



### **Health Alert (HASIL) CAPACITY Profile**

In its extensive involvement in Sierra Leone's public health landscape, Health Alert has pursued a holistic approach to advancing integrated health services throughout the nation. From frontline responses to critical outbreaks such as COVID-19 and Ebola to ongoing endeavors in adolescent and youth engagement, Health Alert remains steadfast in its commitment to health equity and community resilience.

Central to Health Alert's mission is the strengthening of health systems at the district level through collaborative partnerships with local councils. By implementing initiatives like participatory budgeting and public finance management training, Health Alert empowers district councils to effectively support last-mile health service delivery, ensuring equitable distribution of life-saving commodities to remote communities. Through enhancing council capacity in resource allocation and fiscal oversight, Health Alert facilitates greater efficiency and transparency in the healthcare system, ultimately enhancing access to vital healthcare services for all citizens.

Furthermore, Health Alert actively collaborates with local structures such as Facility Management Committee members and Community Health Workers (CHWs) to promote social accountability at the chiefdom level. Through direct engagement with beneficiaries and community stakeholders, Health Alert fosters meaningful dialogue and partnership, empowering communities to advocate for their health needs and priorities. This grassroots approach enables Health Alert to catalyze positive change and foster better health outcomes, leveraging local expertise and resources to address health disparities and promote community well-being.

In essence, Health Alert's work at the district level serves as a cornerstone of its broader mission to advance integrated health services and strengthen health systems nationwide. By forging partnerships, building capacity, and promoting community engagement, Health Alert continues to drive progress towards a healthier, more resilient Sierra Leone for all its citizens. Additionally, as part of its comprehensive approach, Health Alert has established a co-created Adolescent and Youth Mechanism in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH).

This Mechanism serves as a collaborative platform aimed at enhancing the collective capacity of organizations and agencies serving adolescents and youth to advocate for and accelerate investments in adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health (AY SRH). By bringing together diverse stakeholders, including youth-led organizations and government agencies, the Mechanism facilitates strategic coordination and collaboration to address the SRH needs of adolescents and youth at various levels - national, district, and village. Through prioritized actions and engagements with policymakers and key influencers, the Mechanism aims to drive tangible improvements in AY SRH outcomes across Sierra Leone.

**Health Alert Sierra Leone (HASiL) Footprint:** HASiL has had a presence in Sierra Leone since 2009 had undertaken several advocacy campaigns on health policies reform, government commitment to fulfill the 15% Abuja Declaration on health, monitoring of the Free Health Care drugs and other health services delivery, promotes sensitization and education on infant and maternal mortality and other health issues including water, sanitation and hygiene, sexual reproductive health and family planning, nutrition, Sexual and gender based violence, teenage pregnancy and early marriage etc, so as to compliment Governments and its development partners effort and the realization of the SDGs global targets on health as health is a basic human right.

Health Alert held several public hearing and social accountability Forums with DMOs, District Health Sisters, Mayors, Chairmen and Chief Administrators of all 19 Local Councils and Community Representatives including Ministry of Health and Sanitation officials in all five regions to look at the successes and challenges of the implementation of the Free Health Care and the health service delivery in general. Health Alert collaborate with National Youth Coalition and Children Forum Network to undertake Life skills support and training to 25 out of school children and 100 youths in five communities in the western Rural Districts.

**In 2014 to 2015, Health Alert** also embarked on (42) community sensitization and awareness raising on the prevention and control of the Ebola virus transmission, engaged on massive media campaigns for international community attention to support Sierra Leone to combat the scourge as thousands of people had lost their lives, advocated for increase in Personal Protective Equipment's (PPEs) for health workers and staff motivation. We used several strategies to sensitize the public through Radio, TV, Community meetings, Social Mobilization, P.A Systems, mega phones, door to door sensitization and most of our network members were also involved in contact tracing. We also embarked on monitoring the post Ebola recovery implementation where a lot of challenges were observed such as lack of community participation and inclusion in the implementation of the Recovery Plan to ensure ownership and sustainability and these were shared with the Office of the Chief of Staff at State House where attention was given to the concerns and recommendations made.

**In 2016** Health Alert became part of the **Scaling Up Nutrition & Immunization (SUNI)** platform and was selected to be part of the National Steering Committee. **2017-2018**-Health Alert Facilitated a training of community social mobilizers from 8 districts on contact tracing for immunization campaigns and also to identify defaulters for future immunization schedules with support from **GAVI through the SUNI-CSP platform** (Civil Society Platform on Immunization). Through this Health Alert was able to work with community stakeholders to develop over 50 community action plans that helped supported immunization uptake within the various chiefdoms.

**In 2018 Health Alert** received grants from the **Japan Social Development Fund (JSDF)** through Decentralization Secretariat and Freetown city council to trained (24) Councilors and Ward development committees' members on Participatory Budgeting in over 48 Wards in Western

urban/rural district were for the first-time communities had the opportunity to make decision about their felt needs and not imposed on them by duty barriers. **In 2019-Health Alert** received grants from World bank/PFMU to trained Local council in Bombali and Tonkolili on Public financial management (PBF) and to monitor health service delivery on 8 Peripheral health units.

**In 2019- Health Alert** conducted training for stakeholders to develop community action plan with support from UNICEF for over **18 Chiefdoms in 3 districts ( Moyamba, Kambia, Port Loko)** on immunization, Nutrition and Malaria. **In 2020 - Health Alert** Conduct advocacy training and stakeholders' engagement on Sexual Gender based Violence in Pujehum with Support from **UN Women. Over 160 community stakeholders from three chiefdoms were trained on GBV. In 2020- Health Alert** received funding from **PAI** to support Adolescent and youth on Sexual Reproductive health and rights training in 5 districts where over 250 adolescent and youth were trained.

**In 2021 – Health Alert** received support from **Care International** with Support from **KFW Bank** in Germany to conduct sensitization and awareness raising on Covid-19 with in the Western rural were One hundred and sixty (160) community engagement meetings held. a total of Nine thousand five hundred and fifty (9,550) households were reached in these communities and their catchment areas respectively. Twenty-seven thousand one hundred and sixty-one (27,161) people were reached in these households with COVID-19 prevention and control messages of which Eleven thousand nine hundred (11,900) were male and Fifteen thousand two hundred and sixty-one (15, 261) were female.

**In 2021-2022-** Health Alert received grant from **USAID** through the **Momentum Country and Global Leadership** project were capacity of 46 Youth and CSO on SMART advocacy approach around FP/AYSRH and MNCH services in four districts was built. further trainings for Adolescent/Youths and CSOs on budget tracking on Family Planning services in the four project implementation districts (**Pujehun, Kailahun, Western Rural and Urban**) were held. Also, through MCGI supported Health Alert in Partnership with the Ministry of Health have held the two largest Adolescent and Youth Conferences on Family Planning In Sierra Leone were over 350 adolescents and Youth in 2022 and 2023 combine from the 16 districts converged for two days to discuss, asked question and proffer solutions on how they want to see family planning service been delivered across the country.

**In 2021-2022-** Health Alert received funding from the African Health Budget Network (AHBN) for 9 months project on Covid-19 funds accountability especially but not limited funds from the IMF Special Drawing Rights (SDR) and World Bank support funds. Also, to tracked service delivery in 15 Covid-19 vaccination centers across the country with focus on hesitancy and community acceptance of the covid-19 vaccine.

**In 2022 through** the Youth4Health Project funded by EU, Health Alert was able to engaged 15 Health facilities across three district and on improving adolescent and youth Family planning service and tracking availability of FP commodities with the use of KoBo collect application installed in phones given to FMC's to strengthen commodity security and also engaging schools and setting up 15 school health clubs across the three districts (Port-Loko, Kambia and Western Rural) were peer to peer education around teenage pregnancy and hygiene at discussed. Through Youth4Health, 7000 adolescents have received targeted messages on Family Planning and

Teenage Pregnancy. Across 15 community health centers in Port Loko, Kambia, and Western Rural. A systematic approach is evident through regular Family Planning data clinics in the three districts. These clinics bring together key stakeholders, including the District Medical Officer, M&E Officer, District Health Sister, FP Focal Points, and District Pharmacist, fostering discussions on data quality and strategic planning for enhanced impact.

**In 2023 through** the World Bank project, Health Alert have engaged 5 local council and district health management teams across 5 districts ( Tonkoli, Kailahun, Falaba, Bonthe and Western rural) on strengthen Health service delivery across these district. Health Alert has been able to also trained 50 health care workers at these service delivery points on rights-based approach where the clients is the boss and as health care worker they must respect the right of the clients irrespective of their status, class, religion, political affiliation etc. Health Alert also held district social accountability meetings in these districts where over 300 stakeholders across the 3 districts to discuss and share their issues in the presence of District medical officer and Council administrator and in turn responses are made by duty bearer and action plan developed for next steps are developed.

### **Health Alert's Malaria Intervention Initiatives Since 2012**

Since 2012, Health Alert has been an integral part of the National Malaria Control Program, leveraging its expertise and resources to advocate for and implement impactful malaria interventions across Sierra Leone. Our organization's commitment to combating malaria is manifested through a multifaceted approach, with a strong emphasis on advocacy, community engagement, and awareness-raising efforts.

#### **Advocacy and Community Sensitization**

Health Alert has consistently lent a powerful advocacy voice to raise awareness about the detrimental effects of mosquito breeding within our neighborhoods. Through joint campaigns with the National Malaria Control Program, we have utilized various platforms, including radio and TV discussion programs, to sensitize communities on the importance of malaria prevention and control measures. Our advocacy efforts have not only focused on raising awareness but also on advocating for increased domestic revenue investment into malaria control programs.

#### **Supply Monitoring and Community Engagement**

One of our core mandates is to monitor the supply of mosquito-treated bed nets and ensure their proper and consistent use within communities. We actively engage with pregnant women, lactating mothers, and parents, emphasizing the importance of utilizing these life-saving tools distributed during antenatal care (ANC), postnatal care (PNC) visits, or mass bed net distribution campaigns. Through targeted community outreach, we strive to ensure that everyone, especially vulnerable populations, has access to and utilizes treated mosquito bed nets effectively.

#### **Participation in National and Global Campaigns**

Health Alert is actively involved in national and global initiatives aimed at malaria prevention and control. As a participant in the Roll Back Malaria campaign (RBM), we contribute to collective

efforts to combat malaria on a global scale. Locally, our network of 53 grassroots organizations collaborates with us to raise awareness nationwide during World Malaria Day commemorations annually. Through these activities, we reinforce the message of malaria prevention through improved hygiene practices and the consistent use of treated mosquito bed nets, particularly among pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children under five