

# A Review of the USAID–ICITAP Election Security Program in Sierra Leone for the 2012 Presidential, Parliamentary, Municipal, and Local Elections

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# Executive Summary

**The International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP)** worked with the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) under tight time constraints to design a cost-effective, efficient election security curriculum taught in a train-the-trainer approach after the passage of new election laws made the original curriculum obsolete. The new program aimed to increase the reach of previous police training programs by engaging officers across posts and stations in every region of the country rather than just major cities and by having SLP master instructors (MI) train civil society members to present the same training to citizens. Implemented in three phases, the new program emphasized accessibility and ease of understanding for officers and civilians who speak a variety of languages and have limited English literacy skills. It contributed to peaceful elections in Sierra Leone for president, members of parliament, and mayors and other local officials on November 17, 2012.

ICITAP combined the new curriculum with an expansive community outreach effort that included putting on peace concerts, using community radio to disseminate information on the new election laws, and empowering civil society leaders to hold the police accountable on election day. ICITAP and the SLP invited and trained community members to expand the program's reach and to ensure a widespread understanding of election laws and proper police conduct during elections. This publication identifies key components required to implement a law enforcement development project in a post-conflict country, such as building trust, ensuring cultural competence, and strengthening community-police relations. The publication concludes with an emphasis on effective monitoring and evaluation and the importance of sustainable program design.





# Introduction

**“I am personally worried about security.** Will there be enough security for the whole country? I really hope so and I hope that the election will be peaceful and without violence.”<sup>1</sup> These are the words of Mariatu Kamara, a member of Sierra Leone’s “Lost Generation”—the youth population that grew up during the country’s 11-year civil war (1991–2002), which suffered well-documented atrocities, war crimes, and human rights violations. Both government and rebel forces used the Lost Generation of children and youth as porters, soldiers, and sex slaves during the war, which killed more than 50,000 people and left more than one million displaced.<sup>2</sup>

Kamara’s generation was the biggest national security concern for the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) in the months leading up to the 2012 election.<sup>3</sup> Some of Sierra Leone’s Lost Generation became eligible to enter the voting booths for the first time in their lives in November 2012. Law enforcement and civic leaders worried this new generation of voters did not understand the democratic system and civil society as a whole, thus potentially compromising the 2012 election’s security and legitimacy.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Restless Development Sierra Leone, *Youth Manifesto*, 4.
2. Bellows and Miguel, “War and Institutions,” 394.
3. Betancourt et al., “Sierra Leone’s Former Child Soldiers.”
4. Betancourt et al., “Sierra Leone’s Former Child Soldiers.”

Stories of political parties paying individuals, primarily from younger populations, to commit acts of violence against rival parties amplified these concerns.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, in 2011, the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ) International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) began to work with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the SLP to design and implement an election security program that would strengthen relations between the SLP, civil society organizations, and the citizenry at large and ultimately contribute to peaceful elections.

A 2011 assessment conducted by ICITAP and USAID convinced ICITAP that a Senior Law Enforcement Advisor (SLEA) embedded within the SLP would be necessary to develop and implement a successful election security program.<sup>6</sup> However, embedding an advisor would require convincing the SLP’s chief law enforcement officer, the Inspector General of Police (IGP), of the need to bring in an American ICITAP advisor. While the IGP had already recognized the need to improve SLP-community relations, he was hesitant to allow outsiders to influence his plans.<sup>7</sup> He did, however, eventually agree to have an embedded ICITAP SLEA in the SLP.

A sudden change in Sierra Leonean election laws just four months before the 2012 elections required the program stakeholders to adapt their program to a new method

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5. Christiansen and Utas, “Mercenaries of Democracy,” 516–518, 521–523.
6. McEnery, Beinhart, and Ilirjani, “Summary of Meetings Held During Sierra Leone TDY February 27–March 18, 2011.”
7. Eric Beinhart, Senior Training Advisor, International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program, interview with authors, November 6, 2018.

under a tight deadline. Eventually, ICITAP, in conjunction with the SLP and local and international stakeholders, implemented an election security program in the weeks leading up to the election through roll-call trainings (hereinafter referred to as microtraining or MT) disseminated via a “train-the-trainer” approach and community engagement initiatives. This publication analyzes ICITAP’s efforts and establishes a set of lessons learned and best practices that can be employed in future community engagement programs.

A five-person team of graduate students from American University, under the guidance of Dr. Tricia Bacon, conducted research over a three-month period in Washington, D.C., on the Sierra Leone Election Security Program. Evaluators collected information from a variety of primary and secondary sources. The evaluators also conducted interviews with individuals in the United States and in Sierra Leone. Their statements were kept anonymous unless interviewees gave permission to be identified by name, thus ensuring candid and trustworthy responses. The researchers ensured the reliability of the interviews by corroborating their information with other sources when appropriate. Finally, despite the sponsorship of the evaluation by American University and ICITAP, the researchers independently verified all content and conclusions used in this assessment, and evaluators had the freedom to make their own judgments of the program’s successes and shortcomings.

This publication will first describe ICITAP’s experience designing the program in the months prior to the election. Over the next seven sections, the article will outline the implementation of MT modules and identify the respective strengths and weaknesses of each of the program’s three instructional periods. These sections will also identify how the program directly incorporated the Sierra Leonean communities into achieving its goals. The publication will then discuss election-day outcomes and observations related to the program, including whether the program’s outcomes have endured. It concludes with specific lessons learned and good practices that, if replicated, are likely to increase future programs’ success. This publication looks at overarching themes such as the difficulty of implementing a program in a post-conflict country, the importance of cultivating trust with critical stakeholders, and the value of acquiring cultural competence. The authors found that ICITAP’s 2012 Election Security Program (ESP) in Sierra Leone maximized its potential by incorporating host country personnel into the program’s design, understanding and adapting to the population’s culture, and cultivating relationships based on trust.

# 1 Background

**The Republic of Sierra Leone is a small country in West Africa**, about half the size of the state of North Carolina, which has a variety of different ethnic groups and languages. People practice Islam, Christianity, and animism. One element of Sierra Leone’s culture that became particularly relevant for ICITAP’s program is the fact that there are 23 languages spoken in the country. The official language of the country is English, but the most commonly spoken languages are Mende, Temne, Limba, and Krio.<sup>8</sup>

A violent civil war raged in Sierra Leone from 1991–2002 which left around 50,000 people dead and approximately one million people displaced. President Charles Taylor of Liberia provided support to the Sierra Leonean rebels, who invaded Sierra Leone in 1991 from encampments in Liberia. The rebels included university students who were disillusioned by Sierra Leone’s patriarchal system and who found few jobs available to them. Rebels seized vast amounts of alluvial diamonds throughout the country, which the international community branded as “blood diamonds.” One positive development was that Muslim imams and Christian priests worked together to preach peace and bring an end to the civil war in 2002.

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8. VSL Travel, “Languages.”

Sierra Leone experienced some political violence during the elections of 2002 and 2007. The climate was hostile and “political violence was accepted as a political move,” according to Colonel Tom Dempsey, U.S. Army (ret.).<sup>9</sup> In 2002, the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) won the election, while in 2007 the All People’s Congress (APC) took over. International observers considered the elections fair, and neither party contested the results,<sup>10</sup> but in 2007, violence became so rampant that the president almost suspended the election. There were reports of voter intimidation by the APC and an assassination attempt on the APC’s presidential candidate.<sup>11</sup> Based on this history, both Sierra Leoneans and outside observers were concerned that the 2012 elections would be plagued by violence.

The SLP had historically served and protected the government in power rather than the citizens of Sierra Leone.<sup>12</sup> ICITAP worked with the SLP to create the Election Security Program (ESP) to help the SLP become a more apolitical and community-oriented institution.

When ICITAP reached out to Sierra Leone (SL) authorities to initiate the ESP, the SLP was not trained to promote peaceful elections in 2012. For example, SLEA Bryan Atkins said, “The SLP officers told ICITAP personnel that they lack police safety and protection equipment as most of them were unarmed and only a few had batons” and

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9. Tom Dempsey, interview with authors Rogers, Rabiou, Hadachek, and Gaviria, September 24, 2018.

10. Africa Research Institute, *Old Tricks, Young Guns*.

11. Africa Research Institute, *Old Tricks, Young Guns*.

12. Dempsey, interview (see note 9).

none had any type of spray agent.<sup>13</sup> Atkins also pointed out, “Roughly half of the officers had handcuffs but were poorly trained on their use.”<sup>14</sup> Atkins enumerated additional challenges that plagued the SLP ranging from a lack of training on how to deal with an angry person with a deadly weapon to lack of pens, pencils, and paper as well as lack of reliable transportation to satisfy the logistical needs of the SLP during the elections.<sup>15</sup> An independent 2011 review of the SLP’s capabilities conducted by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) predicted that the SLP would not handle the 2012 elections well: “The SLP’s capability to provide policing functions in general, and to police the 2012 elections in particular, is assessed as poor.”<sup>16</sup>



*Post-election celebration in Sierra Leone.*

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13. Atkins, “ICITAP–Sierra Leone Weekly Report, December 5–11, 2011.”

14. Atkins, “ICITAP–Sierra Leone Weekly Report, December 5–11, 2011.”

15. Beinhart, “Sierra Leone Trip Report for May 14–25, 2012.”

16. Horn, Gordon, and Albrecht, *Sierra Leone Police Review of Capabilities*, 6.

## 2 Planning an Election Security Program

ICITAP's initial joint election security assessment with USAID in 2011 recognized a need to implement a multipronged strategy that used relationships with international stakeholders, local civic organizations, and the SLP. Eric Beinhart, ICITAP's associate director, met with the United Nations Police Advisor, who initiated contact and helped establish an early rapport between senior SLP personnel and ICITAP.<sup>17</sup> The SLP and ICITAP agreed that police-community engagement requires daily contact between the SLP and the public and that gaining the citizens' input on local problems is critical to establishing mutual trust.<sup>18</sup>

An SLP chief superintendent said, "All levels of the SLP required training on how to provide security during elections in an organized and neutral manner."<sup>19</sup> This consensus was crucial in ensuring ICITAP, the SLP, and other stakeholders were enthusiastic about an election security program that focused both on training the SLP and on engaging the broader Sierra Leonean public.



*Woman and child preparing to vote in Sierra Leone's 2012 elections.*

Finally, the SLP, ICITAP, and USAID agreed to have an ICITAP police advisor, otherwise known as the senior law enforcement advisor (SLEA), work directly with the SLP.<sup>20</sup>

In November 2011, ICITAP named Bryan Atkins as the SLEA in Sierra Leone to cultivate relationships and trust with the SLP and relevant stakeholders and to coordinate with other donors. ICITAP envisioned the "SLEA would work closely with the SLP to update policies, procedures,

17. Beinhart, interview with authors Murphy, Hadachek, and Rabiou, October 23, 2018.

18. Baca et al., *Micro-Training in Liberia*.

19. Beinhart, "Sierra Leone Trip Report for August 27–September 3, 2011."

20. Beinhart, "Sierra Leone Trip Report for August 27–September 3, 2011."

and trainings necessary to best prepare SLP members to provide election security.<sup>21</sup> The SLEA would provide the SLP with technical assistance as well as writing the program's implementation plan, developing training curricula with SLP instructors, presenting training with co-instructors, and reporting on a regular basis to USAID, the U.S. Embassy, and ICITAP.<sup>22</sup> ICITAP also tasked Atkins with networking with civic society organizations and other stakeholders to improve the SLP's national election strategies.<sup>23</sup> Atkins could then act as an effective and trustworthy intermediary between the SLP and Sierra Leonean civil society groups.

Atkins's immediate actions demonstrated a strong effort to build relationships with the Sierra Leonean police community and other local stakeholders, a crucial component to the successful ESP. Atkins had productive meetings with representatives from the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)—an organization with extensive experience in developing election systems in many countries in West Africa—in March 2012.<sup>24</sup> Atkins's meetings over the first several months played a pivotal role in laying the groundwork for the ESP's successful community outreach component that ultimately promoted peaceful elections.

Atkins built successful relationships based on trust with multiple personnel in the SLP—particularly those in the SLP's Training Division—and established the ESP's initial design and curriculum. He established a rapport with the SLP's Director of Training and went on to gain trust and credibility with four other SLP instructors by meeting with them on a nearly daily basis for a period of three months. Atkins mentored and advised the SLP's instructors on topics such as election law changes, election-related violence, and police neutrality to develop a training curriculum for the SLP as a whole. The SLEA's ability to gain trust with the SLP's instructors and the Director of Training proved critical to developing an effective ESP.

Atkins and the five SLP instructors, who would become known as five of the election security program's ten master instructors (MI), presented the trainings to SLP leadership in April 2012. SLP's leadership agreed to move the program forward to train the SLP, but new election laws introduced in May 2012 forced Atkins and the MIs to focus on creating a new curriculum that took into account the new election laws.<sup>25</sup>

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21. Beinhart, "Sierra Leone Trip Report for November 12–19, 2011."

22. Beinhart, "Sierra Leone Trip Report for November 12–19, 2011."

23. Beinhart, "Sierra Leone Trip Report for November 12–19, 2011."

24. Atkins, "ICITAP–Sierra Leone Weekly Report, March 11–17, 2012."

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25. Beinhart, interview (see note 18).

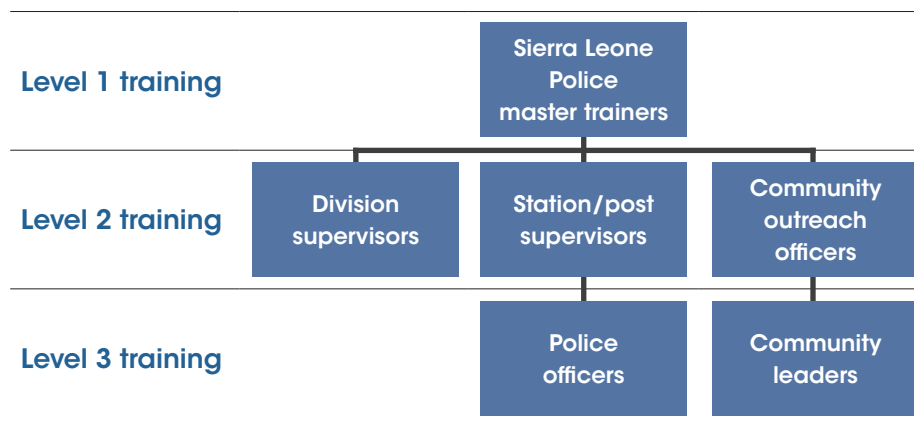
# 3 Program Change

## The sudden election law changes in May 2012

forced ICITAP and the SLP to transform the entire ESP design into a cascading train-the-trainer approach that used MT modules (see figure 1). Sierra Leone’s 2012 Public Elections Act’s laws and regulations addressed human and political rights and directly impacted the SLP—a major stakeholder in ensuring election laws are upheld throughout the electoral process.<sup>26</sup> Though the changes interfered with the ESP’s content, they also provided an opportunity for both ICITAP and the SLP to learn the new laws and establish a consistent baseline to teach Sierra Leonean society about the new changes.

MTs have several traditional benefits. The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) first came up with roll-call trainings (identical to MTs) in 1948, and police departments around the world today use that teaching method.<sup>27</sup> MTs are traditionally carried out at the beginning of police officers’ shifts, otherwise referred to as “morning parades” by the SLP, by their immediate supervisors in 15-to-30-minute increments. This training style enables officers to gradually learn a plethora of different training topics, limited only by the imagination of police supervisors and the needs of the police department. MT modules could be presented on issues related to robbery, theft, domestic violence, sexual violence, crime scene protection, defensive tactics, interview techniques, handcuffing techniques, and community engagement. MT does not require that police personnel take additional time away

Figure 1. Microtraining cascade structure



26. The Carter Center, *Observing Sierra Leone’s November 2012 National Elections*.

27. Beinhart, interview (see note 18).

from their normal duties or force officers to travel to inconvenient training locations, thus making it an inexpensive complement to traditional police training. ICITAP and the SLP decided to implement the MT in a cascading train-the-trainer style to reach as many police officers as they could in a limited time frame. The original program was intended to have a vast portion of the SLP meet in one location to be trained at the same time. The roll-call training idea and a gradual train-the-trainer approach lent more flexibility to training a much smaller portion of the SLP and then having them teach additional SLP officers and community members in a series of phases in multiple locations.

MTs posed additional benefits for Sierra Leone and the ESP. Col. Dempsey noted how MTs can be easily performed in any local language, an important factor in Sierra Leone where many languages are spoken.<sup>28</sup> MTs do not require electricity and can be presented in any venue as opposed to officers having to travel to the capital city of Freetown.

Both SLP leadership and the SLP instructors were essential in adjusting to the program change and developing what became a much-improved program blueprint that included training both the SLP and the community. Beinhart presented the essentials of instructor development to the designated 10 SLP MIs, and then Beinhart worked with the MIs to develop nine MT modules for the

ESP program including topics such as understanding the new election laws, protocols at polling stations, gender discrimination around elections, and police neutrality.<sup>29</sup> Each of the modules was 10–30 minutes long. The modules included an opening role play, an articulation of goals and objectives, an explanation of the topic including use of the Socratic method and photographic posters, a summary, and a five-question true-or-false quiz to test learning at the end.<sup>30</sup> The MIs then presented one of the modules to the SLP’s assistant inspector general for training, who voiced his desire to disseminate the training throughout the SLP.<sup>31</sup>

The SLP’s Inspector General of Police (IGP) Francis Alieu Munu was enthusiastic about disseminating the trainings to the broader community as well, as he knew the SLP needed to improve its relationship with the public.<sup>32</sup> The decision to involve members of the SLP in the curriculum finalization was described by multiple interviewed experts as crucial because the program gained participant support and buy-in.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, it ensured the SLP had a say in tailoring the trainings to their specific needs.<sup>34</sup> Finally, the SLP senior leadership’s enthusiasm about the new design—and its inclusion of the community—was critical to the program’s success as well. ICITAP went on to implement the ESP in three distinct phases to the SLP as well as to communities. Parallel initiatives working with student groups and musical artists and creating photographic posters moved forward as well.

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28. Dempsey, interview (see note 9).

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29. Beinhart, “ICITAP-Sierra Leone Bi-Weekly Report, October 8-21, 2012.”

30. Beinhart, interview (see note 18).

31. Beinhart, interview (see note 18).

32. Beinhart, interview (see note 18).

33. Rick Collinge, interview with authors Hadachek and Rogers, October 2, 2018.

34. Collinge, interview (see note 37).



# 4 Election Security Program Phase 1 and Analysis

In phase 1 of the MT, Beinhart provided curriculum and instructor development training to 10 SLP personnel. Five of the trainees were SLP officers, and the other five were police prosecutors with no prior experience as instructors.<sup>35</sup>

These 10 individuals became the ESP's MIs. The MIs worked closely with Beinhart to learn how to teach the nine modules to their peers and members of different communities. The MIs spent one week participating in phase 1 of the ESP, which concluded on September 13, 2011. After completing the training, they were certified as having completed the Instructor and Curriculum Development Course.<sup>36</sup> It is important to note that phase 1's lessons extended beyond the ESP, so the MIs had "the knowledge, expertise, and accreditation to develop their own training curriculum on future topics."<sup>37</sup>

In addition, ICITAP effectively included members of the SLP and community members in the creation of MT curriculum. This had been a shortcoming of other security and police improvement programs in the past in Sierra Leone. According to Col. Dempsey, "In police reform projects there often isn't a policeman in the room and the usual players that sit at the table making decisions

on the curriculum are military, foreign policy officers, and lawyers."<sup>38</sup> ICITAP made sure that community members and the police in Sierra Leone were major players in developing a curriculum that fit their needs. Phase 1, however, had some limitations. Table 1 analyzes phase 1 of the election security program.

A shortcoming of the phase 1 training is that ICITAP did not focus enough on teaching the participants how to train phase 2 participants on training phase 3 participants. This became apparent during the implementation of phase 3 training, because this was where the substance of the training would have come into play. The fact that

**Table 1. Phase 1 of the SLP election security program**

<b>Goal</b>	In Phase 1 ICITAP trained 10 Master Instructors, five of whom were part of the revision and re-design of the new curriculum. They would become the trainers in Phase 2.
<b>Police component</b>	The 10 Master Instructors were five police officers and five police prosecutors. They were integral in not only the creation of the curriculum, but they also presented two MT modules to the Sierra Leone Police leadership.
<b>Civilian component</b>	This phase did not have a civilian component.

35. Beinhart, "ICITAP-Sierra Leone Bi-Weekly Report, October 8-21, 2012."

36. Owen, "Ambassador Owen's Remarks."

37. Collinge, interview (see note 37).

38. Dempsey, interview (see note 9).

phase 2 training attendees learned and retained knowledge on election security and election laws points to the successful training of MIs in relaying this information to the phase 2 training attendees.

Furthermore, after the elections, the SLP developed MT modules dealing with topics other than election security such as domestic violence, anticorruption, and counter-trafficking in persons. This is evidence that phase 2 trainings were successful in providing a training methodology for MT that the SLP could implement in other places. It also proves that ICITAP trained the MIs well in developing their own curricula.<sup>39</sup>



*Young Sierra Leonean showing off his voting card.*

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39. Kathleen Fitzgibbon, deputy chief of mission to Sierra Leone 2012–2015, interview with authors Gaviria, Murphy, and Hadachek, October 4, 2018.

# 5 Election Security Program Phase 2 and Analysis

## Phase 2’s goal was to train the police and civilians

on election laws, the role of the police in the elections, and how the trainees would in turn train other officers and civilians. Phase 2 took place between September 24 and October 5, 2012. The police component of phase 2 was to train the officers in charge of morning parades at their respective stations or posts, such as shift commanders, station sergeants, and post commanders.<sup>40</sup> The civilian component of phase 2 trained

civilians alongside the police in the same space.

Trained civilians would then take this information and reach out to other civilians in their communities to spread the election law information. Table 2 analyzes phase 2 of the election security program.

Before the phase 2 trainings took place, the assistant SLP inspector general for training sent a memorandum to the local unit commanders (LUC) of each of the 34 divisions.<sup>41</sup> The memorandum asked for 20 supervisors from each division to attend the trainings. The MIs split off into five groups of two trainers. They carried out the trainings in two weeks all over Sierra Leone. Most of the trainings

**Table 2. Phase 2 of the SLP election security program**

<b>Goals</b>	Phase 2 aimed to train the police and civilians—through MT—on election laws, the role of the police in the elections, and how those being trained would train other police officers and civilians. The Master Instructors trained in Phase 1 would train the police division leaders and the civilians that showed up to these trainings. These attendees, in turn, would become the trainers during Phase 3 of the program.
<b>Police component</b>	Master Instructors trained the police supervisors of every division so they could implement roll-call trainings within their divisions and the information would reach police officers of all ranks.
<b>Civilian component</b>	This component reached as many civilians as possible so that these civilians would go out into their communities and share the MT modules and information with other civilians. ICITAP and the Sierra Leone Police hoped that civilians could keep the police accountable if they knew what the role of the police was supposed to be during the elections.

40. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

41. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

took place in the Divisional Headquarters Building, except for the divisions where the headquarters building was too small.<sup>42</sup> In these cases, the trainings took place in community centers, public schools, or youth centers. Phase 2 training took place in 32 of the 34 divisions, but representatives of all 34 divisions were in attendance. The trainings reached 732 SLP officers and 131 civil society figures including media representatives, local police partnership board members, and local rural community leaders including paramount chiefs.<sup>43</sup>

USAID hired an independent contractor, Social Impact, to evaluate phase 2 as it took place, allowing the team to assess the scope and reach of the MTs, their effectiveness in conveying necessary election information, and their

efficacy in preparing the next wave of people once the attendees became the trainers within their own police divisions or communities. Social Impact observed only seven of the 32 trainings.<sup>44</sup> This is a small sample size, but it offers useful insights nonetheless. After these seven trainings, Social Impact distributed a questionnaire to some of the attendees. A few of the questions were self-assessments, and the others were knowledge-based. ICITAP and the SLP also gave Social Impact access to the training attendance sheets. This allowed them to evaluate the reach of the trainings.

The scope and reach of the trainings were improvements over that of other community engagement efforts undertaken by the international community. Table 3 provides the breakdown of attendance of phase 2 trainings by

**Table 3. Attendance at phase 2 trainings**

Region	Number of persons trained					Police stations and posts		
	Sierra Leone Police	Local Policing Partnership Board	Media	Other	Total	Number represented	Total number	Percent represented (%)
Freetown west	99	5	2	2	108	9	25	36
Freetown east	80	5	3	2	90	17	35	49
Northeastern	145	10	2	8	165	15	46	33
Northwestern	111	6	2	3	122	13	44	30
Southern	158	20	6	13	197	18	54	33
Eastern	138	12	8	4	162	22	63	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>731</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>844</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>35</b> (average over all regions)

42. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

43. Beinhart, interview with authors, October 3, 2018.

44. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

region, community involvement, and the percentage of police stations/posts represented; specifically, it shows that 35 percent of the police stations and posts were represented by attendees in the phase 2 trainings.<sup>45</sup> Despite this relatively low rate, this was more representation than previous programs attempted by the international community. The MT approach allowed for the trainings to reach more of the SLP because it did not require them to pay for police officers to make the trip to a training site or for meals and lodging once they were there.

Many of our interviewees focused on the effective community aspect of the phase 2 training. Esther Kaintor, one of the ESP's MIs who worked with ICITAP closely for most of the program's duration, described how the MT style brought people together.<sup>46</sup> Many of our interviewees also pointed to the MT model as an effective model in reaching civilians.<sup>47</sup> This was evident when the MTs reached community radio operators who taped the trainings and played them on their radio stations. This showed not only that there was community buy-in but also that this style of training was opening doors for civilians to be a part of the peaceful election process. Phase 2 also effectively communicated essential election information including what the SLP's roles would be

during the elections. In their assessment of how well officers learned the information taught during the trainings, Social Impact asked "open-ended questions about the understanding of the purpose of the MT as well as the understanding of the process of the MT and particularly the expectation for participants to pass on the information to police officers at their posts and stations."<sup>48</sup> During the knowledge-based questions portion of the evaluation, the evaluators found that self-assessments by the participants were positive, but the findings from the learning questions were a little more varied.<sup>49</sup> Thirteen of the 20 participants answered all three questions correctly; the remaining seven participants answered one question incorrectly on the radius around polling stations within which it was illegal to canvass for votes on the day of the election.<sup>50</sup> This proves that the MIs were generally effective in relaying new information about the election laws.

Finally, phase 3 was not as successful as phases 1 and 2. This discrepancy provides a lens into the success of phase 2, because phase 2 was meant to teach the police officers and civilians who would teach the officers at their own posts. There are a few reasons why phase 2 could have factored into why the implementation of phase 3 did not

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45. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

46. Esther Kaintor, SLP master instructor, interview with author Hadachek, October 10, 2018.

47. Fitzgibbon, interview (see note 43).

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48. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

49. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

50. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.



*Police officers review an educational poster during a microtraining session in Makeni, the largest city in Sierra Leone's Northern Province, in October 2012.*

go as planned. Social Impact evaluators noted that the phase 3 material was covered later in the phase 2 trainings.<sup>51</sup> This delay impacted the number of people who actually saw the phase 3 material covered during their phase 2 trainings, because attendance dropped off by this time in the trainings.<sup>52</sup> The evaluators from Social Impact noted the trainings ranged from approximately four and

a half hours to seven hours. As a result of the longer trainings, many participants had left by the time they would have been taught how to train others.<sup>53</sup> The evaluators also found that neither the explanation of the process of MT nor how to teach phase 3 to local stations and posts were included in the manual.<sup>54 55</sup> This would have been helpful so people could see a plan—potentially with dates—to implement phase 3 trainings.

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51. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

52. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

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53. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

54. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

55. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

# 6 Election Security Program Phase 3 and Analysis

**Phase 3 started immediately after the end of phase 2** and was to be employed until the election on November 17, 2012.<sup>56</sup> The officers in charge of the morning parades attended phase 2 trainings with the intention of bringing the MT modules back to their posts and stations to present to their subordinates. The ultimate goal of the phase was to reach every officer in Sierra Leone.<sup>57</sup> The civilians who received training in phase 2 were to go back to their regions and inform the public of what they had learned.<sup>58</sup> They were instructed to spread the

word in any way possible. To do so, they held public sessions to explain the roll-call trainings or played the modules over radio stations. The long-term goal of phase 3 was to establish methods that could survive past the elections and improve the police-community relationship.

As stressed earlier, phase 3 relied largely on the SLP division leaders and high-ranking officers taking the initiative to present the trainings to rank-and-file officers at their posts and stations. Overseeing the implementation of phase 3, however, proved to be difficult. Table 4 analyzes phase 3 of the election security program.

**Table 4. Phase 3 of the SLP election security program**

<b>Goals</b>	The delivery of MT by local trainers to subordinates at police stations/posts and to community members. Trainers were the members trained during Phase 2.
<b>Police component</b>	Trainers at each respective post/station would present the MTs presented to them during Phase 2 in the morning parade.
<b>Civilian component</b>	Take information learned during Phase 2 and continue to spread the content about election laws and appropriate police conduct throughout communities.

56. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

57. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

58. ICITAP, *Final Project Summary*.

Social Impact conducted the evaluation of this phase and stated that it was the most challenging to evaluate. For example, the evaluation team had a hard time attending morning parades because of the number of stations and posts. Consequently, they ended up observing eight stations in total, of which four included the morning parade; the other stations were attended in the afternoon after the morning parade.<sup>59</sup> They found that three of the eight observed stations and two of the four that included morning parade performed the MTs. Interestingly, the evaluators reported that in the three locations where the trainings were performed, “the quality of the delivery was really poor and did not closely follow the training manuals.”<sup>60</sup> They concluded that only one station, Sewafe, regularly and effectively performed the MTs.<sup>61</sup>

The evaluators pointed out several reasons for phase 3’s problems. First, there was little to no guidance in phase 2 about how to demonstrate the MTs, and the manuals had no instructions on how to perform the MT modules.<sup>62</sup> Second, LUCs lacked incentives to integrate the roll-call trainings into their stations during morning parades. Only the LUCs who truly saw the trainings’ value implemented phase 3.<sup>63</sup> This represents a serious deficiency in the program that would not have existed if the Inspector General of Police had provided guidance to all police

regions in Sierra Leone that instructors who received the phase 2 MT from the master instructors would provide regular MT at their stations and posts. This is a significant lesson learned for ICITAP that will strengthen future MT programs.

Social Impact identified two additional breakdowns in phase 3. There were no clear plans to oversee and monitor the phase’s progress.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, lack of buy-in of high-ranking officials undermined the success of the phase as they did not effectively monitor the training or stress the importance of implementing the phase.<sup>65</sup> When Social Impact reported its findings to SLP leadership, the IGP was reportedly “upset upon hearing that training was not being implemented in some stations.”<sup>66</sup> The top ranking official of SLP believed in the roll-call trainings, but he failed to express this to the leaders at each respective station. In response, the IGP ordered the commanders to complete the trainings and stress their importance.<sup>67</sup> All this happened three weeks before the elections.

Also, Social Impact highlighted that the lack of proper instruction in phase 2 led to phase 3’s poor implementation because phase 3’s success was directly dependent on phase 2. The firm observed that “There was no monitoring team for phase 3 to ensure the MTs were passed down to the rank and file, and nobody was incentivized to

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59. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

60. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

61. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

62. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

63. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

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64. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

65. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

66. Collinge, “ICITAP–Sierra Leone Weekly Report, October 28–November 3, 2012.”

67. Collinge, “ICITAP–Sierra Leone Weekly Report, October 28–November 3, 2012.”



perform the trainings or punished for failing to do so at the local stations and posts.”<sup>68</sup> ICITAP SLEA Rick Collinge observed, “It really depended upon motivation as to whether SLP officers wanted to spread this message within their posts/stations.”<sup>69</sup>

There are a few options to address these implementation challenges. First, the IGP should issue a written declaration mandating that all SLP members receive the MT during morning parade at their stations or posts. The written declaration would be distributed from SLP Headquarters in Freetown to all 34 police divisions in Sierra Leone. The IGP could also establish a position in the SLP to oversee the implementation of the MTs. The person assigned to this position would be responsible for collecting weekly reports signed by the police officers at the various stations and posts, confirming they had completed the trainings.



*Officers John Tumbay and Esther Kaintor leading a microtraining session in October 2012 (top).*

*ICITAP microtraining poster hangs next to a Sierra Leone election poster (bottom).*

68. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

69. Collinge, “ICITAP–Sierra Leone Weekly Report, October 28–November 3, 2012.”



# 7 Community Engagement

The second element of the ESP in Sierra Leone was community engagement. This component sought to relay to as many people as possible what peaceful elections should be like, and it sought to involve as much of the community as possible in holding the police accountable during the elections. Taking the low literacy rate into account and recognizing the importance of music and the radio in Sierra Leone culture, ICITAP used these media to increase the general public's access to election-related information. When considering the lack of technological modernization in Sierra Leone, the value of radio broadcasting becomes apparent—only 13 percent of individuals had access to the internet in as recently as 2017,<sup>70</sup> and fewer than 20 percent of Sierra Leoneans used televisions for election-related news as of 2007.<sup>71</sup> While more than 25 different newspapers were published in 2006, Sierra Leone's low literacy rates rendered this method ineffective to reach a large segment of the population.<sup>72</sup> On the other hand, 80 percent of

the country's population had access to radios in 2007, with most Sierra Leoneans tuning into radio broadcasts daily.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, Sierra Leoneans consider radio broadcasts the most trusted source of news in the country, despite the government's ability to influence programming.<sup>74</sup>



Assistant Inspector General Elizabeth Turay (top) and Jonathan Conteh, Director, Vision of the Blind (bottom) address the crowd at one of Sierra Leone's peace concerts held in October 2012.

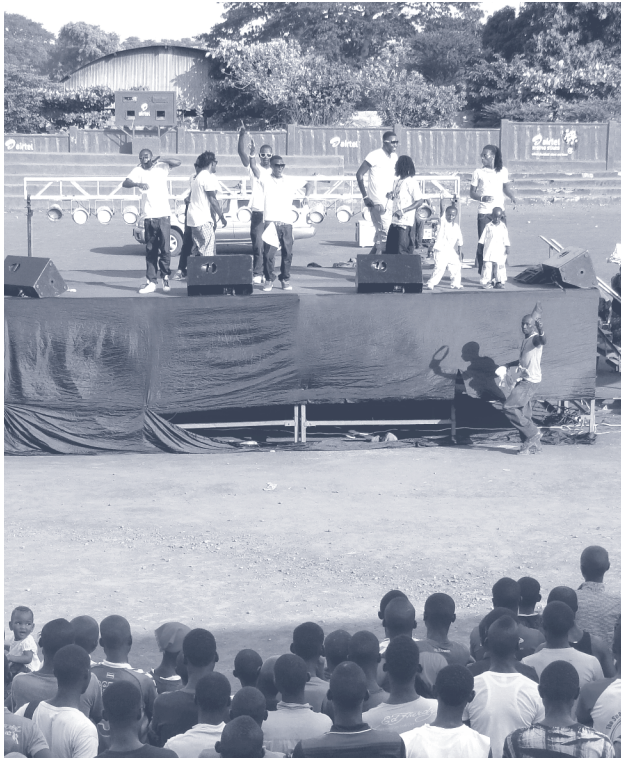
70. International Telecommunications Union, "Individuals Using the Internet."

71. BBC World Service, *Media Use*.

72. Karlekar and Marchant, *Freedom of the Press*.

73. BBC World Service, *Media Use*.

74. BBC World Service, *Media Use*.



*Members of Voice of Salone performing a concert in conjunction with their eight-song Peace Album, which promotes positive messaging about Sierra Leone Police as well as supporting a peaceful election process.*

Meanwhile, music had become a favorite medium to transmit political sentiments, particularly amongst the younger generations of voters.<sup>75</sup> SLEA Collinge described how he believed Sierra Leonean tribal culture’s use of music to teach life lessons meant that the population was already well accustomed to being educated through music.<sup>76</sup> Recognizing these factors, the community outreach component consisted of three pieces: (1) photographic educational posters, (2) peace concerts, and (3) specially made CDs containing music that encouraged peaceful elections.

75. Shepler, “Youth Music.”

76. Collinge, interview (see note 37).

The photographic posters portrayed “dos” and “don’ts” of police behavior on election day.<sup>77</sup> USAID helped fund the printing while ICITAP partnered with the SLP’s press officer to produce posters that staged actual police officers in photo shoots.<sup>78</sup> Each poster focused on a different training module lesson and depicted the inappropriate action with a clearly marked “X,” while the proper behavior was then mirrored and marked with a check mark.<sup>79</sup> The U.S. Ambassador to Sierra Leone, Michael S. Owen, praised the initiative, saying that both police and citizens told him the posters “were an effective way to educate literate and illiterate alike.”<sup>80</sup> Thanks to the tireless efforts of ICITAP’s Sierra Leonean Logistics Coordinator, Musa Sesay, posters were hung around polling places in Sierra Leone’s major cities on election day and also at every police station in Freetown. When Sesay hung the posters at the police stations in Freetown, he called for police and passersby to gather around him and then explained the meaning of the election posters in detail. This served both as a reminder of proper SLP behavior and as a signal to citizens that the officers had received election-specific training.<sup>81</sup>

Another initiative ICITAP undertook was peace concerts. While music had already been a popular medium to transmit political sentiments, the music was often overly political and took sides for or against specific politicians during previous elections.<sup>82</sup> The peace concerts conveyed

77. ICITAP, *Police Neutrality*.

78. ICITAP, *Police Neutrality*.

79. ICITAP, *Police Neutrality*.

80. Owen, “Ambassador Owen’s Remarks.”

81. Owen, “Ambassador Owen’s Remarks.”

82. Shepler, “Youth Music.”

a message promoting peaceful elections while remaining apolitical. The concerts highlighted the community's support for the SLP and the ESP and brought multiple groups, organizations, and political parties together. Participants included SLP LUCs, local choirs, and political parties' spokespersons, all of whom spoke in opposition to political violence.<sup>83</sup> The concerts allowed police officers to present the role playing exercises from their MT training modules while musical artists sang about peaceful elections and the SLP.<sup>84</sup> These concerts provided community members an opportunity to see police officers in a friendly environment and soften the image of the SLP. The SLP peace concerts were successful in the 2012 elections but proved to be unsustainable in the following elections. However, civil society organizations replicated variations of the concerts during future elections.<sup>85</sup>

In February 2012, Atkins met the members of Voice of Salone (VOS), who told him they wanted to create an eight-song Peace Album for the elections.<sup>86</sup> USAID and ICITAP provided limited logistical funding and support to VOS, and by September 2012, the album was complete. This album was specifically applauded by Ambassador Owen, who described the music as “a (fusion) of hip-hop, rap, and reggae styling and are sung in five languages: Krio, Temne, Mende, Mandinka, and Fula. Three of the songs have positive messaging about

the Sierra Leone Police.”<sup>87</sup> A promotional campaign about VOS's album and its messages regarding the elections was launched on September 17, 2012, on commercial radio stations.<sup>88</sup> This campaign was particularly successful after USAID purchased 2,000 CDs of the album and distributed them to “community radio stations and members of the Local Police Partnership Boards during phase 2 of the MT program.”<sup>89</sup>

The community engagement portion of the ESP has been lauded as extremely successful in involving the civilians to keep the police accountable in order to promote peaceful elections.<sup>90</sup> This success can be attributed to the following:

**1. The medium by which the outreach took place.**

Radio is the primary means by which Sierra Leoneans receive their news and is comparatively accessible.<sup>91</sup> However, this initiative was particularly successful because ICITAP distributed copies of the CDs to *community* radio stations, maximizing the reach of the album's messages. Including community radio stations ensured that citizens outside of urban areas received the message, as these stations often provide the only accessible radio broadcasts.<sup>92</sup>

**2. The community engagement message.** The political party in power traditionally controls the content of major news radio broadcasts.<sup>93</sup> Therefore, broadcasting music promoting political tolerance and apolitical

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83. Beinhardt and Collinge, *Sierra Leone Elections Observation Report*.

84. Beinhardt and Collinge, *Sierra Leone Elections Observation Report*.

85. John Tumbay, SLP master instructor, interview with authors Gaviria, Rabiou, Murphy, and Hadachek, September 27, 2018.

86. Owen, “Ambassador Owen's Remarks.”

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87. Owen, “Ambassador Owen's Remarks.”

88. Owen, “Ambassador Owen's Remarks.”

89. Owen, “Ambassador Owen's Remarks.”

90. Dempsey, interview (see note 9).

91. BBC World Service, *Media Use*.

92. Sangarie, “How Local Radio Put Sierra Leone on the Right Wavelength.”

93. Hunt, “Public Information.”

messages that stressed peace on election day represented a change in radio content. Furthermore, the messages promoting positive police-community relations and informing the citizens of the legal expectations for both citizens and police represented a direct extension of the other efforts led by ICITAP.<sup>94</sup>

When the ICITAP master instructors distributed the VOS CDs to police officers during phase 2 training, the music's message could reach the entire country as the trainers returned from the regional trainings to their home posts and the CDs were played on community radio stations.

This distribution—along with the fact that a community radio editor attended one of the phase 2 regional MTs with his sound engineer, recorded all nine of the training modules, and played them repeatedly on his community radio station—illustrates the power that community radio can have in disseminating both musical and MT messages throughout Sierra Leone, other sub-Saharan African countries, and many other countries around the world as well. Community radio should become a key part of ICITAP's grassroots MT dissemination strategy.

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94. Owen, "Ambassador Owen's Remarks."

# Conclusion

## A main goal for the Election Security Program (ESP)

was that it be sustainable past the 2012 elections in Sierra Leone. The 2012 ESP has proved to be relatively sustainable, particularly in the area of roll call MT. An interview with one of the original 2012 MIs, John Tumbay, confirmed that MT continued after the official conclusion of ICITAP's program.<sup>95</sup> Tumbay stated that the rates at which the roll-call training modules were used prior to the 2018 election (80–85 percent of precincts conducted the trainings) was only negligibly less than those in the 2012 election period (90 percent of precincts participated) despite the fact that ICITAP was not involved in the 2018 elections.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, Kaintor, currently the SLP's Director of Training, commented on how the use of MT expanded to include non–election related topics.<sup>97</sup> This demonstrates the importance of one good practice this publication previously highlighted: involving local stakeholders in the earliest stages of a program's design to maximize its sustainability after ICITAP is no longer directly involved. Two specific elements likely contributed to the sustainability of the MT component of the program:

1. Phase 1 curriculum development. The MIs were actively involved in the initial curriculum development.<sup>98</sup> The ICITAP program designers, looking toward the future, ensured the SLP MIs received instruction on curriculum development that they

could use to design MT modules on other topics in the future. This decision appears to have been sound, as USAID evaluators who interviewed SLP MIs reported interviewees described the training concept as “innovative,” and all believed roll MT should be used in the future to provide trainings on additional topics<sup>99</sup>

2. MT recordings. Recording the MT modules on DVDs allowed the trainings to be distributed to radio and television stations, the latter having become more widely accessible in Sierra Leone recently.<sup>100</sup> The DVDs ensured that both citizens and the SLP were knowledgeable about the election laws and could continue to hold one another accountable in the 2018 elections.<sup>101</sup> The DVDs were particularly crucial to the 2018 elections' community relations efforts, as advocacy was primarily conducted through media outlets.<sup>102</sup> The recording of the trainings was also important because it provided a method to counter the constant “brain drain” that the SLP suffers.<sup>103</sup> The SLP currently suffers from a high rate of officer turnover because of the low salaries and the better options available in the private sector.<sup>104</sup> Many officers who were trained for the 2012 elections were no longer employed by the SLP in 2018, and conversely, many individuals who were

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95. Tumbay, interview (see note 90).

96. Tumbay, interview (see note 90).

97. Kaintor, interview (see note 50).

98. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*.

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99. Davis, Etter, and Fiorello, *Microtraining and the Sierra Leone Police*, 6.

100. Collinge, interview (see note 37); Tumbay, interview (see note 90).

101. Tumbay, interview (see note 90).

102. Tumbay, interview (see note 90).

103. Collinge, interview (see note 37).

104. Collinge, interview (see note 37).

officers in 2018 had likely not been part of the SLP during the 2012 elections.<sup>105</sup> The recordings of the original 2012 MT modules were thus able to act as an alternative training tool in 2018 that addressed the issues posed by the SLP's lack of election security-related institutional knowledge. The good practice of adapting trainings to the local context and avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach increases not only a program's effectiveness but also its sustainability.

Finally, the lack of ICITAP support and USAID funding during the 2018 election period meant that not all elements of the program proved sustainable. For example, the SLP did not organize or participate in peace concerts in preparation for the 2018 elections.<sup>106</sup> The inability of the SLP to continue the peace concert component of the program is an example of a lesson learned. Future

initiatives should stress the importance of designing programs with an eye toward local resource availability from the very beginning. However, other civic society organizations filled this void and held their own peace concerts during the 2018 election cycle.<sup>107</sup> This evolution need not be seen as a slight against the 2012 program or the SLP in 2018. Rather, it can be seen as a growth in the strength of Sierra Leonean civil society institutions and a natural evolution of the 2012 program's promotion of community empowerment.

Overall, Americans and Sierra Leoneans describe the ICITAP 2012 ESP as a success, with the 2012 elections experiencing nearly no recorded incidents of political violence on November 17, 2012.<sup>108</sup> Regional expert Col. (Ret.) Thomas Dempsey went so far as to argue that “the SLP [training] model is *the model* to use” across Africa.<sup>109</sup>



*Children enjoying Sierra Leone's 2012 election day.*

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105. Collinge, interview (see note 37).

106. Tumbay, interview (see note 90).

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107. Artists for Peace – Sierra Leone; Pocket TV Classic, “Peace Concert Sierra Leone 2018.”

108. Collinge, interview (see note 37).

109. Dempsey, interview (see note 9).



# Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Initialisms

<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>ESP</b>	Election Security Program
<b>ICITAP</b>	International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (Office of the U.S. Department of Justice)
<b>IGP</b>	Inspector General of Police
<b>LUC</b>	Local Unit Commander
<b>MI</b>	Master Instructor
<b>MT</b>	Microtrainings
<b>SLEA</b>	Senior Law Enforcement Advisor
<b>SLP</b>	Sierra Leone Police
<b>USAID</b>	U.S. Agency for International Development

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