

CARL DEMANDS JUSTICE FOR POLITICALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

At the acme of 2018 elections campaigns, which seemed like a do-or-die affair, N'Daimoh A. Bangura dared to participate amidst intense violence, intimidation and discrimination, and defied these age-old barriers to women's participation particularly in a male-dominated opposition stronghold.



N'Daimoh A. Bangura

As the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) Chairperson in Constituency 058, in Madina, Kambia District, N'Daimoh conceived rising that far had not come easily. She is probably the only female who has attained such a position in the entire Northern Sierra Leone.

According to her, after securing her position, she did not only receive persistent death-threats from anonymous callers; on several occasions, she was humiliated and physically assaulted by male supporters of the ruling All People's Congress (APC) Party in the same community. After failing to diminish assuage her zest in politics her aggressors extended their assault to her family members, including her five-year-old daughter, Mabinty Dumbuya, while completely vandalizing her residence.

It soon became obvious to N'Daimoh that she and her family were in grave danger particularly when her attempt to seek redress from the police was treated with a lacklustre response.. In Sierra Leone, during elections, whatever happens to the rule of law remains a mystery. Increasing lawlessness and extreme violence prevail unabated, especially when perpetrated by supporters of the incumbent party. A combination of these and the inability of N'Daimoh's party, at the time of the 2018 elections to guarantee "safe space" for her participation, urged her to relocate with her family to the district headquarter town of Kambia.



Mabinty Dumbuya

However, for N'Daimoh, the cost of apathy became even higher as days went by than participating. So she moved back to Madina and intensified her participation amidst looming danger until her party, **SLPP**, won the presidential election.

Unfortunately, N'Daimoh's nightmare is far from over, in spite of the victory. At the moment, she continues to be harshly discriminated against, this time by her own party, for the very constituency chairmanship that handed her all the humiliation. For some members of the party, in addition to her being a women, she is not educated enough to effectively man the position.

It is interesting how efforts to increase women's participation and representation in public spheres are often confronted with some patriarchal challenges. We must renew our commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality by creating safe spaces for women's participation.

To this end, the Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law (CARL), with support from Trocaire, seeks to promote access to justice for women and girls, and, therefore, joins N'Daimoh to demand justice for acts of violence committed against her during the 2018 elections.



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