local Government Act
In spite of the successful rollout of the decentralization programme, it is still facing many challenges. In particular, the LGA of 2004 represents a compromise between different visions of decentralization. On the one hand, the Kabbah government viewed local councils first and foremost as development agencies. It had no intention of removing the hierarchy of paramount, section and village chiefs from their colonially-wrought role as the state's primary agents for maintaining social order in rural areas. Sierra Leone's Director of Local Government made this view clear in an interview with the DFID Drivers of Change team in 2005. "The local councils are for development", he announced, "and the chiefdoms are for law and order". This statement recapitulates the relationship between district councils and the chiefdoms in the late colonial era. The first district councils, initially forums for chiefs, were incorporated in 1950 as the old Colony and Protectorate of Sierra Leone underwent administrative unification in preparation for de-colonization. The economic development of Protectorate had long been lagging behind that of the Colony and the British administration decided that it should have priority access to the colonial development funds that were coming back on stream after the Second World War. The main function of a district council, according to the original District Councils Ordinance (no. 17 of 1950), was to "promote the development of the District and the Welfare of its people, with the funds at its disposal". The district and town councils were inserted between central government and the chiefdoms and their primary activity was development planning and project implementation. Service functions were added a few years later (Davidson, 1953; Zwanikken et al, 1994).

The Kabbah government had survived the civil war with little *de facto* authority outside the capital, so it is not hard to see why it was attracted to the idea of channelling post-war

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[11] The official names of these ministries have changed over the last decade and simplified versions are used here

development assistance through decentralized planning and service delivery authorities. Such a strategy could do nothing but assist in the restoration of the Sierra Leonean state's territorial sovereignty (Cf. Slater, 1989). Indeed, former NPRC leader Julius Maada Bio confirmed in an interview with the present research team that the junta's plan to decentralize had arisen during a visit to Ghana, which had originally been intended to yield lessons from the Rawlings government's successful transition from military to civilian rule. According to Maada Bio, the Sierra Leone delegation (which included future President Kabbah) was impressed by Rawlings' decentralization programme, especially as the Sierra Leoneans already had first-hand experience of popular disengagement from the state and the consequences of "losing grip over areas that are supposed to be your country". From the Kabbah government's point of view, reviving district and town councils as development agencies did not necessarily impinge on efforts to re-establish political control over the chieftaincy system (for which donor assistance was also sought). Decentralization could also be sold, in domestic politics, as the restoration of a vital component of the governmental system the SLLP had presided over in the relatively prosperous 1960s; a component that had subsequently been lost in the disastrous centralization drive of Siaka Stevens' APC.

On the other hand, donors tended to view decentralization as providing Sierra Leone with the efficient, transparent and democratic system of local government it had long needed. Chieftaincy had no place in that vision. Indeed, an analysis shared by many donor agencies when decentralization began was that chiefdom governance was undergoing a terminal crisis of popular legitimacy and that the rollout of the programme would only serve to hasten its demise (Fanthorpe, 2006). In the short term, the priority was to ensure that chiefs were not given an opportunity to "capture" the decentralization programme and use it to re-assert their power (Jackson, 2007). The IRCBP's separation, both physically and operationally, from the Ministry of Local Government acquired an extra political salience here since it provided space for technical rationalities of decentralization to prevail over all other arguments. For example, a governance advisor to multilateral donor agency told the Drivers of Change team in 2005 (Brown et al, 2006) that the possibility of restoring budgetary authority to Chiefdom Councils (the chiefdom governing bodies recognized in law) had been mooted by national policy makers during the decentralization planning process.[12] The governance advisor went on to report that donor technicians had strongly opposed the proposal on the grounds that adding 149 budgetary authorities to the 19 already planned would make effective financial monitoring of the decentralization programme impossible. Decentralization, the governance advisor pointed out, "establishes a locus of political authority and responsibility in an elected democratic manner" and concluded that this principle automatically excludes traditional authority. "The chiefdoms might have traditional responsibilities in maintaining law and order", the governance advisor went on, "but they have no mandate for service delivery."

Accordingly, the LGA attempted to provide local councils sufficient authority to carry out development and service delivery functions but left the Chiefdom Councils in place to carry out their original functions. The Act establishes elected local councils as the highest political authorities in their localities and echoes the District Councils Ordinance of 1950 in stating that they are responsible for "promoting the development of the locality and the welfare of the people of the locality with such resources and capacity as it can mobilize from the central

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[12] This authority was removed by the Chiefdom Treasuries (Amendment) Act of 1975, which required all revenues collected by the chiefdoms to be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund. As a result of this legislation, Chiefdom Councils were obliged to apply for operating funds at the office of the Central Chiefdom Finance Clerk (a central government employee) at district headquarters.

government and its agencies, national and international organizations, and the private sector." The LGA also authorizes local councils to determine rates of local tax, claim a precept on revenues collected by chiefdom authorities, approve the annual budgets of Chiefdom Councils (the chiefdom authority recognized in law), oversee the implement of these budgets and pass bye-laws (including bye-laws altering or modifying customs and traditions "impeding development in a locality"). The Act grants paramount chiefs *ex officio* seats on urban councils that are located within the boundaries of their chiefdoms. However, chiefs' *ex officio* seats on District Councils are restricted to three in more populous districts (Bo, Kenema, Kailahun, Kono and Moyamba) and two in all the others. This arrangement differs from the pre-1972 situation in which all Paramount Chiefs in a district sat in council (Tangri, 1978a).

The LGA also establishes a new grassroots forum, the Ward Development Committee (WDC). Chaired by an elected councillor, the WDC comprises of no more than ten ward residents (at least half of whom are required to be women) elected at a public meeting, plus the local Paramount Chief. The main functions of WDCs, as set out by the LGA, are to "mobilize residents of the ward for the implementation of self-help and development projects", "provide a focal point for the discussion of local problems and needs", and "organize communal and voluntary work". The Act further states that Chiefdom Councils should continue to perform the functions set out in the Chiefdom Councils Act (Cap 61 of the Laws of Sierra Leone, 1960). It summarizes these functions as: a) preventing the commission of offences; b) making and enforcing bye laws; c) prohibiting illegal gambling; d) holding land in trust for the chiefdom people.

Competing Spheres of Local Authority
By endorsing the historic division of functions between chiefdoms and local councils, the LGA created a context for political competition between them. Studies of the original local councils emphasised that many elected councillors and council staff were relatives of chiefs and that chiefdom factions competed to divert council resources to their own localities (Kilson, 1966; Tangri, 1978a). However, the current generation of local councillors is far less inclined to defer to chiefs' interests.

For example, a common complaint from elected councillors and council staff in the early years of the decentralization programme was that chiefdom authorities were purposefully failing to account for much of the revenue they were collecting so as to minimize the revenue precept. A district council chairman in the Northern Province claimed in an interview in 2008 that he had petitioned the new President to transfer the management of the Chiefdom Police to the local councils so they could be used as a tax enforcement agency, although nothing had come of it. Two urban council chairmen complained on separate occasions that their efforts to develop planning capacity were being undermined constantly by unregulated land sales brokered by chiefs.

For their part, paramount chiefs often complained that elected councillors were claiming for themselves the status of "highest political authority" in their localities and using that as a pretext to interfere in the governance of their chiefdoms (Manning, 2008; Robinson, 2010). Another complaint was that elected councillors were trying to exclude paramount chief members from voting in council on the grounds that the LGA only authorizes "councillors", to vote. A further complaint from a Paramount chief in Bo District was that local councils were claiming their revenue precept every year but failing to deliver any projects to his chiefdom. A Paramount Chief interviewed in Makeni in 2005 observed that he held two

trump cards over local councils: first, he was the custodian of the land in his chiefdom and so no council project could be initiated there without his authorization; second, local councillors faced election every four years while he held office for life.

Parallel rivalries have also emerged among central agencies responsible for management and oversight of local government. The IRCPB recruited most of its national staff from a younger generation of professionals with previous experience in post-war reconstruction, whether the NGO sector or donor-funded governance reform units. Highly qualified Sierra Leonean professionals have also been recruited by the Ministry of Finance in recent years. The above-noted World Bank retrospective argues that it was the "synergies" between national and international project staff, and between IRCBP management units (all of which were originally located in the same office buildings) and the Ministry of Finance, which propelled the decentralization programme forward in its early years (Zhou, 2009).

However, the mainstream civil service has never been part of this change management culture. Devolution of functions has been painfully slow. The Director of DecSec observed at a public conference marking the closure of the IRCBP in June 2011 that a little over thirty of the 80 functions originally scheduled for devolution in 2004 had yet to be devolved from their parent ministries. The civil servants in the Ministry of Local Government have also been extremely protective of the old chains of authority leading down to the chiefs. While the colonially-inherited post of District Officer (formerly, District Commissioner) was discontinued when the decentralization programme began in 2004, many of the responsibilities functions attached to this post were transferred upwards to the Provincial Secretaries. According to a Ministerial directive obtained by the Drivers of Change team in 2005, the post-decentralization duties of Provincial Secretaries include:

- Administrative head of Province with oversight responsibility for the functions of government ministries/departments that are not devolved under the LGA.
- Provide secretariat services for the Provincial Coordinating Committee (PCC).
- Liaise with other members of the PCC to ensure that: a) activities of local councils in the province are coordinated and b) local councils collaborate for the effective execution of development programmes in which the councils are jointly interested.
- Supervise and coordinate chiefdom activities relating to the maintenance of law and order.
- Preside over the election of paramount chiefs, section chiefs and town chiefs and all processes leading thereto.
- Adjudicate land and boundary disputes in the Province, especially chiefdom bush disputes and district boundary disputes.

These provisions, particularly the last three, are testament to the fact that the local councils were never actually allowed to operate as the highest political authorities in their localities, whatever the LGA might state. The Provinces Act (Cap 60 of the Laws of Sierra Leone, 1960, amended in 1965) is the main repository of central government's powers over chieftaincy affairs. This Act, originally drafted in 1933, identifies numerous fields of local governance (e.g. tax collection, the conduct of chiefs and land disputes) in which District Officers may issue direct orders, initiate inquiries and perform binding arbitrations. Even today, no chief of any rank is secure in their appointment until their name appears in the government gazette. It has always been the central executive, not the judiciary, which serves as the final arbiter in disputes over the revision of Chiefdom Council lists and the eligibility

of aspirants in paramount chieftaincy elections.[13] Indeed, Provincial Secretaries monitor chieftaincy elections on the government's behalf while actively engaged in the electoral process as presiding officers. Furthermore, it has always been central government that decides whether allegations of misconduct against a paramount chief warrant the setting up of a commission of inquiry. No formal mechanism exists to hold a government to account for deciding *not* to hold such an inquiry.

The central executive's continuing grip on chieftaincy affairs also lies at the root of current disputes between chiefs and local councils over revenue. In 2003, annual statements of chiefdom revenue and expenditure were still being produced in the CCFCs' offices in district headquarters and forwarded via the Provincial Secretaries to the Ministry of Local Government. An examination of these statements found that they were devoid of any meaningful content. On every statement, the heading for actual revenue/expenditure had been amended with correcting fluid and a ball point pen to read "actual estimate" (Fanthorpe, 2004b). Production of these budget statements ceased when chiefdom bank accounts were restored under the decentralization programme. Withdrawals were now authorized by the Paramount Chief, Treasury Clerk and local council Chief Administrator, with the CCFC's role confined to training and supervising Treasury Clerks and compiling revenue statistics.

Research commissioned by Concern Worldwide in Tonkolili District in 2009 found that while Treasury Clerks were carrying out bank reconciliations, no budget statements were being produced. Tonkolili District Council staff claimed never to have seen any chiefdom budget statements, which rendered the oversight powers over chiefdom finances granted to then under the LGA inoperable. The local CCFC (now under local council direction, but still a central government employee) denied all knowledge of these statements. There was considerable disquiet among chiefdom employees in the district at the time (especially Local Court staff and Chiefdom Police) over the lengthening arrears in their salary payments. Even some Paramount Chiefs claimed not to know how the 60 per cent of local tax revenues and 80 per cent of other revenues (e.g. market dues, shop licenses and ground rent on property leases) retained by the chiefdoms (after the local council had claimed its precept) was being spent (Fanthorpe, 2009). Subsequent inquiries in DecSec revealed that no budget statements were being produced for any chiefdoms and that the Ministry of Local Government was still exercising close control over chiefdom finances.

A Provincial Secretary interviewed in January 2009 confirmed this last point. He claimed that since the chiefdoms did not collect enough money to maintain an administration, the money is often used as an expense fund for central government "VIPs" on trips to the provinces. The Ministry of Local Government had recently issued a directive stating that no local council precept should be collected for 2008. The explanation given was that resources needed to be found to pay the salary arrears of paramount chiefs and chiefdom staff. A subsequent directive reduced the precept from 40 per cent of local tax to between 15 and 5 per cent, depending on the size of the chiefdom. Some commentators have argued that these directives are illegal (e.g. Robinson, 2010). However, the Local Tax Act of 1975, yet another piece of legislation neither revised nor repealed by the LGA, specifically empowers the Minister responsible for local government to issue directives in respect of local tax.

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[13] Historically, the Sierra Leonean judiciary has been notoriously reluctant to return judgements in cases involving chieftaincy and customary law, even when it has had the authority to do so.

Data obtained from the CCFC in Magburaka showed that the gross amount of local tax collected in Tonkolili District in 2008 was 315.2 million Leones, up from 146.2 million in 2006 and 96.6 million in 2007. Even with the highest figure, the average amount of tax (not counting revenues from market dues and store licences) raised in each of the eleven chiefdoms of the district that year was the equivalent of 6,500 US Dollars. A 40 per cent precept would have yielded the local council the equivalent of 28,600 US Dollars, which is small in comparison to the average grant transfer to each local council of 680,000 US Dollars in the same year. Yet the Ministry's intervention, and the overall lack of transparency in chiefdom financial administration, undermines the development of any social contract between decentralized service provides and local taxpayers (Robinson, 2010). Developing such a contract is of course fundamental to decentralization as a peacebuilding strategy.

Similar problems have emerged in respect of the chiefdom's residual administrative and service functions. Much of the existing legislation on chiefdom governance (including Cap 61) was originally drafted in the colonial era with the aim of grafting local government functions onto customary authority (Fenton, 1935; Kilson, 1966). This legislation granted Chiefdom Councils (then known as Tribal Authorities) the power to raise their own taxes, draw up administrative budgets and hire salaried staff. In addition to their law and order functions, chiefdom authorities also acquired statutory powers to issue orders to their people to prevent water pollution and the spread of infectious diseases, to ensure that the sick and mentally infirm were cared for and to regulate tree cutting, livestock management and farm burning. They were further empowered to make bye-laws pertaining to: a) the setting aside of land in a chiefdom for development purposes, b) the management of public services and the levying of fees for these services; c) the construction of new buildings; e) street trading; f) the establishment, regulation and management of markets, slaughter houses, wash houses and cemeteries. By 1950, Chiefdom Councils were supporting (with considerable assistance from central government) primary education, school scholarship schemes, agricultural extension, primary health and feeder road construction. Their staff at this time included clerks, messengers (forerunners of the Chiefdom Police) agricultural overseers, forest wardens, sanitary inspectors, dispensers, midwives and labourers (Davidson, 1953).

Parallel efforts were made to ensure that chiefdom governing bodies were representative of the chiefdom people. The original statutory definition of a chiefdom authority was the "Paramount Chief, the Chiefs, the councillors and men of note elected by the people according to native law and custom, approved by the Governor and appointed a Tribal Authority under the Ordinance for the area concerned" (Tribal Authorities Ordinance, No. 8 of 1937). Attempts were soon made to expand these bodies to include elected representatives of taxpayers. The 1:20 ratio of councillors to taxpayers was fixed by government decree in 1956 (Kilson, 1966). Most Chiefdom Councils subsequently became too large to function effectively as deliberative forums, prompting statutory recognition of a Chiefdom Committee to serve as the executive arm of the Chiefdom Council. The Tribal Authorities (Amendment) Act of 1964 states that the Chiefdom Committee should comprise of the Paramount Chief (Chairman), senior Speaker (Vice-Chairman), the second Speaker (if any), Treasury Clerk (Secretary) two members from each electoral ward in the chiefdom elected by the chiefdom councillors, and a literate councillor nominated by the local government Minister. Many Chiefdom Committees went on to appoint youth leaders and Women's leaders (Mammy Queens), although these last two positions have never been recognized in law.

The primary functions of the Chiefdom Committee, according to the 1964 Act, are: a) to prepare chiefdom budgets and inspect chiefdom accounts on a regular basis; b) negotiate

contracts with external agencies; c) ensure the proper collection of local revenues; d) approve the appointment of chiefdom employees; e) draft bye-laws for consideration by the Chiefdom Council; f) advise the Chiefdom Council generally on local affairs and perform any other duties delegated to it by the Chiefdom Council.

The chiefdoms were never very effective in the service delivery role, not least because most of their revenues were absorbed by paramount chiefs' salaries (Kilson, 1966). In 1954, many of the chiefdoms' service responsibilities were taken over by the district councils (Zwanikken, et al, 1994) and were not returned when the latter were de-activated in 1972. In any case, a study carried out in Kenema District the late 1960s found that Chiefdom Committees were rarely meeting more than once a year (Barrows, 1971). By the 1970s, section chiefs had taken the place of ward representatives on most Chiefdom Committees and the Chiefdom Council had devolved into an electoral college for paramount chieftaincy elections. Its non-chief members were usually appointed from above rather than elected by taxpayers (Fanthorpe and Sesay, 2009). The decline of government-led economic investment in the provinces during this period, and the assertion of central control over chiefdom financial administration (see note 1 above), only served to hasten the de-formalization of chiefdom governance.

Today, most lower-ranking chiefs remain socially embedded, presiding over the day-to-day affairs of their villages and neighbourhoods. Meanwhile, paramount chiefs have arrogated to themselves the executive and administrative powers that, by law, are invested in the Chiefdom Council and Committee. The resulting lack of accountability in chiefdom governance lies at the root of the numerous grievances that continue to be voiced in NGO-led forums: e.g. exorbitant fines handed down in the local courts and chiefs' informal courts, the tendency of paramount chiefs to broker deals with mining, logging and agri-business enterprises without properly consulting local landowners or securing adequate community compensation and the tendency of chiefs and chiefdom staff to demand ad hoc fees for services in addition to collecting formal taxes for these services (Fanthorpe, 2004b; Fanthorpe and Sesay, 2009; MCSL, 2009). Early predictions of the demise of chieftaincy in Sierra Leone have proven to be premature, but the case for institutional reform at this level is stronger than ever.

Clearly, the LGA should have gone much further to ensure that obsolete legislation was repealed and that local councils had genuine authority to carry out their mandates. None of the chiefdoms' residual functions in respect of revenue collection, service management, planning, contracting and environmental regulation can reasonably be described as "traditional". Accordingly, there is no reason in principle why all such functions could not be transferred to the local councils. Sierra Leone could have taken a lead here from other African countries and removed all executive powers from chiefs. Sierra Leone could have taken a lead from other African countries and removed all executive powers from chiefs. For example, Section 246(f) of the Constitution of Uganda (1995) states explicitly that: "a traditional leader or cultural leader shall not have or exercise any administrative, legislative or executive powers of government or local government." In Ghana also, successive governments have taken measures to ensure that chieftaincy operates within the confines of to civil society, however influential chiefs may remain in national politics (Boafo-Arthur, 2001; Crook, 2005). However, Sierra Leone has instead conserved two competing spheres of local authority, each holding resources and capacities the other needs to govern effectively.

Institutional Choice in Local Government
There has been talk in GoSL circles for several years about the need to revise and expand the LGA, but the main constraints on the development of an effective local government system in Sierra Leone are political rather than technical. Chieftaincy has long been noted in the literature as the national elite's instrument of choice for maintaining political control over the countryside and for mobilizing the rural vote at election time (e.g. Kilson, 1966; Barrows, 1976; Reno 1995; Robinson, 2010). This strategy reflects the state topography Sierra Leone inherited at Independence. Freetown was already a thriving port city with 30,000 inhabitants, its own municipal council and an extensive trading hinterland when the Protectorate was created in 1896 (Banton, 1957). Economic investment in the Protectorate never approached the levels the colonial authorities had originally been hoping for. At Independence, Freetown was firmly established as a primate city while the main economic activity in the former Protectorate (i.e. the provinces) remained smallholder farming. Little has changed since then. According to the 2004 census, 15½ per cent of Sierra Leone's population and more than 80 per cent of its public sector workers are located in Freetown.

This topography has always encouraged political identification with provincial localities, especially chiefdoms, and a popular view of the state as a resource to be harnessed in the interest of these localities. Competition between local groups to access state resources, including scarce educational and work opportunities, created a demand for patrons: an elite with sufficient education and professional training to operate successfully in government, yet remaining loyal to its communities of origin. Chiefs were early investors in the colonial education system and the founder members of the SLPP, Sierra Leone's first party of government, were all members of chiefly families. The extension of universal suffrage into the provinces in the 1950s gave them a decisive electoral advantage over the Krio elite of the old Colony. For them, descent from "natural" African rulers was emblematic of their right to rule an independent Sierra Leone (Kilson, 1966; Cartwright 1970). Having won power as a social elite, early SLPP leaders had little interest in building bureaucratic capacity in the countryside. By their calculation, such developments would merely create platforms for challengers to their local pre-eminence (Cartwright, 1970). Even the socialist-leaning APC, which drew its early support from petty traders, commercial employees and lower paid government workers, found it politically expedient to cultivate alliances with chiefdom ruling houses.

The trading of promises of government patronage for (actual or prospective) subjects' votes ensured the thorough imbrication of chieftaincy politics and party politics. This process led many commentators to argue that Sierra Leone underwent a remarkably seamless transition from colonial "indirect rule" to the indirect participation of the rural masses in modern democracy (Kilson, 1966; Cartwright, 1970; Minikin, 1973; Barrows, 1976; Clapham, 1976; Tangri 1978b). However, the rural masses were not always passive pawns in these political games. For example, it was not unknown for MPs of the early 1960s to lose their seats if they failed, during election campaigns, to visit off-road villages in their constituencies and engage in traditional "shake hands" (i.e. gift giving) with local headmen (Cartwright, 1970). In the following decade, the Siaka Stevens regime's tendency to confer paramount chieftaincies on party loyalists regardless of their "ruling house" credentials often generated prolonged local protest and campaigns of civil disobedience (Reno, 1995; Fanthorpe, 2006).

The political impact of these protests was nevertheless limited by their localization. Furthermore, both of the leading parties, when in power, took full advantage of the authoritarian possibilities in the colonially-inherited apparatus for regulating chieftaincy and

customary law (especially the Provinces Act, Cap 60). The one-party regime built by Siaka Stevens acquired particular notoriety for abusing these powers (GoSL, 1999; Fanthorpe, 2004a) and as Sierra Leone descended towards civil war, the conservation of unreformed chieftaincy structures looked more and more like a cynical strategy to insulate a corrupt government from popular accountability.

These time-worn political strategies are making a comeback now that the threat and fear of war has receded. Even at the height of its enthusiasm for decentralization, the Kabbah government also prioritized the restoration of the chieftaincy system. More than sixty paramount chieftaincy elections were held within a year of the formal declaration of peace. Elite "sons of the soil" (e.g. MPs, senior civil servants, business leader and members of national party executives) were in attendance at many of these elections, often openly declaring their support for particular aspirants. Wrangling over government officials' revisions of Chiefdom Council lists, and decision-making in respect of rotational crowning agreements and aspirants' eligibilities, was commonplace during these elections (Fanthorpe and Sesay, 2009).

Attempts to re-establish centre-local networks were also apparent in the inaugural local government elections of 2004. The prospect of managing substantial donor funds generated intense competition for party nominations, often pitching locally resident elites against their Freetown-based counterparts. The latter group tended to prevail in these struggles, but many of the former stood as independents. Evidence of ballot stuffing during these elections was widespread even in party strongholds (Brown, et al, 2006). The 2004 local government elections marked the revival in the electoral fortunes of the APC, which won many seats in Freetown and in its old strongholds in the north. The Kabbah government now faced a genuine contender for power. Reports began to reach international agencies ahead of the 2007 national elections that the government was using chiefs to harass APC candidates and activists in rural areas (Wyrod, 2008; Fanthorpe and Sesay, 2009). The party political contest has remained intense since the APC victory in 2007. Ernest Bai Koroma's official margin of victory in the Presidential election runoff was nine per cent, which was small enough to encourage both of the leading parties to campaign for victory in 2012.

Concern is now growing among donors that the government is reviving the old strategy of recruiting chiefs as vote banks and party political enforcers and reining back its commitment to decentralization (Robinson, 2010; Srivastava and Larizza, 2011). It is certainly possible that Sierra Leone's governing elite has become confident that informal networks linking Freetown to the provinces are back in place after the upheavals of war and that the urgency to re-establish the state's territorial sovereignty through decentralization has correspondingly diminished. The fact that the opposition SLPP is in firm control over local councils in its historical strongholds in the south may also have encouraged the revival of the old strategy of ruling the countryside through chiefs.

A Provincial Secretary interviewed in 2009 was in no doubt that is strategy had returned. In his view, central governments will always support chiefs, even at the expense of the councils, "because a chief can deliver 40,000 votes." The Koroma government's announcement in June 2010 that it was going to revive the post of District Officer also tends to support this analysis. A document setting out the rationale for reinstating District Officers was circulated at an intra-governmental seminar soon after the formal announcement. The document claims that the Provinces Act (Cap 60) represents a "comprehensive guide for the administration of the provinces" and that "the authoritative stature that District Commissioners and District

Officers once projected in the colonial days and the immediate post-independence era has been considerably weakened over the years, perhaps much to the detriment of effective administration of the provinces". District Officers, the document continues, will take back their duties from "overstretched" Provincial Secretaries, including security coordination and intelligence gathering. The document makes its authoritarian intent explicit when stating that "Paramount Chiefs should at all times regard the District Officers the Chief Administrators of the Districts" and that "all matters pertaining to the administration of the chiefdoms should be channelled through District Officers and on no account should Paramount Chiefs bye-pass District Officers." Local councils are hardly mentioned at all in this document, nor indeed the authority granted to them by the LGA in respect of financial oversight and planning.

In discussions with civil society groups, government spokespersons have also stated that reviving the post of District Officer will enhance central government's presence in all areas of the country. Partisan council elections, one spokesperson claimed, have politicised the development process. In districts where opposition parties control local councils, there is effectively no 'government machinery' and these councils tend to reward their own party political supporters and exclude supporters of the governing party. District Officers, the spokesperson concluded, will fill this "governance gap"; they will be above party politics and therefore inspire public trust (CGG and PICOT, 2011).

The National Decentralization Policy (NDP), published in September 2010, lends further support to this analysis; The NDP states that local councils shall be the "highest development and service delivery authorities" in their localities, not the highest political authority.

The draft Chiefdom and Tribal Administration Policy (CTAP) takes this conservative vision even further. The first draft of the CTAP (June 2011) states that "the chiefdom shall continue to serve as the basic unit of administration and an integral part of the governance of the state of Sierra Leone". Chieftaincy, the draft policy continues, is "deeply rooted in the culture of the people". Since many Sierra Leoneans live in the countryside and rely heavily on chiefs for guidance and leadership, "mutual trust between chiefs and their people is essential for social cohesion". The draft policy goes on to claim that if chiefdom institutions are "properly restated in law" and their capacity strengthened, they will serve as a "fulcrum for an open, transparent and inclusive process that will lay a sound foundation for social harmony".

Specific objectives of the CTAP include the rehabilitation of the Chiefdom Committee as a deliberative body representing of all sectors of the community, re-establishment of proper financial accounting in the chiefdoms (chiefdom accounts are to be audited under the authority of the Auditor General and displayed publicly in the chiefdoms) and the building of a "collaborative relationship" between chiefdoms and local councils "to maximise own source revenue generation for developmental programmes". The draft policy also states that Paramount chiefs will now chair WDCs with local councillors serving as secretaries, reporting back and forth between the WDC and the local council. The draft policy allows chiefdoms to initiate development programmes if they have sufficient resources but they are expected to consult with the local council to ensure "synergy". Rates of local tax and revenue sharing arrangements shall be decided by the Minister of Local Government in consultation with all stakeholders. The payment of salaries to senior chiefs and chiefdom staff shall also be the responsibility of central government.

The CTAP may yet undergo further revision, but in its present form it likely exacerbate, rather than resolve, the existing flaws and contradictions in Sierra Leone's local government

system. The rehabilitation of chiefdom administration is only likely to intensify competition between the two spheres of local governance rather than promote collaboration. In particular, the work of a re-formalized Chiefdom Committee is bound to overlap with the work of the WDCs and there is no mention in the draft policy that any development work undertaken by the chiefdoms should comply with district development plans. Making paramount chiefs chairs of both bodies also places an excessive among of decision-making power in the hands of individuals whom the public can never vote out of office even if their fail to perform their duties. The added danger here is that in their new role as "secretaries" of WDCs chaired by paramount chiefs, local councillors will be seen, publicly, as chiefs' representatives in council. Furthermore, the draft CTAP makes clear that local tax is to be collected on the authority of central government and that the central executive will have the final say on the distribution resources to the local councils and the chiefdoms. Once again, fundamental principles of democratic decentralization are being compromised.

It may be no accident that the conservative turn in local government policy has appeared just as the leading parties prepare to contest the 2012 national elections. Sierra Leone's powerful executive presidency, a surviving legacy of the Siaka Stevens era, has always encouraged "winner takes all" strategies in national politics (ICG, 2008). However, reviving the instrumentalities of colonial "indirect rule" in the provinces is a risky strategy given that the old system of authoritarian politics was, according to most analyses, responsible for Sierra Leone's descent into civil war.

Such a strategy is also likely to alienate international donors, especially as donor support to decentralization has been on the increase in recent years. Early on, the main grant to local councils was based on the pre-decentralization budget for devolved functions and was thus fairly austere. In 2007, donor-supported projects funded through line ministries and other central agencies accounted for 75 per cent of the Sierra Leone government's non-salary agriculture budget, 51 per cent of its health budget, and 19 per cent of its education budget (excluding indirect payments). Local councils' share of these key sector budgets in 2007 was four, eleven, and five per cent respectively (Whiteside Casey, 2009). The grant is now has a stronger basis in needs assessment and the total transfer for devolved functions has accordingly increased from the equivalent of 13 million US Dollars in 2008 to just under 20 million US Dollars in 2011.[14] Further targeted support for decentralization arrived in 2009 in the form of the World Bank's Decentralized Service Delivery Project (DSDP) An initial tranche of 16 million US Dollars was disbursed directly to the local councils to supplement the grant for devolved functions, in the health, education, waste management and water management sectors (World Bank, 2009). However, donors will be deterred from supporting decentralization over the long term if the effectiveness of local councils is being consistently undermined by competition from non-democratic political agencies. There is no longer the same room for compromise in local government policy as there was at the end of the war when the LGA was drafted.

It is possible that the backward-looking trend in recent GoSL policy on local government is a reaction to the success of the decentralization programme, i.e. that it is a rearguard action by conservative elements in government (especially the mainstream civil service) who have yet to come to terms with the fact that the "genie" of local democracy is out of the bottle (Srivastava and Larizza, 2011). But it is also possible that current GoSL policy on local government is being driven by insecurity rather than revived authoritarianism. Sierra Leone's

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[14] Figures obtained from the LGFD

governing classes know full well that the country does not currently generate sufficient resources to satisfy mass demand for wage employment and services. The government may therefore trying ensure a) that chiefs are able to manage social expectations, and influence voting behaviour, among the rural poor and b) that local councils, with donor support, can offer services and democratic accountability to the better educated and better off. The danger remains that national policy makers are misreading social and political currents in the countryside and that a commitment to democratic governance and participatory development for all Sierra Leoneans is now the only political project likely to secure peace and prosperity in the long term; hence the commissioning of the current study.

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Annex 2 Persons Interviewed and Focus Groups

Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
Dauda Kamara, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development
Ibrahim Kaloko, Deputy Minister
Alison Sutherland (Commonwealth Technical Advisor on Governance)

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
Alpha Sesay
Adams Kargbo (LGFD)
Mohamed Sankoh (LGFD)

Decentralization Secretariat
Alhassan Kanu, Director
Floyd Davis, Legal and Governance Manager
Jonathan Kpakiwa, Capacity Building Manager
S.A.T Rogers, M&E Specialist
Sullay Sesay, GoBifo Project

Local Councils
Wusu Sankoh, Mayor, Bo City Council
William Alpha, Chief Administrator, Bo City Council
Daniel Saa Momoh, Chief Administrator, Bo District Council
Finda Diana Konomani, Chair, Kono District Council
Sahr Sessie-Gbenda, Mayor, Koidu-New Sembehun Council
Sahr Emmanuel Yambas, Deputy Chief Admistrator, Koidu-New Sembehun Council
Deputy Chief Adminitrator, Makeni City Council
Mbalu Kamara, Resident Technical Facilitator, Makeni City Council
Isatu Fornah, Deputy Mayor, Makeni City Council
Eric Dura Sesay, Chairman, Bombali District Council
Amadu Bonda, Deputy Chairman, Bombali District Council
Alassan Cole, Chairman, WARD
Abioseh Mansaray Development Planning Officer, WARD
John Conteh Resident Technical Facilitator, WARD

Devolved Ministries
District Medical Officer, Bo
School Supervisors, Bo
School Supervisors, Koidu
T. Komba, Deputy Director of Education, Kono
District Director of Agriculture, Kono

Chiefs
Chief A.M. Kamanda, Speaker, Gbense Chiefdom

World Bank
Brendan Glynn

United Nations Development Programme
Keith Wright

Public Sector Reform Unit
Julius Sandy (Director)

Justice Sector Coordination Office
Olayinka Creighton-Randall

Sierra Leone Parliament
Jobson Momoh (Deputy Chair, Committee on Local Government)

Politicians
Julius Maada Bio (SLPP Presidential Nominee)
Charles Margai, PMDC
Birch Conteh, APC
Sanie Sesay, APC

NGOs
Frances Fortune, Search for Common Ground
Marie-Luise Schueller, Christian Aid
Paul L. Koroma, Network Movement for Justice and Development, Bo

Others
Emmanuel Gaima (former director, DecSec)

Focus Groups
Open Yu Yai (artisanal miners and trader's union), Bo
Belgium Boys (mobile phone traders), Bo
Local councillors, Bo
CSO representatives and paramount chief councillor, Bo
Youths, Gerihun, Bo District
Farmers, Wunde, Bo District
Market women, Kakua Bo District
ABO repesentatives, Bumpe, Bo District
Youths, Koidu
Youths, Jaima Sawafe, Kono District
Women's group, Jaima Nimikoro, Kono District
Local councillors, Makeni
Female youths, Mayongbo, Bombali District
Teachers and farmers, Mayongbo, Bombali District
Farmers, Kayifin, Bombali District
Market women, Makeni
Youths, Makeni
Market gardeners, Ogu Farm, WARD
Fishermen, Tombo, WARD

Annex 3 Survey Methodology and Tabulated Results
Survey Methodology
A total of 608 questionnaires were completed, divided equally among the four districts. District council wards were used as initial sampling points. Every third ward running from the district headquarters along north, south, east and west axes towards the boundaries of the district was sampled. The number of sampling points within each was weighted in to reflect the population of each ward, estimated from the 2004 census (ward boundaries were revised in 2008). Within each ward, fieldworkers were instructed to alternate interviews between urban-type locations (or chiefdom headquarters towns), peri-urban (or roadside) locations and off-road villages until their interview quota was used up. Interviewees in these locations were selected randomly by selecting a readily identifiable landmark (e.g. a crossroads, market enclosure, or school) and choosing the third compound to the left of it.

The fieldworkers worked in pairs, a least one (usually both) fluent the local languages spoken in the district in which they were working. Before going to the field, the fieldworkers attended training sessions in which the overall objectives of the research and the purpose of specific questions were discussed. A pilot survey was carried out in WARD and neighbouring districts to enable the fieldworkers to get a feel for the research and to test responses to the questionnaire. There was much discussion among the fieldworkers after the pilot survey on the best way of translating the survey questions into local idioms and this process greatly assisted the effectiveness of the survey in remote wards.

Tabulated Survey Results

1. Characteristics of Respondents

1.1 Sex of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
male	389	64.0
female	219	36.0
Total	608	100.0

1.2 Age of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
35 years or less	263	43.3
Over 35 years	345	56.7
Total	608	100.0

1.3 Main Occupation of Respondents by District

Occupation	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Business[1]	20.9	34.0	22.3	58.9	34.1
Farmer	24.2	40.0	34.5	19.2	29.4
Teacher	21.6	18.0	7.4	11.3	14.8
Artisanal Miner	8.5	0.7	20.3	0.7	7.5
Government Employee	12.4	2.6	7.4	2.6	6.3
NGO Worker	5.9	2.7	5.4	2.0	4.0
Other Artisan[2]	6.5	2.0	0.7	0.0	2.3
Fishing	0.0	0.0	2.0	5.3	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Includes wholesale and retail trading, commercial transport, construction and employment in the formal private sector.
[2] Skilled and semi-skilled self-employed workers, including tailors, carpenters, roofers, plasterers, soap makers and cloth dyers.

1.4 Main Occupation of Respondents by Age Group

Occupation	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	Over 35 years	
Business	48.3	23.3	34.1
Farmer	20.7	36.1	29.4
Teacher	13.1	15.8	14.8
Artisanal Miner	5.4	9.1	7.5
Government Employee	3.4	8.5	6.3
NGO Worker	6.1	2.3	4.0
Other Artisan	1.9	2.6	2.3
Fishing	1.1	2.3	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

1.5 Main Occupation of Respondents by Sex

Occupation	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		All Respondents
	Female	Male	
Business	38.8	30.8	34.1
Farmer	34.2	27.7	29.4
Teacher	11.9	15.9	14.8
Artisanal Miner	3.2	9.9	7.5
Government Employee	4.6	7.1	6.3
NGO Worker	3.6	4.1	4.0
Other Artisan	2.3	2.4	2.3
Fishing	1.4	2.1	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

1.6 Educational Attainment of Respondents by District

Highest Level of Education Attained	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
None	14.4	39.5	47.7	26.5	31.9
Primary	15.7	17.1	20.1	20.5	18.3
Secondary	32.7	25.0	20.1	20.5	28.6
Vocational	3.9	2.0	0.7	1.3	2.0
Tertiary	33.3	16.4	11.4	15.2	19.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

1.7 Educational Attainment of Respondents by Age Group

Highest Level of Education Attained	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	**Over 35 years**	
None	23.9	38.0	31.9
Primary	20.5	16.7	18.3
Secondary	36.5	22.5	28.6
Vocational	2.7	1.5	2.0
Tertiary	16.3	21.3	19.2
Total	100.00	100.00	100.0

1.8 Educational Attainment of Respondents by Sex

Highest Level of Education Attained	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		All Respondents
	Female	**Male**	
None	36.1	30.1	31.9
Primary	22.8	15.7	18.3
Secondary	24.2	30.8	28.6
Vocational	1.8	2.2	2.0
Tertiary	15.1	21.3	19.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

2. Development and Service Providers Compared
2.1. Accrediting Development and Service Provision

2.1.1 Accrediting Development and Service Provision, by District

Which political authority has brought the most development to your community?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Traditional Authorities*	7.2	14.9	34.7	5.3	15.5
Local Council	55.6	50.6	26.0	25.8	39.6
Members of Parliament	3.9	6.5	6.7	23.8	10.2
Central Government	33.3	27.9	32.7	45.0	34.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Includes chiefdom authorities in the provinces and tribal and village headmen in the Western Area

2.1.2 Accrediting Development and Service Provision, by Age Group

Which political authority has brought the most development to your community?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	Over 35 years	
Traditional Authorities	14.4	16.2	15.5
Local Council	35.0	43.2	39.6
Members of Parliament	11.8	9.0	10.2
Central Government	38.8	31.6	34.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

2.1.3 Accrediting Development and Service Provision, by Sex

Which political authority has brought the most development to your community?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		All Respondents
	Females	Males	
Traditional Authorities	16.9	14.6	15.5
Local Council	44.3	37.0	39.6
Members of Parliament	8.7	11.0	10.2
Central Government	30.1	37.3	34.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

2.1.4 Preference for Development and Service Providers, by District

Which political authority would you ask first for development and services?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Paramount Chief	9.2	27.9	52.7	N/A	22.4
Tribal Headman (Western Area)	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.6	1.6
Section Chief	3.3	21.4	4.0	N/A	7.2
Village Headman (Western Area)	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.3	1.8
WDC Member	0.0	3.2	1.3	2.0	1.6
Local Councillor	64.1	18.8	8.7	35.1	31.7
Local Council Chairman	15.7	1.3	18.7	11.9	11.8
Member of Parliament	2.6	14.4	3.3	23.8	11.0
Resident Minister	3.3	0.7	0.0	N/A	1.0
Minister in Freetown	0.0	1.3	8.7	2.6	3.1
Other*	2.0	11.0	2.7	10.6	6.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Includes religious leaders, other chiefdom authorities (e.g. Speaker and Village Chief), business leaders and civil servants.

2.1.5 Preference for Development and Service Providers, by Age Group

Which political authority would you ask first for development and services?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	Over 35 years	
Traditional Authorities	35.7	31.1	33.0
WDC Member	2.3	1.2	1.7
Local Councillor	25.8	36.2	31.7
Local Council Chairman	8.7	14.2	11.8
Member of Parliament	13.7	8.9	11.0
Resident Minister	0.7	1.2	1.0
Minister in Freetown	5.7	1.1	3.1
Other	7.2	6.1	6.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

2.1.6 Preference for Development and Service Providers, by Sex

Which political authority would you ask first for development and services?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		All Respondents
	Females	Males	
Traditional Authorities	35.5	31.2	33.0
WDC Member	0.4	2.3	1.7
Local Councillor	26.5	34.7	31.7
Local Council Chairman	16.0	9.5	11.8
Member of Parliament	10.9	11.0	11.0
Resident Minister	1.4	0.7	1.0
Minister in Freetown	3.6	2.8	3.1
Other	4.5	7.7	6.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

2.1.7 Reasons for Preferring Development and Service Providers, by District

What are your reasons for your choice of political authority to ask first for development and services?	Response by District (Percent Agreeing)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Leader of the community?	44.7	63.9	62.8	85.3	**64.2**
Has power to get things done?	79.1	89.7	93.9	98.0	**90.3**
Specifically Responsible for Development?	66.2	78.1	87.2	77.6	**77.0**

2.2. Perceptions of NGOs

2.2.1 NGO Activity in Respondents' Localities, by District

Do you know of any projects and services NGOs have brought to your community	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	88.9	74.0	72.7	58.3	**73.0**
No	11.1	26.0	27.3	43.7	**27.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.2.2 Reported Knowledge of NGO Activity as a Function of Benefit

Have you benefited from any of the NGO projects you know about?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	respondents answering "yes" to question 2.1.1 only
Yes	97.2	99.2	87.7	76.8	**90.8**
No	2.1	0.8	12.3	23.2	**9.2**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.2.3 Satisfaction with NGOs by District

Do NGOs do a good job when implementing projects?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Always responds to local needs in an efficient manner	17.0	22.7	43.3	12.6	**23.8**
Often responds to local needs in an efficient manner	60.1	38.3	30.7	17.9	**36.8**
Sometimes responds to local needs in an efficient manner	18.3	22.7	8.7	24.5	**18.6**
Rarely responds to local needs in an efficient manner	2.6	5.2	10.7	10.6	**7.2**
Never responds to local needs in an efficient manner	2.0	11.0	6.7	34.4	**13.5**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.2.4 Trust in NGOs, by District

Do NGOs listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Always	4.6	16.9	51.3	9.3	20.4
Mostly	60.8	29.2	20.7	14.5	31.4
Sometimes	28.1	33.8	17.3	29.8	27.3
Rarely	4.6	9.1	6.0	8.6	7.1
Never	2.0	11.0	4.7	37.7	13.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

2.2.5 Trust in NGOs, by Age Group

Do NGOs listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		
	35 years or under	Over 35 years	All Respondents
Always	17.9	22.3	**20.4**
Mostly	31.5	31.3	**31.4**
Sometimes	27.4	27.2	**27.3**
Rarely	7.2	6.9	**7.1**
Never	16.0	12.2	**13.8**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.2.6 Trust in NGOs, by Sex

Do NGOs listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		
	Female	Male	All Respondents
Always	19.2	21.1	**20.4**
Mostly	34.2	28.8	**31.4**
Sometimes	23.3	29.6	**27.3**
Rarely	7.7	6.7	**7.1**
Never	15.5	12.8	**13.8**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.3. Perceptions of Central Government as a Development Agency

2.3.1 Central Government Activity in Respondents' Localities, by District

Do you know of any projects and services central government has brought to your community?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	51.6	61.7	65.3	63.6	**60.5**
No	48.4	38.3	34.7	36.4	**39.5**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.3.2. Reported Knowledge of Central Government Activity as a Function of Benefit, by District

Have you benefited from any of the central government projects you know about?	Frequency by District (Percent)				Respondents answering "yes" to question 2.2.1 only
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Yes	86.5	96.8	82.7	81.1	**86.7**
No	13.5	3.2	17.3	18.9	**13.3**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.3.3 Satisfaction with Central Government Agencies, by District

Do central government agencies do a good job when managing projects and services?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Always responds to local needs in an efficient manner	2.0	15.6	19.3	8.6	**11.3**
Often responds to local needs in an efficient manner	22.2	33.8	25.3	25.2	**26.6**
Sometimes responds to local needs in an efficient manner	41.8	27.3	26.7	35.1	**32.7**
Rarely responds to local needs in an efficient manner	24.8	13.6	17.3	11.9	**16.9**
Never responds to local needs in an efficient manner	9.2	9.7	6.7	19.2	**12.3**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.3.4 Trust in Central Government Agencies, by District

Do central government agencies listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Always	0.7	5.8	12.7	11.3	**7.6**
Mostly	28.8	17.5	31.3	10.6	**22.0**
Sometimes	39.9	45.5	23.3	39.7	**37.2**
Rarely	28.1	18.2	17.3	16.6	**20.1**
Never	2.6	13.0	15.3	21.9	**13.2**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.3.5 Trust in Central Government Agencies, by Age Group

Do central government agencies listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		
	35 years or under	Over 35 years	All Respondents
Always	8.7	6.7	**7.6**
Mostly	22.4	21.7	**22.0**
Sometimes	39.9	35.1	**37.2**
Rarely	14.8	24.1	**20.1**
Never	14.1	12.4	**13.2**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.3.6 Trust in Central Government Agencies, by Sex

Do central government agencies listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		
	Female	Male	All Respondents
Always	9.1	6.7	**7.6**
Mostly	19.6	23.4	**22.0**
Sometimes	43.4	33.7	**37.2**
Rarely	16.9	21.8	**20.1**
Never	10.9	11.4	**13.2**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.4. Perceptions of Local Councils

2.4.1 Local Council Activity in Respondents' Localities, by District

Do you know of any projects and services local councils have brought to your community?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	79.7	63.5	53.3	41.1	**59.5**
No	20.3	36.4	46.7	58.9	**40.5**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.4.2 Reported Knowledge of Local Council Activity as Function of Benefit, by District

Have you benefited from any of the local council projects you know about?	Frequency by District (Percent)				Respondents answering "yes" to question 2.3.1 only
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Yes	90.1	98.9	67.9	84.9	**86.6**
No	8.9	1.1	32.1	15.1	**13.2**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.4.3 Satisfaction with Local Councils, by District

Do local councils do a good job when managing projects and services?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Always responds to local needs in an efficient manner	9.2	7.8	12.0	6.6	**8.9**
Often responds to local needs in an efficient manner	55.6	37.0	15.3	15.9	**31.1**
Sometimes responds to local needs in an efficient manner	22.2	27.3	22.7	29.1	**25.3**
Rarely responds to local needs in an efficient manner	6.5	11.7	22.7	18.5	**14.8**
Never responds to local needs in an efficient manner	6.5	16.2	27.3	29.8	**19.9**
Total	100.0	100. 0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.4.4 Trust in Local Councils, by District

Do local councils listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Always	5.9	3.2	10.0	3.3	**5.6**
Mostly	47.7	14.9	13.3	6.6	**20.7**
Sometimes	30.1	40.9	37.3	24.5	**33.2**
Rarely	11.8	17.5	12.7	24.5	**16.6**
Never	4.6	23.4	26.7	41.1	**23.8**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.4.5 Trust in Local Councils, by Age Group

Do local councils listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	Over 35 years	
Always	4.9	6.1	**5.6**
Mostly	18.6	22.3	**20.7**
Sometimes	33.1	33.3	**33.2**
Rarely	18.2	15.3	**16.6**
Never	25.1	22.9	**23.8**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.4.6. Trust in Local Councils, by Sex

Do local councils listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		
	Female	Male	All Respondents
Always	4.1	6.4	**5.6**
Mostly	19.6	21.3	**20.7**
Sometimes	36.9	31.1	**33.2**
Rarely	15.9	16.9	**16.6**
Never	23.3	24.2	**23.8**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.5. Perceptions of Chiefdom Authorities and Western Area Headmen as Development Agents

2.5.1 Development Activity Managed by Chiefdom Authorities WA Headman in Respondents' Localities, by District

Do you know of any projects and services chiefdom authorities/ headmen have brought to your community?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	13.7	36.4	52.7	11.9	**26.6**
No	86.3	63.6	47.3	88.1	**71.4**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.5.2 Reported Knowledge of Chiefdom Authority and WA Headmen Development Activity as a Function of Benefit

Have you benefited from any of the projects brought by chiefdom authorities/ headmen that you know about?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	Respondents answering "yes" to question 2.4.1 only
Yes	76.9	96.0	82.6	42.9	**75.6**
No	23.1	4.0	17.4	57.1	**24.4**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.5.3. Satisfaction with Chiefdom Authority and WA Headman Development Activity by District

Do chiefdom authorities/ headmen do a good job when managing projects and services?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Always responds to local needs in an efficient manner	4.6	14.9	58.0	7.3	**21.1**
Often responds to local needs in an efficient manner	37.9	29.9	14.0	21.2	**25.8**
Sometimes responds to local needs in an efficient manner	46.4	29.9	10.7	26.5	**28.5**
Rarely responds to local needs in an efficient manner	7.8	13.6	9.3	11.9	**10.7**
Never responds to local needs in an efficient manner	3.3	11.7	8.0	33.1	**14.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.5.4 Trust in Chiefdom Authorities and WA Headmen by District

Do chiefdom authorities/ headmen listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Always	4.1	9.3	46.3	5.4	**16.2**
Mostly	32.0	15.3	21.1	17.0	**21.3**
Sometimes	52.4	38.7	16.3	30.6	**34.5**
Rarely	8.2	22.0	8.2	10.9	**12.4**
Never	3.4	14.7	8.2	36.1	**15.6**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100. 0**

2.5.5. Trust in Chiefdom Authorities and WA Headmen by Age Group

Do chiefdom authorities/ headmen listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	Over 35 years	
Always	14.8	17.3	**16.2**
Mostly	18.3	23.6	**21.3**
Sometimes	35.5	33.7	**34.5**
Rarely	13.7	11.3	**12.4**
Never	17.6	14.0	**15.6**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

2.5.6 Trust in Chiefdom Authorities and WA Headmen by Sex

Do chiefdom authorities/ headmen listen to what people say and what they need?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		All Respondents
	Female	Male	
Always	15.9	16.4	**16.2**
Mostly	21.0	21.6	**21.3**
Sometimes	38.8	32.1	**34.5**
Rarely	10.3	13.5	**12.4**
Never	14.0	16.4	**15.6**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3. Citizens' Engagement with Local Government

3.1. Participation in Development Planning

3.1.1 Knowledge of Local Council Development Plans by District

Have you heard of town and district development plans?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Yes	64.7	34.4	69.3	51.7	**54.9**
No	35.3	65.6	30.7	48.3	**45.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.1.2 Knowledge of Local Council Development plans by Age Group

Have you heard of town and district development plans?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	**Over 35 years**	
Yes	49.8	58.8	**54.9**
No	50.2	41.2	**45.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.1.3 Knowledge of Local Council Development plans by Sex

Have you heard of town and district development plans?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		All Respondents
	Female	**Male**	
Yes	45.7	60.1	**54.9**
No	54.3	39.9	**45.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.1.4 Sources of Information on Local Council Development Plans by District

How have you heard about town and district development plans?	Frequency by District (Percent, multiple answers possible)				Respondents reporting knowledge of local council development plans only
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
From a Family Member	49.0	64.1	75.0	66.2	**63.5**
From a Chief or Headman	39.6	75.3	72.1	46.8	**58.4**
From a WDC Member	17.2	19.5	22.1	32.1	**20.2**
From a Local Councillor	44.0	54.2	59.6	57.7	**53.9**
From a Local Council Notice Board	17.2	14.7	15.4	27.3	**18.7**
From Radio	22.2	85.3	89.4	92.2	**72.2**
From Television	2.0	1.9	4.8	6.7	**3.9**

3.1.5 Participation in Development Planning Meetings, by District

Do you take part in development planning meetings?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	**All Respondents**
Always	2.6	7.1	32.7	11.3	**13.3**
Mostly	26.1	14.3	10.7	8.6	**15.0**
Sometimes	38.6	26.0	24.7	35.8	**31.2**
Rarely	20.3	6.5	14.0	9.3	**12.5**
Never	12.4	46.1	18.0	35.1	**28.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.1.6 Participation in Development Planning Meetings by Age Group

Do you take part in development planning meetings?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		
	35 years or under	**Over 35 years**	**All Respondents**
Always	10.7	15.4	**13.3**
Mostly	14.1	15.6	**15.0**
Sometimes	30.0	32.2	**31.2**
Rarely	9.1	15.1	**12.5**
Never	36.1	21.7	**28.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.1.7 Participation in Development Planning Meetings by Sex

Do you take part in development planning meetings?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		All Respondents
	Females	**Males**	
Always	7.3	16.7	**13.3**
Mostly	14.6	15.2	**15.0**
Sometimes	28.8	32.6	**31.2**
Rarely	12.8	12.3	**12.5**
Never	36.5	23.1	**28.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.1.8 Type of Development Planning Meeting Participated in, by District

What kind of development planning meetings have you participated in?	Frequency by District (Percent, Multiple Answers Possible)				Respondents participating in development planning meetings only
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
VDC	40.8	45.9	64.2	36.5	**46.8**
NGO	57.9	49.7	56.8	42.0	**51.6**
WDC	21.1	9.2	41.2	15.2	**21.7**
Chief/Headman	35.1	54.2	56.8	12.3	**39.6**
Local Council	31.3	30.8	48.0	43.2	**38.2**
DBOC	4.0	2.0	24.3	2.9	**8.3**
CBO	16.6	2.0	2.7	40.3	**11.1**

3.2. Interaction with Local Councillors

3.2.1 Accessibility of Local Councillors, by District

Where does your local councillor live?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Respondent's Town/Section	35.3	38.9	27.3	56.3	**39.5**
Neighbouring Town/Section	31.4	27.3	2.0	35.1	**24.0**
Chiefdom HQ	8.6	17.6	14.7	N/A	**10.2**
District HQ	16.2	14.3	46.7	0.0	**19.2**
Another District	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.2**
Freetown	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	**0.2**
Don't Know	7.8	1.9	9.3	7.9	**6.7**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.2 Participation in Meetings called by Local Councillors, by District

Have you ever been called to a meeting lead by a local councillor?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Yes	46.4	31.1	50.0	35.1	**40.6**
No	53.6	68.9	50.0	64.9	**59.4**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.3 Participation in Meetings called by Local Councillors, by Age Group

Have you ever been called to a meeting lead by a local councillor?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	Over 35 years	
Yes	40.7	40.6	**40.6**
No	59.3	59.4	**59.4**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.4 Participation in Meetings called by Local Councillors, by Sex

Have you ever been called to a meeting lead by a local councillor?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		All Respondents
	Female	Male	
Yes	37.4	42.4	**40.6**
No	62.6	57.6	**59.4**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.5 Local Councillors' Communal Labour Demands, by District

Have you ever been called to a meeting by a local councillor to perform communal labour?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Yes	32.7	34.4	27.3	24.5	**40.6**
No	67.3	65.6	72.7	75.5	**59.4**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.6 Satisfaction with Local Councillors, By District

My local councillor is doing a good job?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Strongly Agree	3.9	2.6	10.0	8.6	**6.3**
Agree	56.9	25.3	25.3	19.2	**31.7**
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	27.4	24.0	30.7	12.6	**23.7**
Disagree	9.8	28.6	20.0	34.4	**23.2**
Strongly Disagree	1.9	19.5	14.0	25.2	**15.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.7 Satisfaction with Local Councillors, by Age Group

My Local councillor is doing a good job?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	**Over 35 years**	
Strongly Agree	5.7	6.7	**6.3**
Agree	27.4	35.0	**31.7**
Neither Agree nor Disagree	24.7	22.9	**23.7**
Disagree	27.4	20.0	**23.2**
Strongly Disagree	14.8	15.4	**15.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.8 Satisfaction with Local Councillors, by Sex

My Local councillor is doing a good job?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		All Respondents
	Females	**Males**	
Strongly Agree	4.6	7.2	**6.3**
Agree	28.8	33.4	**31.7**
Neither Agree nor Disagree	28.3	21.1	**23.7**
Disagree	24.2	22.6	**23.2**
Strongly Disagree	14.1	15.7	**15.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.9 Turnover of Local Councillors in 2008, by District

In 2008, did your ward re-elect the original local councillor?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	**All Respondents**
Yes	32.7	35.1	13.3	9.9	**22.9**
No	67.3	64.9	86.7	90.1	**77.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.10 Comparing the Performance of Current and Former Local Councillors, by District

My current local councillor is doing a better job than the old one	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	**Respondents Answering "Yes" to question 3.2.8 only**
Strongly Agree	12.3	4.8	15.9	5.4	**9.52**
Agree	49.1	35.8	9.5	20.4	**24.3**
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	21.0	28.5	30.1	25.0	**26.8**
Disagree	12.3	25.0	31.7	21.2	**24.1**
Strongly Disagree	5.3	5.9	12.7	28.0	**15.3**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.2.11 Criteria for Comparing Current and Former Local Councillors, by District

Please give a reason for your answer	Frequency by District (Percent)				Respondents Answering question 3.2.6 only
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Lives and works locally	27.6	7.4	7.6	16.7	**13.2**
More committed to development	23.6	23.8	32.4	44.2	**31.7**
Younger and more active	7.9	4.9	4.8	0.8	**4.3**
Older and more experienced	0.0	2.5	8.9	0.0	**3.4**
Better educated	9.2	2.5	7.6	0.0	**4.5**
Knows people in Freetown	0.0	2.5	4.8	0.0	**2.1**
Better connected politically	11.8	4.91	9.6	0.8	**6.5**
Other*	19.7	51.6	24.1	37.5	**34.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

*Mostly issues specific to individual councillors, e.g. brought a particular project to a locality or found jobs for local people.

3.2.12 Perceived Political Accountability of Councillors, by District

Which of these statements is most true?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
My councillor is more accountable to his/her political party	9.8	36.4	46.7	33.8	**31.6**
My councillor is more accountable to the local community	66.0	29.2	24.0	39.1	**39.6**
I don't have an opinion about my councillor's accountability	24.2	34.4	29.3	27.1	**28.8**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3. Interaction with Ward Development Committees (WDCs)

3.3.1 Knowledge of WDCs, by District

Have you heard about WDCs?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	92.8	60.4	61.3	52.9	**66.9**
No	7.2	39.6	38.7	47.1	**33.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.2 Knowledge of WDCs, by Age Group

Have you heard about WDCs?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		
	35 years or under	Over 35 years	All Respondents
Yes	60.4	71.9	**66.9**
No	39.6	28.1	**33.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.3 Knowledge of WDCs, by Sex

Have you heard about WDCs?	Frequency by Sex (Percent)		
	Female	Male	All Respondents
Yes	58.9	71.5	**66.9**
No	41.1	28.5	**33.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.4 Knowledge of WDC Members, by District

Can you name a WDC member other than the Local Councillor and Paramount Chief?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	66.0	42.2	45.3	25.1	**44.7**
No	34.0	57.8	54.7	74.9	**55.3**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.5 Mode of Recruitment of WDC Members, by District

How were your local WDC members chosen?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Elected at a Public Meeting	65.3	41.0	28.0	29.8	**41.1**
Appointed by Councillor	5.2	7.1	16.7	11.2	**10.1**
Appoint by the Paramount Chief/Headman	0.6	0.0	0.0	2.6	**0.8**
Don't Know	28.9	51.9	55.3	56.3	**48.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.6 Knowledge of WDC Notice Boards, by District

Have you ever seen a WDC Notice Board?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Yes	37.2	12.9	8.0	7.9	**16.6**
No	62.8	87.1	92.0	92.1	**83.4**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.7 Public Notification of WDC Meetings, by District

Have you ever been informed that a WDC meeting is about to take place?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Yes	61.4	39.6	43.3	20.5	**41.3**
No	38.6	60.4	56.7	79.5	**58.7**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.8 Participation in Meetings called by WDC Members, by District

Have you ever been called to a meeting by a WDC member to discuss Development Needs	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	43.1	17.5	32.7	11.2	**26.1**
No	56.9	82.5	67.3	88.8	**73.9**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.9 WDC Members' Communal Labour Demands, by District

Have you ever been called to a meeting by a WDC member to supply communal labour?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	26.1	12.3	18.7	11.3	**17.1**
No	73.9	87.7	1.3	88.7	**82.9**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.10 Satisfaction with WDCs, by District

Are you satisfied with the performance of WDCs?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Very Satisfied	5.2	1.3	0.7	4.6	**3.0**
Satisfied	32.7	10.4	14.0	9.9	**16.8**
Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	32.0	9.7	24.7	3.3	**17.4**
Not satisfied	28.2	57.8	42.0	49.7	**44.4**
Very unsatisfied	1.9	20.8	18.7	32.5	**18.4**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.3.11 Responses to Suggestions for Improving WDCs, by District

| What changes would improve the performance of WDCs? | Frequency Agreeing by District (percent, multiple answers possible) | | | | |
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
More meetings in different locations	91.2	92.2	98.6	96.7	**94.7**
Local councils should pay all WDC members' expenses	68.0	72.3	93.1	68.9	**75.6**
WDC should control their own budgets	58.8	68.4	82.2	81.7	**72.8**

3.3.12 Chairmanship of WDCs, by District

| Who, in your opinion, should chair WDCs | Frequency by District (Percent) | | | | |
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Local Councillor	63.4	33.8	25.3	30.5	**38.3**
Paramount chief/headman	24.8	18.2	16.7	19.9	**19.9**
Member of Parliament	2.0	5.8	2.7	11.9	**5.6**
Don't Know	9.8	42.2	55.3	37.7	**36.2**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.4. Interaction with Chiefs and Western Area Headmen

3.4.1 Knowledge of Chiefdom and WA Development Committees, by District

| Does your chief or headman have a committee to help develop your community? | Frequency by District (Percent) | | | | |
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	72.3	62.4	98.6	87.9	**80.2**
No	27.7	37.6	1.4	12.1	**19.8**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.4.2 Knowledge of Chiefdom and WA Development Committee Members, by District

Can you name a member of your chief's or headman's development committee other than the chief or headman?	Frequency by District (Percent)				Respondents answering "yes" to question 3.4.1 only
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Yes	85.9	76.3	84.0	74.0	**80.2**
No	14.1	23.7	16.0	26.0	**19.8**
Total	100.00	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.4.3 Composition of Chiefdom and WA Development Committees, by District

Does your chief's or headman's development committee have women and youth representatives?	Frequency by District (Percent)				Respondents answering "yes" to question 3.4.1 only
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Yes	87.8	83.9	86.8	95.4	**88.8**
No	12.2	16.1	13.2	4.6	**11.2**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.4.4 Activities of Chiefdom and WA Development Committees. by District

What does your chief's or headman's development committee do?	Frequency by District (Percent, multiple answers possible)				Respondents Answering "yes" to question 3.4.1 only
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Resolves disputes and keeps order	77.6	44.1	97.2	99.2	**80.8**
Organizes cleaning and sanitation	79.4	32.2	90.9	80.1	**73.9**
Receives strangers	68.2	11.8	91.7	74.6	**74.6**
Others	49.0	7.5	41.7	40.9	**35.4**

3.4.5 Chiefs' and WA Headmen's Directives, by District

Have you ever received a direct order from a chief or headman, seeking to mobilize your community into action?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	36.5	75.0	95.9	67.6	**68.7**
No	63.5	25.0	4.1	32.4	**31.3**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

3.4.6 Content of Chiefs' and Headmen's Directives, by District

What matter did your chief's or headman's order concern?	Frequency by District (Percent, multiple answers possible)				Respondents Answering "yes" to question 3.4.5 only
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	
Local Taxes and Revenues	90.9	51.3	97.8	90.6	**82.3**
Entertaining Visiting VIPs	47.2	24.8	82.7	60.0	**56.3**
Communal Labour	76.4	18.6	88.6	77.1	**64.9**
Commercial Land Leasing	23.6	2.6	58.6	15.5	**27.2**
Other	14.5	4.4	11.4	13.5	**9.8**

4. Traditional Authorities' Political Influence on Local Councils

4.1 Local Councillors' Family Ties to Paramount Chiefs and WA Headmen, by District

Is your local councillor related to a paramount chief or headmen by blood or marriage?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	3.3	22.1	31.3	11.9	**17.1**
No	96.7	77.9	68.7	64.2	**76.9**
Don't Know	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.9	**6.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

4.2 Local Councillors' Links to Chiefdom Ruling Houses, by District

Does your local councillor come from a chiefdom ruling house?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Yes	1.3	22.7	24.0	N/A	**15.9**
No	44.4	44.2	34.0	N/A	**41.0**
Don't Know	54.3	33.1	42.0	N/A	**43.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	N/A	**100.0**

4.3 Local Councillors' working relationship with Chiefs and WA Headmen, by District

How would you describe the relationship between your paramount chief/headman and your local councillors?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
They work hand in hand	62.1	39.6	60.3	56.7	**54.6**
They work separately	37.9	57.7	34.2	41.9	**43.0**
They are at loggerheads	0.0	2.7	5.5	1.4	**2.4**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

4.4 Influence of Chiefs and WA Headmen on Voting in Local Council Elections

How active was your paramount chief/headman in advising people to vote for a particular candidate in local council elections?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Very active	3.44	10.7	26.9	16.1	**14.3**
Moderately active	28.3	16.1	8.4	10.1	**15.6**
Minimally active	13.1	4.7	9.6	1.3	**7.1**
Not active at all	55.2	68.5	55.1	72.5	**63.0**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

4.5 Reasons for Chiefs' and WA Headmen's Endorsement of Particular Candidates in Local Council Elections

Why did your paramount chief/headman advise people to vote for a particular candidate in local council elections?	Frequency by District (Percent)				Respondents reporting that their chief/headman tried to influence voting in local council elections
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Favoured candidate represents the political party supported by the chief/headman	9.3	58.3	13.7	48.4	**21.8**
Favoured candidate lives locally, not in Freetown	36.0	16.7	2.1	25.8	**18.2**
Favoured candidate is a relative of the chief/headman	9.3	12.5	17.9	9.7	**13.3**
The chief/headman and the favoured candidate are personal friends/business associates/former work colleagues	45.4	12.5	66.3	16.1	**46.7**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

4.6 Influence of Chiefs and WA Headmen on Voting in National Elections

How active was your paramount chief/headman in advising people to vote for a particular candidate national in the recent national elections?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	**All Respondents**
Very active	2.8	10.9	32.2	18.6	**16.1**
Moderately active	17.9	5.5	15.1	9.0	**11.9**
Minimally active	67.6	77.4	38.3	63.4	**61.6**
Not active at all	11.7	6.2	14.4	9.0	**10.3**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

4.7 Reasons for Chiefs' and WA Headmen's Endorsement of Particular Candidates in National Elections

Why did your paramount chief/headman advise people to vote for a particular candidate in national elections?	Frequency by District (Percent)				Respondents reporting that their chief/headman tried to influence voting in national elections
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Favoured candidate represents the political party supported by the chief/headman	5.2	62.9	39.2	60.0	**34.2**
Favoured candidate lives locally, not in Freetown	46.7	25.9	1.0	10.2	**20.0**
Favoured candidate is a relative of the chief/headman	11.7	3.7	5.2	10.2	**7.9**
The chief/headman and the favoured candidate are personal friends/business associates/former work colleagues	36.4	7.4	54.6	20.6	**37.9**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

4.8 Influence of Chiefs and WA Headmen on Voting in all Elections

If your paramount chief/headman advised you to vote for a particular political party what would you do?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	**All Respondents**
Follow the paramount chief/headman's advice	1.4	1.4	9.6	5.5	**4.5**
Vote according to my own preference	92.5	98.6	73.1	91.9	**89.0**
Don't Know	2.0	0.0	5.6	1.3	**2.2**
Won't say	4.1	0.0	11.7	1.3	**4.3**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

5. Tax Authority and Service Delivery

5.1 Willingness to Pay Local Tax, by District

Are you Happy to pay Local Tax?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Yes	88.4	81.5	82.1	92.7	**86.2**
No	11.6	18.5	17.9	7.3	**13.8**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

5.2 Willingness to Pay Local Tax, by Age Group

Are you happy to pay local tax?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	**Over 35 years**	
Yes	85.7	86.6	**86.2**
No	14.3	13.4	**13.8**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

5.3 Predicting the Consequences of Giving Local Councils Sole Responsibility for Local Revenue Collection, by District

What would be the change if local councils took charge of all local taxes and revenues?	Frequency by District (Percent)				All Respondents
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	
Change for the better	12.3	28.5	54.4	25.8	**30.3**
Change for the worse	52.1	32.7	24.5	24.5	**33.4**
No change	30.1	27.9	8.2	20.4	**21.6**
Don't know	5.5	10.9	12.9	29.3	**14.7**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

5.4 Predicting the Consequences of Giving Local Councils Sole Responsibility for Local Revenue Collection, by Age Group

What would be the change if local councils took charge of all taxes and revenues?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		All Respondents
	35 years or under	**Over 35 years**	
Change for the better	30.4	30.2	**30.3**
Change for the worse	26.6	38.7	**33.4**
No Change	24.6	19.3	**21.6**
Don't Know	18.3	11.8	**14.7**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

5.5 Predicting the Consequences of Giving Local Councils Sole Responsibility for Local Revenue Collection, by Sex

What would be the change if local councils took charge of all taxes and revenues?	Frequency by Age Group (Percent)		
	Females	**Males**	**All Respondents**
Change for the better	31.3	28.5	**30.3**
Change for the worse	35.5	29.5	**33.4**
No Change	19.0	26.6	**21.6**
Don't Know	14.2	15.4	**14.7**
Total	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

5.6 Reasons for Predicting Positive or Negative Consequences of Changing the local Tax System, by District

Give Reasons for your views on changing the local tax system?	Frequency by District (Percent Agreeing, Multiple Answers Possible)				
	Bo	**Bombali**	**Kono**	**WARD**	**All Respondents**
Local councils, not traditional authorities, are service delivery agencies	12.5	30.4	58.5	63.1	**40.2**
Local taxes should fund local services	34.0	65.7	95.2	87.7	**70.7**
Local Councils' financial management is more modern and efficient	23.3	37.6	66.0	45.1	**43.3**
Tax collection is the responsibility of traditional authorities	73.9	77.8	73.5	41.0	**66.5**
Rural people would refuse to pay taxes to anyone but traditional authorities	74.5	81.5	65.3	39.3	**65.5**
Local taxes are the chiefdoms' only source of revenue	48.3	54.8	74.2	N/A	**58.1**
Other	4.9	0.0	6.1	4.9	**3.9**

5.7 Satisfaction with Local Council Education Services, by District

Is your local council supporting primary education in your community?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	93.1	71.8	64.8	38.7	**66.9**
No	0.0	20.8	28.2	30.7	**20.0**
Don't know	6.9	7.4	7.0	30.6	**13.1**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

5.8 Satisfaction with Local Council Health Services, by District

Is your local council supporting primary health in your community?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	87.0	37.0	39.0	24.0	**46.7**
No	2.1	47.6	44.7	44.0	**34.6**
Don't know	10.9	15.4	16.3	32.0	**18.7**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**

5.9 Satisfaction with Local Council Agricultural Services, by District

Is your local council supporting agriculture in your community?	Frequency by District (Percent)				
	Bo	Bombali	Kono	WARD	All Respondents
Yes	84.1	46.6	31.7	26.2	**47.1**
No	1.4	37.2	38.0	37.6	**28.6**
Don't know	14.5	16.2	30.3	36.2	**24.3**
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	**100.0**