

NMJD Organizes National Conference on Human Security

With support from the United Nations Development Programme through the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) organized a two-day national information sharing, awareness raising and planning conference on Human Security in the mining sector in Sierra Leone at the Vanilla Complex, Aberdeen in Freetown, on Thursday 20th to Friday 21st June 2024 on the theme: "Promoting Human Security in the Minerals Sector Governance in Sierra Leone". The conference was geared towards promoting the use of human security approach as a tool to improve mining sector governance in Sierra Leone by equipping citizens and affected mining communities with knowledge of human security and its related components such as Human Rights, Corporate Social Responsibility/Impact Sourcing and Local Content. The conference targeted 60 participants from across the country drawn from diverse walks of life and different organizations/institutions, including youth and women's groups, persons with disabilities, local chiefs, affected land owning families, mining companies, government MDAs, security sector, media, CBOs, CSOs and NGOs.

In her opening statement, Mrs Aminata Kelly-Lamin who moderated the session described the national conference as mind-provoking and she reminded participants that all over the world human security has only one objective, which is to "create a conducive political, economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions in which people live in dignity and freedom". Mrs Aminata Kelly-Lamin is a civil society and gender activist with many years of experience advocating for the proper resettlement and relocation of families affected by mining operations. . She drew the attention of participants to the African Mining Vision (AMV) of 2000, which she said is the "continental blueprint to harness Africa's rich mineral wealth with the objective of building resilient communities and competitive economies".

Whilst making a statement on behalf of UNDP, Snr Rule of Law and Human Rights Officer, Mr Alie B Sesay, expressed delight to be at the conference and emphasized the multiplicity of problems that always characterized the operations of multinational companies and the need for appropriate response through the adoption of the human security approach, which "puts people's safety, health, socio-economic wellbeing and community engagements at the centre of development". In giving an overview of the project, NMJD's Executive Director, Mr Abu A. Brima, said the human security approach calls for "provision for the comprehensive safety and security of populations in mining communities at all stages and at all levels of mining operations". He spoke about the core principles guiding the human security approach, including people-oriented (issues of vulnerability), gender consideration (impact), respectful (local customs and traditions), and consistent with national laws and standards. Statements were also delivered by representatives of the Women's Initiative Forum for Empowerment in Extractives (WIFEE), Moyamba District Council, Natural Resource Rights and Economic Justice Sierra Leone (NaRGEJ-SL) and the local authorities (chiefs).

The conference provided a platform where the different stakeholders in the natural resource sector in Sierra Leone shared their concerns and aspirations, experiences and

the challenges they faced in dealing with issues of human security and developed transformational action plans on how to mitigate some of these challenges.



NaGEJ-SL representative, Mr. Hajie Bah giving a solidarity statement



Mrs. Aminata Kelly-Lamin moderating one of the plenary sessions



Participants in break-out group work to develop action plans



NMJD Executive Director giving an overview of the project