

The hysterical debate about abortion in Sierra Leone is no confirmation that the country is a model of righteousness, it simply shows that morality is like an a la carte restaurant menu, some people like certain food items, others don't and vice-versa. With some religious leaders assuming the mantle of "moral guarantors" of Sierra Leonean society, the question becomes which morals, and whose morals are they the guardians of?



In the past few decades, Sierra Leone has earned some honors in world rankings that imply a society in serious moral volatility. Corruption, high infant mortality, and a lack of justice are some of the moral challenges facing Sierra Leone that are potentially more important than what a woman chooses to do with her own body or what two consenting adults, whether homo or heterosexual choose to do behind closed doors.

Despite an explosion in the number of places of worship and religious broadcasting, Sierra Leone remains a country where certain morally wrong acts are viewed with dispassionate concern. For example, many Sierra Leoneans will readily admit that when their compatriots gather together at road accident scenes, it is with the intention of robbing the victims and not to assist them. Many Sierra Leoneans also allege that the country is full not of pure moralists but of moral hustlers who are in it for politics and the opportunity to financially benefit from monies contributed by foreign sponsors.

What's more, in a society with high unemployment, the arrival of certain "investors" in the country has only exacerbated the moral confusion some Sierra Leoneans, especially youths find themselves in. Betting on sports and numbers is now a pastime that many already destitute Sierra Leoneans, unaware of the odds, participate in with the hope of becoming rich by hitting a jackpot. And then there is the hard liquor brewed by "investors" that is destroying the health of thousand of Sierra Leoneans. The new brews have even displaced and put out of work those who used to make the illegal and equally harmful local moonshine known as "Omole." Yet, no shouts of opposition to these vices are being heard on the rooftops of the government buildings congregated on Tower Hill.

After the new abortion law is defeated in Parliament, young ladies who need to terminate unwanted pregnancies will continue to risk their lives with shadowy medical practitioners. And the rest of society, under the fallacy of being moral, will continue gambling, drinking, and allegedly stealing.

## Sierra Leone abortion debate exposes a la carte nature of morality - inside-sierra-leone -

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That is the moral status quo Sierra Leoneans know and have been living with for decades.