



## Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law (CARL-SL)

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### Press release

#### **CARL Launches Nationwide Human Rights Monitoring Project to Support Covid-19 Response Efforts**

*Freetown, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020:* Thanks to funding from the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), the Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law (CARL) today launched a \$40,000 project aimed at monitoring and documenting human rights violations, ensuring transparency and accountability in the management of Sierra Leone's Covid-19 response funds, and supporting social mobilization efforts through media outreach. Through this initiative, CARL will work with 16 Human Rights Monitors and regional partners across the country to track and respond to human rights violations, providing legal assistance to victims of human rights abuses, and to the extent possible, keeping tabs on medical and food supplies provided by the government and its partners to hospitals and quarantine facilities.

"We can't possibly solve all the challenges occasioned by the Covid-19 just yet, but there are opportunities for human rights defenders to support the response efforts by ensuring that rights are respected and resources dedicated to the response are managed in a transparent and accountable manner", said Ibrahim Tommy, CARL's Executive Director, adding that "We cannot afford to ignore the lessons of the 2014 Ebola outbreak when a significant amount of funds dedicated to response efforts were allegedly mismanaged".

The project would sponsor monitoring and extensive media outreach through community-based volunteers and the country's key media institutions. Data collected through the monitoring efforts will be shared via a monthly bulletin and radio broadcasts. The key objectives of the project are to ensure protection and respect for human rights at all times, a transparent and accountable delivery of support services, and keep citizens informed and engaged with the response efforts.

As the Government of Sierra Leone has dedicated a significant amount of funds to Covid-19 response efforts, there is need to ensure that the funds are managed in a transparent and accountable manner. This project would help identify progress and challenges in the management of Covid-19 response funds, especially as it relates to any gaps between resources expended and the availability of supplies in treatment and quarantine facilities. CARL will also use this project to share constructive recommendations that will meaningfully contribute to improving the response.

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