



## **HRCSL ENGAGES SIERRA LEONE CORRECTIONAL SERVICE ON FINDINGS OF PRISON MONITORING**

In continuation with its Strategic engagement with institutions, the HRCSL on Tuesday 18th June 2019 engaged the Director General and officials of the Sierra Leone Correctional Services (SLCS).

The engagement was about the HRCSL findings during its monitoring of Correctional Centres across the country and to also formally introduce the newly appointed Commissioners.

It could be recalled that the HRCSL Commissioners embarked on a regional tour immediately they assumed office in April, 2019. One of the institutions targeted was the Sierra Leone Correctional Service.

During the outreach to the regions, the Commission monitored the facilities of the SLCS and identified some challenges.

The Vice Chairperson of HRCSL, Mr. Victor I. Lansana, informed the management of the SLCS that the engagement was for the two institutions to discuss the findings and observations of HRCSL's monitoring visits to correctional centres in the regions conducted from the 13th-28th May, 2019. Highlighting some of the challenges observed by the Commission, the Vice Chairperson stated that the issue of ventilation and housing capacity within the facility, juveniles being kept with adults in some correctional centres, the quality and quantity of food in some centres, hygiene and water facility, health and medical concerns and skills training for inmates came to the limelight.

The issue of skills training took centre stage during the discussion. "The SLCS is a place of reformation but without any required skills the individual will return to the community unreformed and they will be more burden to the society" the Vice Chairperson Stated.

Commissioner Simiti Lavalay while making her statement commended the SLCS for centres where women were regional commanders. She also applauded the strives of the SLCS for creating the child-friendly space in some of their facilities. She also advocated that a holding cell be built for inmates to be kept while they await for their matters to be called upon.

Reacting to the concerns raised by the Commission, the SLCS Director General, Joseph Lamboi stated that most of the concerns raised were perennial and most are tagged to budget allocation. He appealed that the Commission continue to advocate on their behalf to government and partners for more funding and supports.

In another engagement, the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone held a fruitful meeting with the Child Protection/ Child Governance Advisor of Save the Children; Deanne Evans on



Tuesday 18th June 2019 to discuss the launching of the 'State of Children in Sierra Leone 2017' report and to also formally meet with the new Commissioners.

The report was based on the situation of children in Sierra Leone and also an assessment of government's performances in terms of promoting and protecting children's rights, and holding it accountable.

The Executive Secretary, HRCSL Mr. Joseph Kamara welcomed the Advisor and formally introduced the commissioners. He further stated it was an opportunity for the two institutions to continue with the work they started and hope to continue with their collaboration.

While making her statement, Deanne expressed her joy to be back and to finally plan for the launch of the report which the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone was instrumental in its compilation and production. She also assured the Commission of more collaboration in the future.