



UNITED NATIONS
SIERRA LEONE



**2021 UN ANNUAL
RESULTS REPORT**
Sierra Leone





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UN COUNTRY TEAM IN SIERRA LEONE

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) is composed of the heads of all the UN agencies, funds and programmes active in Sierra Leone. The UNCT leads the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2020-2023, with its steering committee co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Minister of Planning and Economic Development.

21 UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes signed the UNSDCF 2020-2023, 18 of which are implementing the UNSDCF Joint Workplan. The UNCT is composed of 15 resident agencies and 3 non-resident agencies. Four international finance institutions also closely interact with the UNCT and participate in UNCT meetings. The UN family works as one with the Government and partners to deliver sustainable development interventions across People, Prosperity, Planet, Partnership, and Peace.



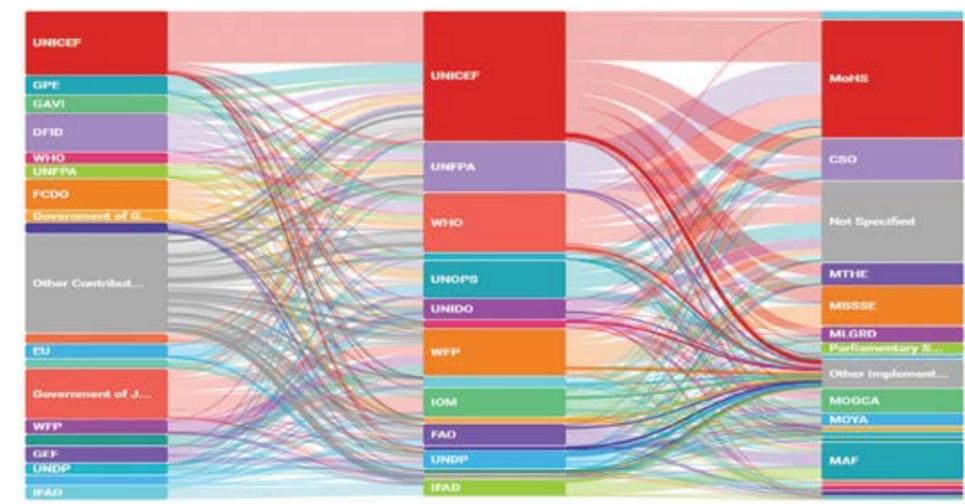
KEY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

The key development partners of the United Nations in Sierra Leone are the Government of Sierra Leone, international financial institutions, donor governments and development agencies, civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, other public sector institutions, academia, the mass media, and the people of Sierra Leone. The UN Country Team wishes to thank all partners who have supported our work in 2021, despite the challenges posed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

We wish to pay special acknowledgement to the co-chair of the UNSDCF Joint Steering Committee, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development; and members from Government Ministries—Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security; Basic and Senior Secondary Education; Gender and Children's Affairs; Health and Sanitation; and Social Welfare. The UN Country Team also wishes to thank our dedicated implementing partners in helping us to progress the 2030 Agenda in Sierra Leone.



LINKING PARTNERS, UN AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES, AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



FOREWORD

Midway into its implementation, this report card, our stock-taking of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2020-2023), speaks to the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Sierra Leone's development advances in 2021, notwithstanding the shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impact and other challenges.

As UN Resident Coordinator, with 18 resident and non-resident UN agencies, funds and programmes contributing to the national development priorities and strategies of the Government of Sierra Leone as established in the Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019-2023, I am pleased to present to you the 2021 UN Country Annual Results Report for Sierra Leone.

As the roadmap of our collective development programmes in the country towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the UNSDCF outlines four strategic priority areas. I encourage you to pay attention to how UN Agencies, funds and programmes have delivered on these outcome areas:

Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security, and Climate Resilience, where the country has witnessed improved agricultural practices and reduction of vulnerability due to food insecurity.

Transformational Governance, where access to justice improved, especially for vulnerable populations including children, women, and migrants through development and review of legal and policy frameworks, strengthening and establishment of local service centres, and providing direct support to survivors of violence.

Access to Basic Services, where more children in Sierra Leone have enrolled in school with improved and meaningful learning outcomes, where WASH

services have improved the wellbeing of the population and reduced disease burden, and where efforts have been strengthened towards the achievement of Universal Health Coverage.

Protection and Empowerment of the Most Vulnerable, where key actions were taken towards changing community behaviour and understanding of the rights of women, children, and people living with disabilities, and the promotion and protection of these rights.

As one of the first countries to implement the Cooperation Framework under the UN development system reform, the UNCT in Sierra Leone was able to deliver coherent, efficient, and effective programmatic and operational activities against the four outcomes of the UNSDCF in 2021. This could not have been done without our co-travellers in this journey, the Government of Sierra Leone, its people, and the development partners. The collaboration with Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED), as co-chair of the UNSDCF Joint Steering Committee and in the Ministerial Development Partnership Committee (DEPAC) in addition to its efforts on the delivery of the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process and the Country Common Analysis (CCA) updates has enhanced the UNCT's capability in delivering as one and in ensuring that no one is left behind in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of sustainable development activities.

Looking forward to 2022, the UN Country Team will continue to focus on implementing the UNSDCF, including the activities adopted from the UN COVID-19 Socioeconomic Response Plan. Our efforts on collective partnerships and resource mobilization would be reinvigorated. Innovative funding streams and catalytic partnerships would also be better explored, including South-South cooperation and non-financial partnerships.

Babatunde A. Ahonsi
United Nations Resident Coordinator
Sierra Leone

SIERRA LEONE AT GLANCE

POPULATION 7,092,113 

 41% Urban

 59% Rural

 42% of the population is under the age of 15

FOOD SECURITY

 3.9 million people is food insecure

 2 million people chronically hungry

 1.3 million people acutely hungry (IPC Phase 3+)

MATERNAL AND INFANT MORTALITY

 1 in 32 babies die during their first month of life

 1 in 139 pregnant women die due to complications from pregnancy or childbirth

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

 85% of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years have undergone some form of FGM, with

 61% of girls aged 15 to 19 years having already undergone FGM

 1 in 7 adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 are currently married

Approximately  half of all women believe a husband is justified in beating his wife

NUTRITION

 29.5% of children under 5 are stunted

 5% of children under 5 are acutely malnourished

EDUCATION

Only  1 in 10 children aged 3-5 years attends an early education programme

About  half of children aged 3-5 years are developmentally on track, but the majority have below average literacy and numeracy skills

 82% of primary school-aged children attend school

 For every 5 students who enter primary school, only 1 student completes their last year of senior secondary school

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

 59.5% of households have access to improved drinking water, though only

 2% actually access water from safely managed sources

 23% of households have soap and water for handwashing

 16% have access to improved toilet facilities that are not shared with other households

 17% still practice open defecation

 35% of peripheral healthcare units and 26% of primary schools do not have WASH facilities

More than  80% of under-five deaths at hospitals have environmental health and sanitation-related causes



1 | COUNTRY CONTEXT

Sierra Leone has a total population of 7,092,113, of which household population is 7,076,119, and institutional population is 15,994.¹ Poverty in the capital, Freetown is estimated to have increased from 17.7 per cent in 2018 to 29.1 per cent in 2020.² According to the 2021 World Bank Economic Review, in other urban areas, the increase was much smaller, from 45.2 per cent to 46.3 per cent.³ In rural areas, there was essentially no change as poverty is estimated to have declined from 71.5 per cent to 71 per cent.⁴ Sierra Leone's economy is heavily reliant on agriculture, forestry, and fishing (60 per cent of GDP in 2020).⁵ However, about 94.1 per cent of households reported crop production difficulties (i.e., plant diseases, low seed quality, and crop loss and damage during planting season). According to the June 2021 Food System Monitoring Survey (FSMS) survey, the percentage of households spending more than 75 per cent of their income on food is about 74.1 per cent.⁶

Sierra Leone has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.644, ranking it 153 out of 162 countries in the 2018 index.⁷ Only 11.6 per cent of members of parliament are women.⁸ Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) rate in Sierra Leone is 83 per cent for women ages 15-49.⁹ According to the Multidimensional Poverty Index 2019, multidimensional poverty based on disability stood at 68.1 per cent with persons with functional disabilities being poorer than those without functional disabilities. HIV/AIDS prevalence is estimated at 1.7 per cent among adults ages 15-49 with 2.2 and 1.1 per cent in women and men, respectively. HIV prevalence in urban areas is twice that in rural areas, at 2.3 per cent in urban areas compared with 1.2 per cent in rural areas.¹⁰

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the economy with growth contracting to -2 per cent in 2020¹¹ mainly due to slow down in the tertiary and service sectors (tourism, and trade including supply chain disruptions of impending imports) and dampening manufacturing and construction due to the suspension of international flights with Government's COVID-19 containment measures further affecting agricultural production, local and regional trade mineral production and exports. Economic growth rebounded by 2.9 per cent in 2021¹² reflecting the easing of COVID-19 restrictions and government fiscal response to the pandemic. Growth is expected to remain strong at 5 per cent in 2022¹³ supported by the recovery in agriculture and services. Headline inflation fell to 8.9 per cent in March 2021, before increasing sharply to 15.6 per cent by late-November, reflecting an increase in food and fuel prices. Indeed, food inflation reached 18.8 per cent in November, well above its pre-pandemic level of 9.9 per cent (reflecting an increase in the price of key food staples due to food supply difficulties).¹⁴

Sierra Leone has made sustained progress on state reconstruction since the end of the civil war in 2002. It has consolidated state authority, extended public services, and undertaken significant reforms in the governance and security sectors. The country has also conducted four elections with peaceful transfer of power in 2002, 2007, and 2018 (in 2012 there was no change of power). However, it remains in a fragile political situation, with the potential for heightened tension between the two main political parties (largely along ethno-regional lines) to spill over to the larger society in the lead-up to the next general elections in mid-2023.



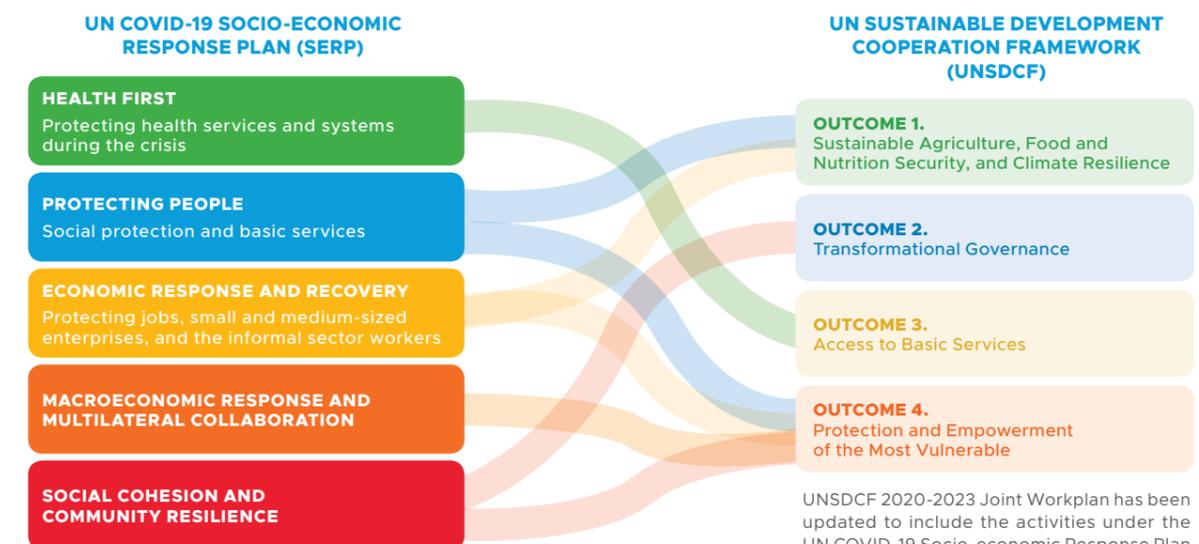
2 | UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM RESULTS THROUGH THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

2.1 Overview of the Cooperation Framework Results

The United Nations System in Sierra Leone represented by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the Government of Sierra Leone represented by the Minister of Planning and Economic Development signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2020-2023 in October 2019. The UNSDCF 2020-2023 is currently at the penultimate year of its implementation, with 18 resident and non-resident UN Agencies, funds and programmes contributing to the national development priorities and strategies of the Government of Sierra Leone as established in the Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019-2023 and to the progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In 2021, the UNSDCF 2020-2023 Joint Workplan has been updated to include the activities under the UN COVID-19 Socio-economic Response Plan and to reinvigorate effective partnerships as outlined in the UN Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda. Both financial and non-financial partnerships have been strengthened, while continuing to uphold the principles of gender equality, human rights, conflict sensitivity, and to "leave no one behind" in all activities. Recommendations from the Food Systems Summit are currently being mainstreamed to programmatic work to catalyse sustainable and inclusive transformation of food systems in the country.

This report documents the progress that has been made towards the implementation of the UNSDCF in 2021, at the outcome and output levels.



OUTCOME 1

Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security, and Climate Resilience

Sierra Leone witnessed improved agricultural practices and reduction of vulnerability due to food insecurity. Sustainable use of land and natural resources improved and strategic partnerships at national and local levels to strengthen institutional capacity in the agriculture sector were established. The most vulnerable populations received nutritious food, while policy frameworks were developed and implemented to ensure sustainable nutritious food access, handling, and distribution. Agriculture value chains have been improved through strengthened adherence to international quality standards and business practices, affecting business development and competitiveness. The national preparedness and response systems demonstrated timely and effective nationally owned leadership, coordination, and response to disasters.

OUTCOME 2

Transformational Governance

Institutional frameworks are more inclusive, justice more accessible and affordable, confidence and trust by citizens in public institutions improved. Access to justice was strengthened especially for vulnerable populations including children, women, and migrants through development and review of legal and policy frameworks, strengthening and establishment of local service centres, and provision of direct support to survivors of violence. Despite deteriorating socio-economic situation and other challenges caused by COVID-19 and recurring natural disasters, public institutions continued to provide services.

OUTCOME 3

Access to Basic Services

Since the government launched the Free Quality School Education programme in 2018, more children in Sierra Leone were able to access free education as evidenced by increased total number of children enrolled in school from pre-primary to senior secondary; increased transition rate between primary and lower secondary education; and increased completion rate. Access to WASH services have also surged contributing to improved wellbeing of the population and reduction in disease burden, stunting and wasting amongst children under 5 years. Efforts continued towards the achievement of Universal Health Coverage through review, development, and alignment of strategic policies and guiding documents, direct support, and resource mobilization. These also resulted to improved quality of care in the health sector contributing to the reduction of maternal and paediatric morbidity and mortality. Health sector capacity was also strengthened to sustain the continuity of essential health-related services, including vaccination programmes, sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, in the context of COVID-19. Access to renewable energy in rural areas also improved through the construction of mini-grids while capacity was strengthened to develop the electricity market.

OUTCOME 4

Protection and Empowerment of the Most Vulnerable

A key enabler of protecting and empowering the most vulnerable members of society is changing social norms to ensure communities have increased understanding and respect for human rights. Key actions were taken in this regard, particularly towards changing community behaviour and understanding of the rights of women, children, and people living with disabilities, and the promotion and protection of these rights. Technical and financial support were provided to the government to increase access to quality services related to protection, including from Gender Based Violence (GBV) and other harmful practices. UN system collaboration to improve life skills and knowledge on comprehensive sexuality education and HIV education resulted in high-level government support, strengthened capacity of the Education Ministry and inclusion of comprehensive sexuality education in the curricula.

2021 EXPENDITURE (US\$) 66.5 MILLION





OUTCOME 1



Increased rice production at **2.5MT/hectare**



490,659.21 Hectares of forest protected



54,300 people assisted with specialized nutritious food



17 schools piloted Home-Grown School Feeding



16 Chiefdoms established Disaster Management Committees

CONTRIBUTION TO THE SDGs



OUTCOME 1 CONTRIBUTING AGENCIES



"Because most of us are women, people thought we would fail, yet we saw no way out but to engage in these tasks, knowing that men in Matagalema had other options like working in mining," says Mamie.

MINING AND US: HOW A RURAL WOMEN'S GROUP FOUND A WAY OUT OF CONFLICT AND HUNGER

Families around Matagelema village in Moyamba district, south of Sierra Leone had watched their farming space diminish as rounds of rutile mining turned more and more parts of the land into large pits and false rivers. After years of tensions and unrest between the community and mining companies, a few dozen women, most of them widows or single parents formed the Matagelema Women Farmer's Association in February 2021.

WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) supported them with agricultural tools and cash to enable the development of an irrigation system. The women were also trained in modern climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and provided with high-yielding, short-duration rice, and vegetable seeds to improve their nutrition and ensure food diversification.

The group soon attracted more women to the project in Lower Banta chiefdom, contributing to women's economic empowerment in the area. The women celebrated their first harvest in December 2021, where they accumulated approximately three times more crop than in previous harvests.

"Previously, we planted cassava, groundnuts and some rice, but ate it before we reached the market," says Mamie Achion, the group's coordinator.

The project was financed by the UN Peacebuilding Fund.

2.2 Cooperation Framework Priorities, Outcomes, and Outputs

OUTCOME 1

Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security, and Climate Resilience

By 2023, Sierra Leone benefits from a more productive, commercialized, and sustainable agriculture, improved food and nutrition security, and increased resilience to climate change and other shocks.

OUTPUT 1.1

Farmers especially women, youth, and other vulnerable groups to have equal access to information and decision-making opportunities on land tenure, knowledge of improved agricultural practices, inputs, technology, financial services, linkage to markets, leveraging appropriate technologies and innovations

In 2021, the UN targeted vulnerable populations with various spheres of support to increase their access to appropriate and improved agricultural practices. This approach is to reduce their vulnerability in the face of challenging food security in the country.

- WFP's Home-Grown School Feeding Programme supported women and youth farmers to increase yield and ensure sustainable market access through support that enabled sales of 70MT of locally produced rice earning over US\$47,000.
- Incidence of land conflicts in selected communities in Port Loko, Kenema and Bo were reduced due to increase of awareness raising initiatives on customary land rights.
- Land cultivation increased up to 3370 hectares with resultant increase in yield, and improved livelihood and income status due to provision of inputs, training, and equipment from FAO. Up to 8000 farmers benefited from Technical Package for Rice Production (T-PRP), improved Post-Harvest Management practices for rice, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and financial services via Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs). Rice yield after afore-mentioned catalytic interventions is averaged at 2.5MT/hectare. To enhance sustainable agricultural productivity, IOM trained women in the operation of farming equipment and supported the development of training curricula for youth.
- IOM in collaboration with the National Council for Technical Vocational and other Academic Awards (NCTVA) developed an agricultural mechanization training curriculum on Tractor Operation and Maintenance for a vocational skills training program. This skills training programme has linked 262 (119 Men and 63 women) young men and women with 16 agro-processing companies across Sierra Leone.



OUTPUT 1.2

Land and other natural resources (forests, minerals, marine, wetlands, etc.) are utilized in a sustainable and equitable manner

The UN provided key support to improve sustainable use of land and natural resources through a series of technical and financial inputs provided by various UN agencies on forest, marine wetlands, and minerals utilization. Indicative actions have been modelled to achieve sustainable use of land and natural resources.

- FAO supported post-harvest management of fish, including sanitation, health, and hygiene practices in 5 districts. Development/rehabilitation of 500 hectares of Inland Valley Swamps and training of 3,725 farming households (30 percent female-headed households) in Pujehun and Moyamba

Districts on climate-resilient farming techniques like TLPR were undertaken with support from the Peacebuilding Fund.

- Government was supported to develop policy and regulatory frameworks affecting enabling environment. Policies and laws¹⁵ on environmental protection, climate change, and forest management were formulated and enacted for the regulation of sustainable use of these resources. To enforce these regulations, UNDP financially contributed to the deployment of 500 Forest Guards that provide increased surveillance monitoring estimated at 490659.21 Hectares.
- Through UNDP support, the Natural Water Management Agency (NWRMA) was able to delineate and map out water catchments and sub-catchments areas in the Western Area and Rokel river basin.

OUTPUT 1.3

Access to diversified, nutritious and safe food is increased, and adequate dietary intake improved

The UN established strategic partnerships at national and local levels to strengthen institutional capacity and mobilize resources; targeted distribution of nutritious food to the most vulnerable populations; and supported development and implementation of policy frameworks and guidelines to ensure sustainable nutritious food access, handling, and distribution.

- WFP provided technical and financial support to the institutionalization of school feeding in Sierra Leone through the finalization of the National School Feeding Policy enacted in May 2021.¹⁶ Sierra Leone is now better able to transition from government implemented feeding to Home-Grown School Feeding (HGFS), which is being piloted in 17 schools.



- WFP provided nutrition support to ten districts with high prevalence of food insecurity and global acute malnutrition rates. Super cereal plus, super cereal and fortified vegetable oil were distributed and complemented with nutrition messages on optimal Maternal Infant and Young Child Feeding (MIYCF) practices. In four districts, specialized nutritious food was prioritized only during the “lean” season when needs are highest. WFP assisted over 54,300 beneficiaries including children aged 6-59 months and pregnant and lactating mothers.
- WHO worked with the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau in the development and submission of a National Proposal for resource mobilization for Round 6 of the Codex Trust Fund¹⁷. National food safety and quality control guidelines and monitoring and reporting tools were developed and rolled out at regional level. UNIDO also supported the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau with reagents and other technical equipment for the operations of the food chemistry laboratory.
- Health staff attached to In-Patient care Facilities (IPF) in ten (10) district hospitals were capacitated on the management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM). National Nutrition Policy was drafted with technical input from WHO to enhance safe nutritious food supply that is economically accessible in adequate amount, thereby preventing dietary deficiency and reducing diet-related diseases. WHO also supported the drafting of the Breastmilk Substitute Act 2021 which has been enacted into law by the Sierra Leone Parliament.
- Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative was implemented in the five regional hospitals to support the implementation of the 10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding Initiative. National Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy for Hospitals and other Health facilities was finalized and rolled out to 16 hospitals providing maternal and child health services.



OUTPUT 1.4

An enabling environment for sustainable agriculture, food and nutrition (regulatory, institutional, research and policy framework) is in place

The UN focused on strengthening the data management, monitoring, and research capacity of the government in 2021. This is geared towards enabling the government to have evidence-based policy framework that ensures sustainable agricultural, food and nutrition security for the country.

- WFP ensured quality Food Security Monitoring System (FSMS) during 2021 lean season, that a monthly market price

monitoring system is in place and food security monitoring reports are regularly produced.

- Sierra Leone for the first time, has certification body that verifies products for export at internationally recognized and acceptable standards. UNIDO supported international standardization processes, provision of equipment and qualifications of 12 internationally certified auditors that support this process. Mass Metrology lab with calibrated equipment was installed. Implementation of ISO17025 testing and calibrations under the food chemistry lab was also conducted.

OUTPUT 1.5

Improved competitiveness and trade compliance of selected value chains

The UN strengthened adherence to international quality standards and business practices and conducted market research to affect business development, improve competitiveness and, develop more diversified agricultural value chains.

- Accumulative support of FAO, IFAD, ITC, and UNIDO led to recorded increase in the quality of cocoa, receiving high rating and acceptability in 2021. More than 14 Cooperatives supported by ITC reported increased production and quality averaging over 30 percent and 5 Cooperatives reported 30 percent increase in revenues due to better quality of cocoa.

- ITC and UNIDO developed sector and market studies in cassava, cocoa and palm oil value chains to affect policy development and business creation. Over 30 cooperatives and farmers associations have been assessed with ITC support.
- UNIDO implemented ISO9001 (Quality management systems) and ISO22000 (Food safety) at 7 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) for export markets and established the National Notification Authority (NNA) at the Ministry of Trade. (MTI) to safeguard products going into markets.
- A Market Information Monitoring System for the ECOWAS Commission that will provide timely market information on selected value chains (mango, cassava, textile and garments and ICT) was also developed by ITC.



OUTPUT 1.6

Preparedness systems in place and functional at community level to mitigate the impact of climate change

The UN led in providing catalytical support to ensure functional disaster management systems are in place at various levels in the country. The national preparedness and response systems demonstrated timely and effective nationally owned leadership, coordination, and response regarding numerous disasters. The community level structure was continuously engaged to champion disaster prevention actions. Platforms were also developed to effectively coordinate disaster management. Operational readiness and timely response to disasters was ensured through quality data and appropriate tools for hazard profiling and beneficiary targeting.

- WFP supported capacity development of National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), including handing over the Port Loko logistics base, repairs of its trucking fleet, and setting up coordination systems and response clustering. WFP also embedded an international disaster risk and climate change specialist to assist NDMA with strategic, technical, and operational support.
- Functional system to manage disaster was cascaded to community level by setting up, equipping and training of 16 Chiefdom Disaster Management Committees (CDMCs) in Kailahun and Kambia districts. To make this community structure work effectively, the UN supported the development and use of disaster terminology dictionary in four Sierra Leonean local languages (Krio, Temne, Mende and Limba) and an updated Disaster Risk Reduction Standard Operating Procedures.
- Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) equipment were provided, including the installation of 5 new weather stations generating and providing early warning information in 6 project communities. UNDP refurbished the metrological server house designed to receive weather signals from the Oceanographic Monitoring system and disseminate relevant climatic information to mobile phones of community representatives who then



disseminate early warning information to the broader fishing communities.

- With support from FAO, the capacity of the Veterinary Service personnel of the division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has been strengthened, surveillance structure established for Zoonotic disease monitoring and regular screening reports produced and used for decision-making.
- IOM advanced community-level preparedness and prevention initiatives reaching 2,199 cross-border community members through training and redeployment of 60 social mobilizers engage in Community Events Based Surveillance (CEBS) in 281 cross-border communities within the districts of Kailahun, Portloko and Pujehun.



OUTCOME 2



127,076
births (64,125 girls;
62,951 boys)
registered by NCRA



30,201
people affected
by reduced
HIV/TB stigma



28,661
children
(15,266 girls;
13,395 boys)
provided with legal
representation



16
District
Trafficking-
In-Person
taskforces
supported



12 out of 16
District
Development
Coordination
Committees
operational

CONTRIBUTION TO THE SDGs

8.6
Million
TOTAL EXPENDITURE
IN US\$



1.8M



1.8M



4.7M

OUTCOME 2 CONTRIBUTING AGENCIES



"We were trained on alternative measures for dealing with children in conflict with the law, especially those who commit minor offences, other than taking them to court," says Police Constable Ada Alpha.

GIVING CHILD OFFENDERS IN SIERRA LEONE ANOTHER CHANCE TO REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

A few months ago, Sento* an 11-year old pupil was taken to the Bo police station on allegations of theft. After Sento was questioned by the officers on duty, the matter was transferred to the Family Support Unit (FSU) given the alleged offender was a minor. Police Constable, Ada Alpha, attached to the FSU at the Bo East Police Division, benefited from a training provided with support from UNICEF and provided the needed support to Sento in this matter.

"Thanks to this programme we have been able to support 10 children including Sento. Some of them are now in school and are trying to get an education and a better future", says Ada.

To ensure access to child friendly justice services, UNICEF supported the Justice Sector Coordination Office to develop a framework on alternatives to detention and diversion of children in conflict with the law. A diversion policy was developed and has been piloted in 10 police stations across the country, including in Bo district. In addition, UNICEF has supported the Legal Aid Board to provide services to 8,229 children across the country with either legal representation, legal advice and assistance or legal education.

* Sento Dumbuya is not her real name

OUTCOME 2

Transformational governance

By 2023, people in Sierra Leone benefit from more gender and youth responsive institutions that are innovative, accountable and transparent at all levels and can better advance respect for human rights and the rule of law, equity, peaceful coexistence, and protection of boys and girls, women and men including those with disabilities.

OUTPUT 2.1

Democratic institutions are inclusive and the representation of women, young persons, and persons with disabilities in elected offices is institutionalized

UN contributions enabled institutional frameworks to be more inclusive, justice to be more accessible and affordable, and improved confidence and trust by citizens in public institutions and in the quality and equity of services.

- ▶ The draft Anti-trafficking in Persons Act is more robust due to the technical inputs provided by IOM. The reviewed Act is now tabled at the Parliament for adoption.
- ▶ To prepare young women and girls for leadership, UNDP set-up mentorship programmes in schools. Social media platforms were established for information sharing using mentorship manual developed in 2020. Mentees were assigned to female Parliamentarians.
- ▶ UNDP provided equipment to 190 Chiefdom Youth Councils across the 16 districts of Sierra Leone to further enhance their participation in the local development agenda.
- ▶ To ensure legislation that promote Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) the UN through UN Women scaled up its communications and advocacy. Heads (men) of media houses committed to positively communicate for the enactment of the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Bill. Five (5) short documentary videos to promote the enactment of the Bill were screened on various media platforms, while advocacy continues at the Parliament.



OUTPUT 2.2

Inclusive institutional frameworks (gender, youth and disability responsive) strengthened for peace, citizen’s voices and participation for social cohesion

UN support contributed to the reduction of stigma for the most vulnerable populations and improved meaningful women participation and leadership, particularly in peace and security.

- ▶ UNAIDS developed and operationalized the Multi-year Plan to Remove Human Rights-Related Barriers to HIV and TB Services (2021-2024) to ensure the reduction of HIV and TB-related stigma and discrimination, human rights protection, gender equality,

and improved health equity, which directly affected 30,201¹⁸ people.

- ▶ With technical, advisory, and financial support from UN Women, the country has reactivated the implementation of SILNAP II of UNSCR 1325 which ensure women’s participation and leadership in peace, security, and development. The reactivation commenced with the ongoing barrier assessment for women in the forces’ participation in UN peace keeping operations. It also assesses factors that affect recruitment, retention and promotion of women in the security forces.



OUTPUT 2.3

Access to justice is open to and affordable for all Sierra Leoneans and the rights of children, girls, women, men, including persons with disabilities are fully protected

The UN contributed to improved access to justice especially to vulnerable populations including children, women, and migrants through development and review of legal and policy frameworks, strengthening and establishment of local service centres, and provision of direct support to survivors of violence.

- UNDP and UNICEF support contributed to improved legal representation resulting to increase convictions for sexual offences with provision of support to the Judiciary, Legal Aid Board (LAB), the Justice Sector Coordination Office and Ministry of Justice and increased local access to justice mechanism through training of paralegals.

Capacity of 65 judges and magistrates was strengthened, and training of paralegals led to increased legal representation services to 28,661 children¹⁹ (15,266 girls; 13,395 boys). UNICEF also advocated for the release of children from remand homes and prevented new arrests and sentencing measures depriving children of liberty. UNDP support to the Model Sexual Offences Courts through LAB legal representation and provision of computers to the Judiciary led to increased number of convictions and cases tried (165 additional cases heard and 16 additional convictions).

- UNICEF supported training of 100 officers (74 Male and 36 Female) on the revised Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and 50 Family Support Unit (FSU) Court Monitors and Police Prosecutors of the Legal and Justice Department (25 Male; 25 Female) on crime data collection and management. UNICEF also supported the incorporation of child protection and child justice components in the Sierra Leone Police Academy Recruitment and In-Service training curricula. 2,151 (including the 499 from government OSCs) GBV survivors were reached. FSU provided support to 3,453 children (2,818 girls; 635 boys) who were survivors of violence.²⁰

- Support was provided by UNDP to Justice Sector Coordination Office and Attorney General's Office for the review of the Criminal Procedure Act; Human Rights Commission and Attorney General's Office for drafting instruction for the Human Rights Commission Act 2004; and the Independent Police Complaints Board and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

- Minimum standards for elimination of trafficking and enhanced district-level access to justice procedures for Victims of Trafficking and Smuggling were met through IOM support to 16 district Trafficking-In-Person (TIPS) taskforces with 320 TIPS taskforce Members trained. Detailed health and security profile for 15 Point of Entries (PoEs) are available at MoHS and Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA), products of an IOM-led joint assessment exercise covering selected POEs in Pujehun, Kailahun and Falaba Districts.

OUTPUT 2.4

Citizens have trust and confidence in the quality and equity of services of public institutions

Support from the UN contributed to improved quality of service delivery in public institutions including the justice sector, national civil registration, health sector and the Parliament.

- Institutional and legal reforms of the justice sector due to embedded technical advisory and financial support received from UNDP²¹.
- UNICEF, UNDP, and UNOPS contributed to enhance citizens' trust in services of public institutions, through capacity and technical support to the National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA). Access to birth registration services has improved through UNICEF support, with 127,076 births (64,125 girls; 62,951 boys) registered by NCRA out of 131,032 births (66,200 girls; 64,832 boys)²². Targets for registration rates were attained through TV and radio programmes that reached over 21,500 people across 16 districts. UNDP and UNOPS supported capacity strengthening of 480 people on data transfer on vital statistics.

A software became operational to enable automated transfer of data with other national institutions such as the Electoral Commission. UNICEF and NCRA also made progress towards digital birth registration by testing a mobile birth notification and registration application and training 1,250 frontline staff²³.

- With UNDP support, NCRA has developed and validated a Data Protection and Privacy Policy, Bill and Regulations. This addresses gaps in the legal framework for the collection, management, and transfer of data of vital events of citizens and residents of Sierra Leone.
- UNAIDS with UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women, and WHO facilitated strategic engagements with the Global Fund, PEPFAR, and other global and national stakeholders, contributing to effective resource mobilization for MoHS (US\$30million for COVID response) and implementation of the NFM3 grant (US\$126 million), for the efficiency and sustainability of the national response, to eliminate HIV as a public health threat by 2030.





- The National HIV & AIDS Secretariat (NAS) was supported by UNAIDS to carry out four regional (South, East, North and Western Urban) engagements of stakeholders on popularizing the Sierra Leone Human Right Strategy 2021-2024 and Sierra Leone People Living with HIV (PLHIV) Stigma Index Report 2019.
- ICT configuration and the Rehabilitation/ Refurbishment of the Main Parliament Building, are being undertaken in the House of Parliament through UNOPS support, with the construction of covered walkway, and offices of the Leaders of the Parliament completed.
- Strengthened implementation of National Civil Registration Act (2016) through IOM support in developing Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) to address coordination gaps and provide for the registration of refugees, returned stateless migrants, and displaced populations, and women.

OUTPUT 2.5

Local governance institutions are well resourced, service delivery functions are devolved to them, and they are service oriented (UNDP, UNIDO, UNICEF, & IOM)

UN contributed to the strengthening of local governance institutions and improved service delivery.

- Supported MoPED to pilot and roll-out functioning of District Development Coordination Committees that steer national development coordination at local levels to a total of 12 districts in 2021 as part of the decentralization process.
- Through IOM support, a framework on the comprehensiveness of city migration governance structures and priorities for the way forward is now available and awaiting publication for 4 locations in Sierra Leone, namely Makeni, Kenema, Bo and Freetown City.

OUTPUT 2.7

Government-wide national M&E system of development results strengthened

- With UNDP support, new North-West Province has established and operationalised Provincial Coordination Committee as the highest body of oversight of local governance in the new province. The function of this organ in other provinces strengthens integration of interventions, and improves decentralisation and service delivery, and community cohesion, and is integral to early warning mechanism of the province,
- In line with the World Trade Organization Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the SPS Agreement), UNIDO supported the Ministry of Trade and Industry with technical trainings following the establishment and operationalisation of the National Notification Authority and the National Enquiry Point to publish all sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS measures) and other SPS activities.

- To improve on the accountability of development results, the UN continued to contribute to capacity strengthening of the newly established National Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (NaMED). A national M&E policy was formulated and validated in 2021 as part of the policy framework and system strengthening that will enable the institution to continue leading and coordinating development results monitoring.
- Sierra Leone submitted its third inclusive and participatory Voluntary National Review (VNR) report with support from UN agencies as a result of which a well-received VNR was produced and presented to the HLPF.

OUTPUT 2.6

Government has strengthened Public Financial Management (UN partners UNDP, FAO, IOM, UNICEF, UNIDO)

- The Sierra Leone Integrated Financing Framework (INFF) was produced in 2020 and launched in 2021. With support from UNCDF, the INFF landscape was designed and is being implemented for improved financial and tax policy.
- UNCDF strengthened capacity of the Bank of Sierra Leone through online training courses on supervision of Digital Financial services.





OUTCOME 3



36%
increase in children enrolled in basic education



95,350
people have access to water



2 million
children vaccinated



697,144
couple years of contraceptive protection



127,762
people with solar electricity

CONTRIBUTION TO THE SDGs

34 Million
TOTAL EXPENDITURE IN US\$



1.8M



15.8M



4.8M



4.1M



2.8M

OUTCOME 3 CONTRIBUTING AGENCIES



Looking back, Maseray Bangura said, "my dignity has been restored. I have spent a week without experiencing urine leaks."

RESTORING HOPE AND DIGNITY OF A FISTULA SURVIVOR

Pregnant with her fifth child, Maseray Bangura was taken for her delivery to the Government Hospital in Lungi, a referral hospital in Port Loko district. For three days, she was on labour and developed obstetric fistula after having caesarean delivery.

Obstetric fistula, a childbirth injury wherein a hole develops between the birth canal and the urinary system resulting in constant leakage of urine or faeces is often the direct result of failure by a health system to provide quality health care during childbirth. It is preventable and, in most cases, can be repaired surgically. In Sierra Leone, an estimated 2,400 women are living with obstetric fistula.

UNFPA is addressing fistula prevention by supporting the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in improving quality services for pregnant and postnatal women. With funding from the Government of Iceland, UNFPA partners with non-governmental organizations like Haikal Foundation and Aberdeen Women's Centre to conduct screening for women with suspected obstetric fistula, and surgery to repair their fistula and restore their dignity. UNFPA also supports the government in preventing the incidence of obstetric fistula by strengthening the quality of obstetric services, a key component to addressing maternal mortality.

Maseray remains grateful to Aberdeen Women's Centre, the Government, and the donor partners providing support for the elimination of fistula. "I am appealing for more funding support to partners working on ending obstetric fistula. Without funding support to Aberdeen Women's Centre, I won't be talking here today. I am thankful to UNFPA."

OUTCOME 3

Access to basic services

By 2023, the population of Sierra Leone, particularly the most vulnerable, will benefit from increased and more equitable access to and utilization of quality education, healthcare, energy and water, sanitation, and hygiene services, including during emergencies.

OUTPUT 3.1

Children, adolescents, young women, and youth have increased access to comprehensive quality education services with improved learning outcomes

Since the government launched the Free Quality School Education programme in 2018, access to education has significantly improved. In 2021, the gross enrolment rate of pre-primary education increased to 20.6 percent compared to 19.3 percent the previous year and compared to a baseline of 11.5 percent (MICS). Between 2020 and 2021, the transition rate between primary and lower secondary education increased from 94.9 to 97.6 percent

and the lower secondary education completion rate increased from 68.5 to 73.9 percent thus indicating progress towards achieving country programme targets. There was a 36 percent increase in total number of children enrolled in school from pre-primary to senior secondary.

- More children are completing school with 8 out of 10 primary school children completing primary school and 7 out of 10 junior secondary school completing school. UNICEF contributed to this increase with the construction of 30 new ECD centres and development of holistic ECD training packages and creative Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials. UNICEF also trained a cadre of ECD experts who conducted decentralized training and provided ECD materials for 23,300 children.
- Parliament approved an Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy (IECD) which outlines minimum standards and guidelines to promote high quality and standardized ECD programming²⁴.
- Towards improved learning outcomes, UNICEF provided teacher training to 6,925 early grade teachers or approximately 78 percent of early grade teachers in six low performing districts.
- In support of universal education, UNICEF, and government partners led the development of the next Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2022-2026. UNICEF updated the 2016 Out-of-School Children Study (OOSC) which served as a platform to develop a national OOSC strategy.
- Contributing to efficient and equitable budget management, UNICEF in collaboration with the World Bank (WB) initiated an Education Public Expenditure Review (PER)²⁵.



- Towards inclusive and equitable education, UNICEF supported two initiatives that seek to provide evidence on why children are not in school or do not stay in school. UNICEF through two NGOs and the Overseas Development Initiative (ODI) is implementing a pilot on addressing school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV).
- In support of adolescent skills development, UNICEF launched the UPSHIFT programme in Sierra Leone reaching 260 adolescent girls. As part of Reimagine Education and to promote remote or self-learning, UNICEF digitized the UPSHIFT content and ECD materials on the Learning Passport platform.
- UNESCO supported resilience of schools to respond to COVID-19 challenges and to future shocks to education systems through development of modules for a training programme by UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA), for master teachers, radio and television technical staff. It also supported capacity development through workshops on content creation for university staff to ensure effectiveness of E-Learning and Mobile-Learning.
- UNESCO supported sub-regional capacities and supported distance and blended learning through an online platform ImagineLearning.Africa. Under IICBA, it developed 10 T-Pack Based Modules, comprising seven subject based modules and three general modules.
- UNIDO effectively mobilized US\$3.8 million to establish an ultra-modern automotive maintenance centre in Freetown to help train auto-mechanics.²⁶
- IOM offered life changing support to 1,506 vulnerable youth (including 531 young women) who received vocational skills enhancement, 921 youth (including 329 young women) who were supported to find jobs in Sierra Leone, 413 youths (including 158 young women) who were supported with business start-up kits, 240 entrepreneurs (including 64 young women), who receive advanced courses in business skills management and 16 entrepreneurs (including 4 young women) who received crowdfunding support.



OUTPUT 3.2

The population has improved WASH coverage, quality services and positive WASH behaviours

The UN strengthened policy and institutional frameworks, capacity building and utilization, evidence generation, and the use of real-time data for planning, monitoring, and resource mobilization to scale up access to sustainable WASH services. These results contributed to improvement in the wellbeing of the population and reduction in disease burden, stunting and wasting amongst children under 5 years.

- > As of 2021, increased access to basic water supply services from 58 to 64 percent and access to basic sanitation increased from 16 to 17 percent since 2017²⁷.
- > An additional 95,350 people have access to a basic level²⁸ of water through UNICEF direct

interventions. Additional 84,612 persons (40,614 Males and 43,998 Females), now live in 207 open defecation-free communities across five districts.

- > 66,428 children and their families (31,885 males and 34,543 females) now have access and use basic sanitation services through the construction of 10,541 improved latrines.
- > 246,812 people (116,002 males and 130,810 females) were reached through house-to-house hygiene promotion by the community promoters and public awareness campaigns.
- > Improved learning and quality of care services within schools and health facilities through strengthening intersectoral collaboration between WASH and Education to deliver higher impact for children. 14,300 school children (7,007 boys and 7,293 girls) have access to and use basic WASH facilities across 38 schools, while 7,000 girls across 75 schools received menstrual hygiene management (MHM) packs. 150 girls can now produce reusable pads following participation in life skills training.
- > UNICEF had supported the Government to roll out the implementation of the National Strategy on Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion.
- > UNICEF through Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) mobilized more than US\$3 million. With the MoHS and Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), UNICEF provided access to WASH facilities for 51 health care facilities through the construction of solar-powered motorized water supply, gender-segregated toilets, shower blocks, and health care waste management system.
- > UNDP increased access to basic water supply services for more than 60,000 people in programme communities through the construction of solar-powered water facilities at 2 border crossing points in Pujehun and Kambia District.
- > UNDP fostered innovation and talent through engaging the services of a local innovator to provide 50 low-tech water boreholes using locally built tools and an in-built filtration system from local materials in Karene and Kailahun districts.

OUTPUT 3.3

The population has access to integrated people-centred health services to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

The UN sustained the vision, strategic direction, policy frameworks, and resource mobilization to attain Universal Health Coverage (UHC) through review, development, and alignment of strategic policies and guiding documents²⁹. Continued delivery of UN support contributed to the implementation of the 2021-2030 National Universal Health Coverage Roadmap and increased access to health services, while supporting public health emergency response.

- > WHO supported MOHS to conduct the national assessment, supportive supervision, training, guideline development, and operationalization of policies, including the recruitment of 8,625 Community Health Workers (CHWs) nationwide, development of revised training guides and tools, and training of 933 trainers to roll out the revised CHW policy.

- > With support from UNFPA, the service delivery portfolio of the public health system was strengthened through introduction of cervical cancer screening and treatment at selected government health facilities, a first in the country³⁰. UNFPA also built the capacity of 53 community-based organizations to conduct community sensitization programmes that reached 435,434 women with information on cervical cancer and 1,289 women received cervical cancer screening services at the government health facilities.
- > WHO provided technical assistance leading to the development of a National Primary Health Care (PHC) Framework and an aligned community based PHC delivery model for improving equity, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness, was piloted in two targeted districts.





- > The Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS)'s Policy, Planning and Information Directorate (DPPI), District Health Management Team (DHMT), and periphery health unit (PHU) staff engaged communities and other stakeholders and led evidence-based and equity-focused planning of interventions at PHU and district level.
- > WHO contributed to strengthening social safety nets through technical support to the development of Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance (SLeSHI) scheme.

Improved quality of care in the health sector contributing to the reduction of morbidity and mortality and overall improvement of essential health care through UN support to MoHS in the establishment of national Quality Management Programme, creating district and hospital QOC structure, appointment of dedicated QOC officers at hospital and district levels, and capacity building of the newly appointed 40 quality of care officers.

- > WHO supported in the accreditation exercise of Post Graduate Education, ODCH and PCMH hospitals through regional expertise, review of curriculum and enhancing the post-graduate education environment in teaching hospitals³¹.
- > Instituted Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response system in 15 hospitals with 72 service providers trained. Launched Commitment and Action Initiative using blended approach of Appreciative Inquiry and Plan-Do-Study-Act in 7 hospitals with over 460 participants for continuous quality improvement.
- > Supported organization of policy advocacy, national dialogue and learning summit that facilitated reflection and envisioning to develop direction and roadmap to strengthen regulatory system for the health sector.
- > WHO supported the strengthening of AMR governance structure in line with the One Health model.³²

The UN supported the strengthening of health sector capacity to sustain the continuity of essential health-related services, including vaccination programmes, sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, in the context of COVID-19.

- > Cumulative total of 2.2 million children benefited from polio and routine vaccination campaigns. Vitamin A supplementation (VAS) and deworming campaign cancelled in 2020 was also integrated in the vaccination campaign, and as a result, Semester-1 VAS coverage among children 6-59 months increased to 98 per cent (1,279,880 out of 1,302,767) from 34 per cent reached through routine services only. Improvement of cold chain system and vaccine stock management practices with introduction of online tool has built readiness for scaling-up COVID-19 vaccination while maintaining childhood immunization.
- > Strengthened quality of SRHR programme by WHO through supply chain management, technical and financial support for review and development of national Essential Medicine List incorporating SRHR to advance SRHR programme and reduce maternal mortality and procurement of medical supplies and equipment for 90 SRHR facilities including 266 oxygen concentrators.
- > With support from UNFPA and other development partners, the supply chain management system was further strengthened through development of the Integrated National Supply Chain Strategy which will provide a coordinated and harmonized framework to guide efforts of partners that are supporting the MOHS to ensure availability of essential health commodities.³³
- > UNAIDS and UNICEF supported the national HIV response to improve the quality of PMTCT services through the development of eMTCT and paediatric HIV strategic and operational plans, and integration of PMTCT into RMNCAH services leading to increase in PMTCT coverage from 50.93 percent in 2020, to 78.21 in 2021; and a corresponding decrease in new HIV infections in children 0-14 years from 1.74 in 2020, to 1.64 in 2021 (2022 HIV Spectrum).
- > UNAIDS made significant progress in ensuring meaningful participation of PLHIV, TB patients, MSMs, and FSWs, PWID, persons with disability, youth, and adolescents,

leading to decision-making contributions that informed the Global Fund NFM 3 and COVID-19 grants.

- > Contributed to increase of paediatric case detection and antiretroviral therapy for children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers through WHO support to the National HIV/AIDS Control Programme in training 170 healthcare workers in five high-burden districts on Providers-Initiated Testing.
- > Capitalized investments in COVID-19 response to increase cold chain and oxygen supply capacity through installation of over 450 cold chain equipment, 3 oxygen plants, and resource mobilization for 7 additional plants³⁴.
- > Improved national capacity to prevent, detect and respond to emergencies through development, operationalization and online monitoring of National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS). Overall health security capacities improved from 49 percent in 2020 to 51 percent in 2021. WHO provided technical and financial support for strengthening the surveillance system³⁵.

The UN contributed to the strengthening of the health system to reduce maternal and paediatric mortality in Sierra Leone through improved policy frameworks, capacity of training institutions, better management and stewardship of the health workforce, and provision of medical supplies and equipment.





- UNFPA strengthened the family planning programme through capacity building of health care providers in family planning, procuring and distributing over 90 percent of the national needs for contraceptive commodities with potential to generate 697,144 couple years of protection, and strengthening the supply chain management system to ensure delivery of commodities to the last mile. The family planning programme reached 510,000 total users of modern methods of contraception, thereby averting 190,000 unintended pregnancies, 70,000 unsafe abortions and 1,500 maternal deaths.
- UNFPA and WHO strengthen capacity of medical practitioners and health workers to improve sexual and reproductive health services and reduce maternal mortality and mortality. Capacity of 625 health workers was strengthened³⁶. UNFPA supported completion of trainings for 119 midwives and 12 surgical assistant community health officers. WHO and UNFPA provided technical support for the establishment of the postgraduate programme to train specialist doctors, including Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. 184 women and girls have undergone surgery to correct obstetrical fistula, with 93 percent success rate. WHO supported the assessment and accreditation of ODCH

hospital and initiation of post-graduate education for Paediatrics.

- Access to essential maternal, neonatal, and child health services has been expanded. Seven additional Special Care Baby Units (SCBUs) were established covering 14 out of 16 districts³⁷.
- Maternal Death Surveillance and response system was strengthened to better report and track maternal deaths. The safe blood transfusion³⁸ service was strengthened by procurement of reagents required for processing safe blood; a nationwide blood donation drive was conducted including advocacy for safe blood.
- The RMNCAH Score Card and the Quality-of-Care Dashboard were revised, and capacity of health managers built to improve tracking of maternal death and other SRH indicators at district level and paediatric quality of care indicators including institutional under-five mortality in district and national levels³⁹.
- UNOPS helped to strengthen capacity to deliver quality comprehensive RMNCAH+N services by initiating the construction of one new BEmONC facility in Kailahun District.
- Improved understanding of determinants of high institutional under-five mortality⁴⁰ in hospitals was achieved via the roll out of WHO Standards⁴¹ and Operational guide for facility-based audit in 17 districts and regional hospitals, with more than 550 health care workers trained. Hospitals conducted periodic mortality reviews to affect quality improvement of outcomes of admitted children in these hospitals.
- Emergency Triage Assessment and Treatment training was provided to 250 HCWs in 14 facilities, with national capacity. WHO also supported the adaptation of Care for Critical Child (CCC) guideline and its roll out in tertiary, regional and district hospitals.
- UNOPS supported the provision of safe blood transfusion services especially to pregnant women and children under five years, through the procurement and supply of vehicles, reagents, blood bags, consumables and equipment for the National Safe Blood Transfusion Services.

OUTPUT 3.4

Population has improved access to renewable energy in rural areas

- UNOPS contributions resulted in improvement of the enabling environment and governance of renewable energy-based electricity sector through ratification of Mini-grid Regulation by the Parliament leading to all operators having Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission (EWRC) approved licenses and agreed tariffs. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines were also developed and approved and are being incorporated into the new EPA Act to be ratified by the Parliament. The capacity of the Ministry of Energy (MoE) was also strengthened through trainings and development of training curriculum.
- UNOPS improved access to renewable energy in rural areas through the construction of 81 mini-grids and providing 18,693 connections. All the mini grids were handed over to MoE and private sector operators for regular operations and maintenance.

In total, 16,798 households; 94 community health centres; 1,495 businesses; 187 schools and 212 public service institutions are connected to clean energy based on mini grid electricity. 289,882 beneficiaries from the rural communities of Sierra Leone (of which 55 percent are females and 3,930 persons with disabilities) are benefiting from mini grid electricity. 127,762 people; 86,805 patients from the community health centres; 38,230 school students and 36,437 businesspersons are enjoying mini-grid electricity.

- UNOPS increased demand for electricity through the stimulation of market development of productive use of energy by providing matching grants support to 16 rural productive use businesses/ organizations and TA support to 134 businesses. 58,147 people in the mini-grid catchment areas (of which 57 percent are females and 4 percent people with disabilities) benefitted from the promotion of productive use of mini grid electricity.



OUTCOME 4



2,151
GBV survivors
accessed quality,
survivor-centred
care



16,034
girls with access
to health and
protection
services



1,822
stranded
migrants
returned and
reintegrated

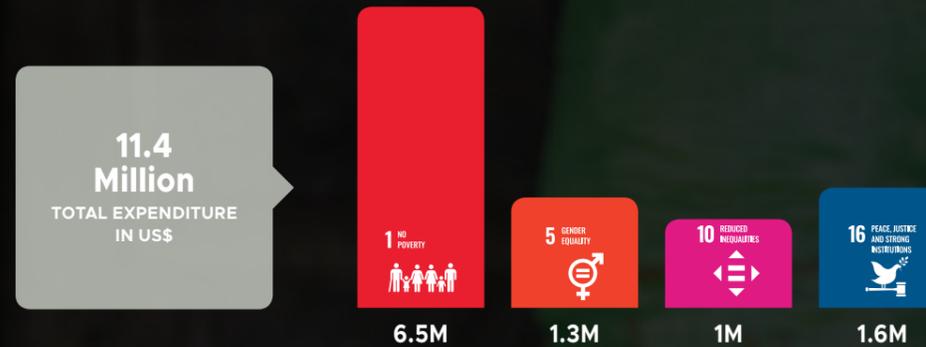


123,000
people received
cash-based
transfers



10,976
people provided
with enabling
business
environment

CONTRIBUTION TO THE SDGs



"As a woman entrepreneur, my family and I have improved livelihood through improved business development skills, financial literacy and access to finance."

Lynda Renna from Hastings

RECOVERING FROM COVID-19: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH THROUGH FINANCIAL LITERACY AND ACCESS TO FINANCE

Lynda, 33-year old single parent, operates her business in a nearby school, where she sells different kinds of kids' products. Her business suffered a setback during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted the academic calendar and forced schools to temporarily close due to lockdowns. Business recovery looked almost impossible until she participated in the "Capacity Building for Entrepreneurs" programme.

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) partnered with the Institute of Development and Humanitarian Assistance (IDHA) in the project aimed at empowering entrepreneurs, especially women. Initiated in September 2021, the project supported over 6,000 beneficiaries by December 2021. The Joint SDG-funded project aims to improve economic opportunities for entrepreneurs through business development skills training and financial and digital literacy. In addition, trainees were linked to financial services providers, so they were able to access credit (loans) to grow their businesses.

Through the business development skill training, financial literacy, and linkage to banking services including loans, Lynda's business is now revived and growing. "I am very happy with the support I received from this project because I have been able to make profit to a tune of 2.5 million Leones (approximately US\$210)," Lynda said.

OUTCOME 4 CONTRIBUTING AGENCIES



OUTCOME 4

Protection and empowerment of the most vulnerable

By 2023, the most vulnerable, particularly women, youth, adolescents and children (especially girls), and persons living with disabilities are empowered and benefit from increased social protection services, economic and social opportunities.

OUTPUT 4.1

Community behaviour towards women and girls' rights have changed towards increased understanding and respect of these rights

The UN recognises that a key enabler of protecting and empowering the most vulnerable members of society is changing social norms to ensure communities have increased understanding and respect for human rights.



- > UNFPA and UNICEF strengthened the capacity of the National Secretariat for the Reduction of Teenage Pregnancy and Child Marriage as demonstrated by convening partners around implementing joint programmes and initiatives on reduction of teenage pregnancy and harmful practices. This increased capacity has led to expanded and streamlined interventions within the sector. Youth from each district were capacitated to serve as Youth Advisory Champions and to ensure that all implementation is done with the inclusion of young people including those living with disability.
- > UNICEF, UNFPA, and UN Women improved the skills of 5,148 men and women (including parents, traditional and religious leaders) to serve as agents of change to create a more enabling environment for women, girls and boys to claim their rights. Key strategies included the operation of husbands' schools, boys' clubs training on positive parenting using the new positive parenting curriculum and influencing positive masculinity through leadership from chieftdom to religious group levels. Together, these strategies are addressing violence against women, girls and boys through a joined-up approach between government, community and civil society organizations.



OUTPUT 4.2

Legal, policy and regulatory frameworks for the protection of the rights of women, children and people living with disabilities are further developed, promoted, and implemented

The UN system in Sierra Leone contributed to national progress towards legal, policy and regulatory frameworks that promote the protection of the rights of women, children and people living with disabilities.

- > UNICEF supported the Child Rights Coalition to prepare and submit a report with engagement of civil society, children and young people to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) during the Government's sixth and seventh reporting cycle⁴². ILO supported inclusion of the implementation of international labour standards, which articulates progress made towards protection of workers' rights including women and other vulnerable groups.

- > UN supported MOYA to finalise and launch the National Youth Policy. UNDP further supported NAYCOM to produce the Status of Youth Report 2020-21. UNESCO supported the National Youth Commission in the development of a performance tracking tool to track the performance of the new Youth Policy, that outlines government's commitments, principles and concrete actions to empower youth, with special emphasis on female youth, youth with disability and other marginalized groups.
- > Progress on the implementation of policy and legal reforms, has resulted in the development of a draft of the Child Rights Act (CRA) amendment.⁴³
- > Sierra Leone has an improved harmonised curricula and training for social workers and child protection practitioners. With UNICEF support, the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW) engaged with 16 placement agencies to develop and sign MoUs to ensure social work students could be placed.

- > Following the UN supported development and endorsement of the 'Human Resource Strategy for Social Workforce' that envisaged the phased recruitment of 286 social workers last year, the MoSW obtained approval for the recruitment and deployment of 110 social workers funded from the 2022 state budget.
- > UN Women is supporting the government in advocating for the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Bill to be enacted by Parliament. The bill amongst other things mandates a minimum of 30 per cent of decision making positions being occupied by women, ensures access to finance for women, and links government spending to improving gender equality.



- > With continuous support from ILO, the government demonstrated greater commitment towards promoting decent work and protecting the labour rights of workers including migrant and domestic workers by adopting 8 conventions and 1 Protocol⁴⁴ ratified in 2021.
- > With support from the UN, the Government of Sierra Leone, through the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, has revised and adopted the National Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labour.⁴⁵

OUTPUT 4.3

Vulnerable populations benefit from increased access to prevention, protection services related to GBV, and other harmful practices (child marriage, FGM, child labour, trafficking)

UN provided technical and financial support to the government to increase access to quality services related to protection from Gender Based Violence (GBV) and other harmful practices.

- > UNICEF supported the MoSW to train 120 social workers to use case management tools and provide MHPSS and Psychological First Aid services to 6,015 children and family members for COVID-19 and other emergencies.⁴⁶
- > Working with government and CSO partners, significant progress was made in evidence-generation initiatives and foundational work for social norms programming in 2021, including the completion of a survey on social and behavioral drivers of child marriage, launching of a positive parenting education pilot programme, and school-related GBV research. An additional 21,343 parents/caregivers and children were reached through various platforms to help prevent and raise awareness on reporting instances of violence and harmful practices.
- > With the support of UN Women and UNFPA, 2,151 survivors of GBV accessed quality, survivor-centred care (499 via the government one stop centres and 1,652 via the Rainbo Initiative Rainbo Centres).⁴⁷
- > IOM provided support for the dignified, orderly and humane return and reintegration of 1,822 (1587 men, 235 women) stranded migrants from 30 countries back to Sierra Leone.



OUTPUT 4.4

Vulnerable groups have increased essential life skills and knowledge (comprehensive sexuality education and HIV education)

UN system collaboration to improve life skills and knowledge on comprehensive sexuality education and HIV education resulted in high-level government support, strengthened capacity of the Education Ministry and inclusion of comprehensive sexuality education in the curricula.

- > Through support from UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNFPA, Sierra Leone became the first country to officially announce government leadership and support for the Education Plus Initiative (EPI), which accelerated opportunities for the empowerment of the most marginalized adolescent girls and boys.⁴⁸

- > UNICEF and UNFPA improved knowledge on key life skills of up to 16,034 girls, who are more empowered to access health and protection services through their engagement in girls' clubs and other services including out of school comprehensive sexuality education.
- > UNFPA contributed to increased capacity of the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) to implement in-school comprehensive sexuality education.⁴⁹
- > An end line survey conducted in adolescent safe spaces showed that 80 percent of the 646 adolescent girls surveyed (out of 12,000 reached) expressed increased sense of self-efficacy and confidence in their ability to negotiate and delay early marriage, (versus 58 percent during the baseline survey).⁵⁰



OUTPUT 4.5

Vulnerable groups have improved entrepreneurial and financial literacy, and employability

UN contributed to changing the economic situation of vulnerable groups including efforts to create enabling environment for entrepreneurship and improve the employability particularly of young persons.

- The government was supported in providing employment opportunity for up to 2000 youth through 28 car wash centres, and 2 innovative fish facilities. 800 youth were recruited, trained and placed in public and private institutions. UNFPA and UNDP provided support ranging from policy review, technical and financial to the National Youth Services that prepares young graduates for employability and social cohesion so as to harness the demographic dividend.

- UNCDF, UNFPA, ILO, UNDP and FAO contributed to the economic self-sufficiency of various vulnerable groups (including migrant returnees, persons with disability, vulnerable women and youth in the rural, coastal and poor urban communities) by providing an enabling entrepreneurship environment for business development including start-ups, financial literacy and access to finance to about 10,976 people (8,751 Women 2,225 Men). Through SheTrades West Africa programme, ITC trained over 400 farmers in good agricultural practices and over 45 SMEs and Cooperatives (including women owned SMEs and women cooperatives) on access to finance.
- IOM supported career development, for 1,506 vulnerable youths⁵¹ to promote youth and young women empowerment and entrepreneurship and dissuade them from irregular migration and human trafficking.

OUTPUT 4.6

Quality data is available and used for decision-making

In 2021, UN Agencies supported the generation of rich data including HIV epidemiological estimates, Spectrum, Global AIDS Monitoring (GAM), Integrated Bio-behavioural Surveillance Survey (IBBSS), impacts of diseases, social dynamics and drivers of violence and harmful practices, HIV profiling and vulnerability assessment, survey on social and behavioural drivers of child marriage, the Situational Analysis for people with disability, system management of the Child Protection IMS (CPIMS), school-related gender-based violence action research, and SPRINT for social protection. These generated data have strengthened decision-making for planning, and resource allocation. A SheTrades Outlook⁵² profile was finalised by ITC in close collaboration with the Ministry of trade and relevant policy makers to highlight best practices and outline recommendations for increased women’s participation in trade and the economy.

OUTPUT 4.7

Vulnerable people have increased access to and use of social protection and are more resilient to disasters and emergencies

Significant progress has been made in the policy framework and there is increasing access of vulnerable population to social protection with support from the UN.

- The Government of Sierra Leone now has a draft social protection strategy that was presented for stakeholders’ review and inputs with support from UNICEF.
- The Grievance Response Mechanism (GRM) supported by UNICEF was actively utilized at all stages of targeting, enrolment, and

disbursement for Social Safety Net (SSN) and COVID-19 emergency cash transfers to improve protection of vulnerable populations.

- During the lean season and in areas without well-functioning food markets, both in-kind food and cash-based transfer assistance, consisting of a two-months ration, was provided by WFP to over 123,000 crisis affected persons. In locations, including urban areas with well-functioning food markets, assistance was given as a cash-based transfer (CBT) through mobile money and immediate cash in hard-to-reach areas with no mobile network coverage to create multiplier effects with local economies to strengthen recovery from the effects of COVID-19.



2.3 Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda

Innovative partnerships forged by the UN Sierra Leone helped to advance the SDGs and leverage financing to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) was launched to mobilize domestic revenues. A joint programme under the Joint SDG Fund has advanced several elements of domestic resource mobilization towards SDG Financing. Increased government revenues support public service provision as well as COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, and private sector growth supports economic development and job creation.

To enhance tax compliance, the Joint Project supported public-private dialogues between the National Revenue Authority (NRA) and businesses in the informal sector on tax reforms and compliance and the importance of business formalization across the country. The dialogues were done in collaboration with the Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture and local trade

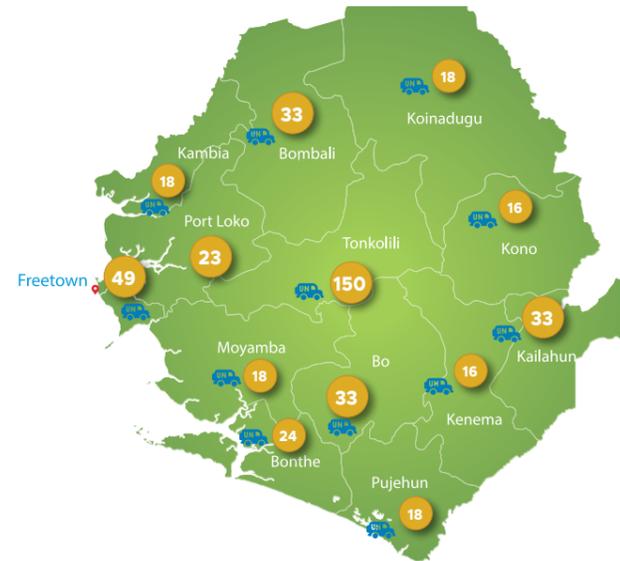
unions. The NRA has also undertaken targeted efforts to reach women entrepreneurs as part of its efforts to improve tax collection among businesses.

To strengthen local level public financial management, a series of hands-on training, ongoing mentoring, and M&E visits to Local Councils and Councilors, in collaboration with the Fiscal Decentralization Division of the Ministry of Finance INFF were conducted. A national workshop was held capacitating hundreds of fiduciary staff for revenue and expenditure forecasting, and collection strategies and reporting, in line with internationally accepted standards.

To expand access to financial services, improvement of digital financial services distribution is underway with Orange Mobile Finance SL Limited by expanding agent networks, training 10,000 clients on financial and digital literacy, and providing digital credit to 50,000 unique customers.

2.4 One UN Sierra Leone: Coherence, Effectiveness, and Efficiency

WHERE WE WORK



UN Sierra Leone continued to deliver together under the UNSDCF, ensuring coherence, effectiveness and efficiency across 7 thematic and 2 operational areas. The UNSDCF Joint Workplan 2020-2023 was reviewed and updated in 2021, particularly due to the integration of UN COVID-19 Socio-economic Response Plan (SERP). The International Trade Centre (ITC) has also reinvigorated its country presence, contributing to Outcomes 1 and 4.

Operations Management Team (OMT)

Implemented the Business Operation Strategy in 2021, with 12 participating agencies in six common areas. The OMT endeavoured to mainstream innovation, environmental sustainability, gender, youth, and disability inclusiveness in support of the SDGs. The OMT supported the Comprehensive Local Salary Survey resulting in approximately 16 percent increase of national UN personnel's salary, enabling a more competitive remuneration package to attract qualified and skilled personnel. The OMT also supported the UNCT in the procurement of COVID-19 Isolation Centre facilities to ensure Duty of Care for UN staff and dependents. Moreover, the OMT regularly reviewed and harmonized the Daily Subsistence Allowance, Transport and Fuel Allowance to accommodate changes in cost of living and high inflation in Sierra Leone.

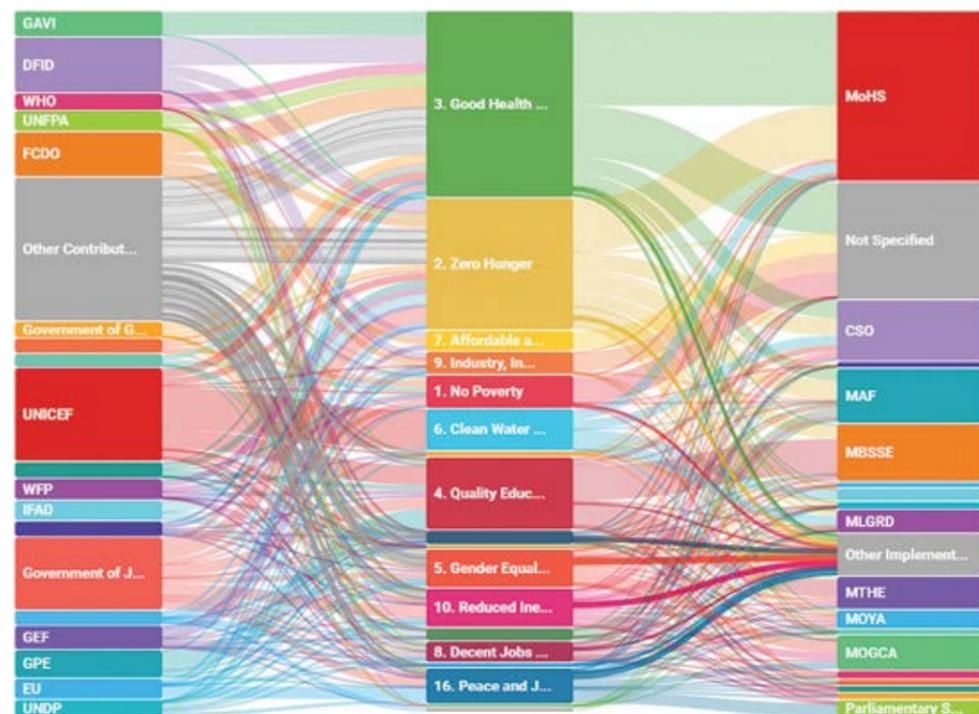
UN Communications Group (UNCG)

UNCG used different channels to disseminate the UN's contributions to Sierra Leone as guided by the UNSDCF. The UNCG highlighted the UN's support to the development-humanitarian-peace nexus. Joint statements related to the Susan's Bay fire and the Wellington fire disasters were developed and disseminated through seven media houses, while visits to the disaster areas were undertaken by the UN Country Team, as supported by the UNCG. Moreover, media engagements helped to shape the narrative on the knock-on effects of the pandemic across country, including a sustained campaign on the UN's contribution to the shipment, deployment and promotion of COVID-19 vaccines and countering vaccine misinformation. The UNCG also supported important international observances and highlighted the UN's support for the meaningful participation of marginalised groups. The 2021 UN Day Commemorations involved a strategic engagement with development partners and the Government, and an all-staff event. The UNCG supported two townhall sessions that served as important avenues for all staff and the UNCT to communicate and resolve challenges.

Disability Inclusion Group (DIG)

Following an inception workshop and a comprehensive situational analysis, the DIG participated in the development and submission of a joint UNPRPD proposal, which was approved by the Secretariat. DIG also organized and facilitated an in-person Comprehensive Disability Inclusion Training for DIG, UNCG and M&E staff of all UN agencies. Additionally, in partnership with Humanity Inclusion, DIG organized online Disability Inclusion Awareness trainings, one in English and one in Krio, for all UN staff in Sierra Leone. Moreover, with support from the UNCT the DIG worked with OMT to conduct an accessibility survey and assessment of UN premises to improve the accessibility for persons with disabilities.

LINKING INVESTMENTS, PARTNERS AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN SIERRA LEONE





Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR)

Through EPR, the UN supported the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) to rapidly assess the Susan’s Bay fire incident that rendered 1,400 households homeless by registering affected households within 48 hours, allowing the timely provision of much needed relief, including food assistance, shelter, and WASH support. In response to a deadly fuel tanker explosion in Wellington, that claimed 149 lives and injured 159 persons, the UN facilitated the timely provision of life saving medical supplies and deployment of health personnel with expertise in treating burns. To strengthen the capacities of NDMA, the UN provided technical assistance through UN facilitated simulation exercises and provided trainings on Sexual and Reproductive Health during emergencies, psychosocial support, and protection. To prepare for floods, the UN also supported the NDMA with assessment and registration tools (MIRA, beneficiary registration form, tablets) and committed disaster response supplies as contingency. Thus, UN investment and support enabled strong Government coordination and leadership of emergency responses in Sierra Leone during 2021.

Gender Thematic Group (GTG)

In 2021, effective and impactful collaborations between the GTG and the Ministry of Gender and Children’s Affairs (MoGCA) resulted in different high-impact advocacy efforts. GTG provided technical support to the comprehensive review processes for the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Bill and its popularization through engagement with multiple stakeholders. The GTG pooled funds on behalf of the UNCT to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism campaign in partnership with the MoGCA. The GTG-supported National SGBV Response Strategy was launched in a high-level advocacy event with key stakeholders including Government, Development Partners and NGOs. Through GTG, 4 UN Agencies and the MoGCA also signed a Joint MoU to accelerate the implementation of the GEWE policy and mainstream gender into targeted Ministries including MOYA, MOAF and MBSSE, as well as local councils. The GTG and the Inter-Agency Assessment (IAT) Team trained 16 staff on 16 performance indicators leading to the finalization of the UNCT Gender Scorecard, with support from UN Women.

Human Rights

Despite various challenges including the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the UNCT continued to provide support to key human rights institutions including the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) and human rights organizations. The UN Human Rights Council adopted Sierra Leone’s 3rd cycle recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) following which the country has committed to implement 216 recommendations (out of 274 received). The UNCT has supported the Government to develop the Action Plan for the implementation of these recommendations. Supporting the work of the National Reporting Mechanism to International Treaty Bodies (NRM) that was adopted in March, the UNDP and the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) conducted a series of activities to reinforce the capacity of the NRM secretariat and planning for activities to be conducted in 2022. Throughout the year, the United Nations Resident Coordinator (RC) and the UNCT continued to engage the Government and supported its efforts to promote and protect human rights.

Joint HIV Group

In 2021, the Joint Team mobilized US\$308,000 (UBRAF Country Envelop), and US\$50,000 (Business Unusual Fund (BUF), and financial and technical support from the UNAIDS Secretariat and co-sponsors. The Joint Team played strategic roles in developing Global Fund, PEPFAR/RoP and the PMI funding proposals, which has contributed more than 80 percent of the total expenditure on AIDS, TB, Malaria in the country. The Joint Team has been actively engaged in the development of the Five-Year Human Rights Plan for HIV and TB, and human rights sensitization for key stakeholders. NaCSA was supported to conduct a vulnerability assessment for PLHIV which provides data for inclusion into the national social protection scheme and NAS was supported to generate evidence on the performance of the national response towards ending AIDS in Sierra Leone. The HIV Joint Team also remained a strong contributor in the national health sector to ensure the continuity of health services, especially HIV services since the start of COVID-19 response in the country.





UN Network on Migration (UNNM)

The UN Network on Migration (UNNM) was launched in June 2021 to facilitate effective, timely and coordinated UN system-wide support to Sierra Leone on migration governance. Members of the UNNM have been trained on various thematic areas including integration of Migration in UNSDCF and CCA, Leveraging the Global Compact on Migration to achieve the 2030 Agenda, and Financing and funding the SDGs (Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund). UNNM also supported the Government to participate in the Regional and Continental Review consultations on the implementation of the Global Compact on safe, regular, and orderly Migration within ECOWAS and Africa, respectively. In this process, the UNNM supported the Government to capture progress made on GCM implementation as well contributed to the discussion looking at concrete ways to address gaps along the migration landscape. These reviews were part of the preparations leading to the International Review Forum which will take place in May 2022.

Youth Task Team (YTT)

YTT facilitated the launch of the revised National Youth Policy by the Vice President of the Republic of Sierra Leone in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth Affairs (MoYA). 500 youth were engaged in dialogue sessions to share their views on ensuring the successful implementation of the Policy. YTT completed online user testing of the Youth2030 Toolkit and Action Guide with the UNCT, MoYA, National Youth Commission, National Youth Service, youth networks and civil society organizations. YTT also collaborated with other countries on a Concept Note for the Youth2030 Strategy Workshop series for the implementation of the SDGs for youth and the Youth2030 Strategy in Sierra Leone as one of the 10 fast track countries.

For International Youth Day (IYD) 2021, YTT with MoYA, organized television and radio dialogue series on “Transforming Food Systems: Youth Innovation for Human and Planetary Health”. On African Youth Day, YTT organised the first ever National Youth Summit in Sierra Leone bringing together youth representatives, the UNCT, GoSL and development partners to establish a Partnership on Youth Empowerment and Demographic Dividend. 1,000 youth from across the country prepared and deliberated on four position papers leading to the Magburaka Declaration, which calls for young people’s active involvement in shaping and implementing fundamental changes in all aspects of their lives and societies.

Generation Unlimited, the global multi-sector partnership for expanded education, training, and employment opportunities for young people, was initiated in Sierra Leone in 2021. Key milestones achieved include the launch of the Generation Unlimited National Partnership Committee, the first Digital Learning Hub, and the UPSHIFT programme that supports youth and adolescents to become a force for positive social and economic change.

UN Country Team in Action



UN Country Team pays solidarity visit to the Wellington fire disaster site



UN Country Team, Ministry of Youth Affairs organize first National Youth Summit



UN Resident Coordinator pays tribute to volunteers and emergency health workers



UN Country Team discusses HIV/AIDS and alternative livelihood with sex workers



UN Country Team and GoSL host High-level Dialogue on Integrated National Financial Framework



UN Country Team celebrates UN@76 with UN Staff

2.5 Financial Overview and Resource Mobilization

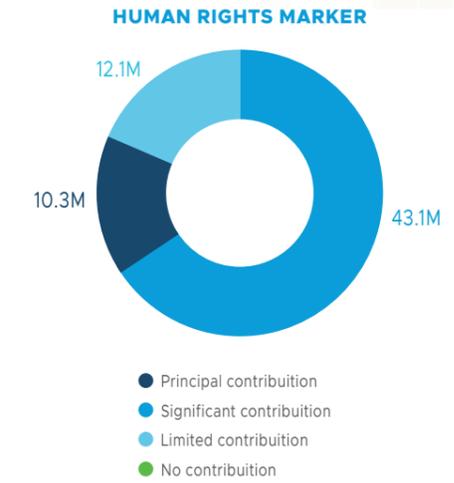
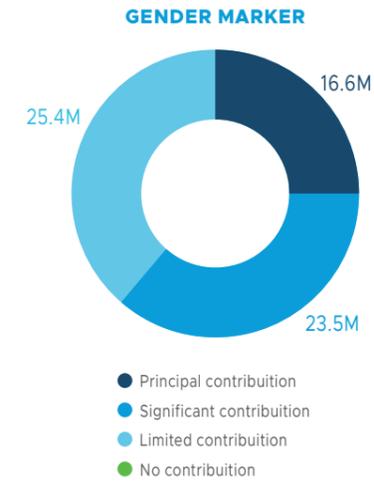
UNSDCF Outcome Areas	Total Required Resources	Available Resources	Expenditures	Delivery Rate (Expenditures vs. Available Resources)
Outcome 1. Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security, and Climate Resilience	\$13,497,434	\$13,362,434	\$12,109,434	90%
Outcome 2. Transformational Governance	\$9,737,292	\$9,787,292	\$8,627,657	88%
Outcome 3. Access to Basic Services	\$38,301,670	\$36,803,327	\$34,075,655	93%
Outcome 4. Protection and Empowerment of the Most Vulnerable	\$14,818,400	\$14,818,400	\$11,455,785	77%
Total	\$76,354,796	\$74,771,453	\$66,268,531	87%

The UNSDCF 2020-2023 was on its second year of implementation in 2021. The total required budget was US\$76.3 million, of which US\$74.7 million was obtained. The total amount of expenditure was US\$66.2 million, reflecting a strong delivery rate of 87 percent.

Through the Joint Financing and Resource Mobilization Strategy that was implemented in 2021, a joint programme was awarded funding of US\$912,742 from the UN Human Security Trust Fund for Enhanced Resiliency and Living Conditions for Vulnerable Communities Addressing Economic, Health, and Food Security challenges due to Impacts of COVID-19. Also, MUWODA, a women's development CSO received a grant of US\$242,000 from the UN Democracy Fund for inclusive governance activities.

With the support of the Peace and Development Advisor, the UN Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) country

portfolio has further expanded, and three new projects were added to the two projects already in the portfolio. A new US\$1,300,000 project in the area of youth inclusion and participation complements the US\$3,000,000 proposal already under implementation on "Empowering Youth at Risk as Resources for Sustaining Peace". A new US\$1,500,000 proposal on "Women for Water and Peace" in Freetown addresses conflicts related with access to water in the urban area, facilitating the participation of women in the management of water resources. A US\$4,550,000 cross-border proposal was also approved to support Sierra Leone and Guinea to build cross border peace and strengthening sustainable livelihoods of cattle herders and crop farmers. With a total investment of about US\$72 million from 2007 to date in 45 projects, of which US\$5.3 approved million in 2021, PBF remains the most strategic Multi-donor Trust Fund of the UNCT.



Funding Source	Programme Title	Implementing Partners	Approved Funding
UN Human Security Trust Fund	Enhanced Resiliency and Living Conditions for Vulnerable Communities Addressing Economic, Health, and Food Security challenges due to Impacts of COVID-19 in Sierra Leone	IOM, UNODC	\$912,742
UN Democracy Fund	Enhancing Civil Society Organizations' Capacity for Inclusive Governance and Development in Sierra Leone (awarded to a CSO)	MUWODA	\$242,000
Peace Building Fund: Cross-border project Guinea-Sierra Leone (2021-2023)	Building cross border peace and strengthening sustainable livelihoods of cattle herders and crop farmers in Sierra Leone and Guinea	WFP, IOM in Sierra Leone and Guinea	\$4,550,000
Peace Building Fund: Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (2021-2023)	Women4Water & Peace in Freetown	UNCDF, ILO	\$1,500,000
Peace Building Fund: Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (2021-2022)	Inclusive Peace and Reconciliation in Sierra Leone	Cordaid	\$1,300,000



3 | UNCT KEY FOCUS FOR 2022

In 2021, the UN Country Team (UNCT) focused on six areas of strategic interventions, namely:

- > Preparedness and response to health outbreaks (COVID-19 and Ebola Virus Disease);
- > SDG Implementation;
- > Operationalising the SG's Prevention Vision (prevent and manage risks, strengthen resilience);
- > Strategic Financing and Partnerships;
- > Leaving No One Behind and Human Rights and Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda; and
- > Business Innovation (Business Operations Strategy, Common Premises).

While maintaining the five categories of country-level relationships and accountability agreements under the Management Accountability Framework (MAF), UNCT Sierra Leone will continue to focus on the implementation of the UNSDCF, including on-going activities from the UN COVID-19 Socioeconomic Response Plan that have been included in the UNSDCF. Programmatic and operational activities will continue to focus on the Leave No One Behind principles and the UN Secretary-General's "Our Common Agenda", "Prevention Vision", "Efficiency Agenda", and the Secretary-General's Call to Action for Human Rights.

For 2022, risks as identified in the CCA Update in 2021 will be factored in the planning and implementation of UNCT activities, considering key developments in the Sierra Leonean context associated with the population census conducted in 2021, the upcoming national and local elections in 2023 and the on-going COVID-19 pandemic. UNCT will have a joint strategy on the agreed actions to be taken. Moreover, gender equality and women's empowerment will continue to be mainstreamed and advocated, especially on women's participation in the elections. UNCT support to non-UN security forces will also be based on a strong application of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP), ensuring that adequate risk assessment and analysis is conducted, and mitigation measures put in place and monitored by the agency providing the support.

Recommendations from national consultation drives, including the Food Systems Summit Dialogue and the National Youth Summit's Magburaka Declaration will be implemented and mainstreamed in UNCT activities, while also maintaining a focus on climate resilience and disability inclusion.

As the UNCT embarks on the penultimate year of the UNSDCF, efforts on collective partnerships and resource mobilization would be reinvigorated. Innovative funding streams and catalytic partnerships would also be explored, including South-South cooperation and non-financial partnerships.

ACRONYMS



CSO	Civil Society Organisation
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSMS	Food Security Monitoring System
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
IPC	Infection, Prevention and Control
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITC	International Trade Centre
MTNDP	Medium-Term National Development Plan
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
MBSSE	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
MoGCA	Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs
MoHS	Ministry of Health and Sanitation
MoPED	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
MSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCRA	National Civil Registration Authority

PLWA	People Living with HIV/AIDS
RMNCAH+N	Reproductive, Maternal, New-born, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
RCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

ENDNOTES

¹Statistics SL, 2015 Population & Housing Census

²World Bank 2021 Economic Update,

³ibid

⁴ibid

⁵ibid

⁶Food Security Monitoring System, June 2021.

⁷Human Development Report 2020

⁸International Parliamentary Union 2020

⁹SL Demographic and Health Survey 2019

¹⁰ibid

¹¹World Bank 2021 Economic Update

¹²2022 Sierra Leone Budget Readout, Ministry of Finance

¹³2022 Sierra Leone Budget Readout, Ministry of Finance

¹⁴Statistics Sierra Leone Consumer Price Index 2021

¹⁵Environmental and coastal policies and acts (National Environment Policy, Climate Change Policy, NPAACTF, Forestry Act, 1988 and wildlife Conservation Act, 1972, EPA Acts 2008/2010. National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, EPA-SL Strategic Action Plan the development of State of the Environment Report, development of the National Strategic framework for the Blue Economy, the review and timely submission of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

¹⁶The collaboration was operationalized through Memorandums of Understandings and implementation agreements between WFP and central and district-level government counterparts to implement activities in the country strategic plan (2020-2024), with each including strong capacity strengthening initiatives to effectively implement their roles.

¹⁷The Codex Trust Fund (CTF) was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to support member States in building strong, sustainable national capacity to engage in Codex. The Codex Alimentarius, or Food Code, is a collection of internationally adopted, uniform food standards that are used to build sound national food control systems.

¹⁸Female Sex Workers (FSW) – 12,032; Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) – 4,825; People Who Inject Drugs (PWID) – 8,984; Transgender (TG) – 4,360

¹⁹In Sierra Leone, a “child”, “boy”, or “girl” is defined as someone under the age of 18. 28,661 children with 591 (116 girls; 475 boys) provided with legal representation; 13,093 (8,787 girls, 4,306 boys) with legal advice and assistance and 14,977 (6,363 girls; 8,614 boys) with legal education by Legal Aid Board

²⁰Out of the 2,818 girls, 1,983 were survivors of sexual violence; 443 were survivors of domestic violence; and (46) boys were survivors of sexual violence. FSU also registered cases involving 815 children in conflict with the law (690 boys, 125 girls) with the most common types of offences for boys being that of sexual violence (345 out of 690 cases) and for girls being that of domestic violence (91 out of 125 cases) including physical abuse (49 cases)

²¹For instance, Criminal Procedure Act of 1965 was reviewed, the ongoing Criminal Procedure Act Review, the ongoing drafting instruction for the Human Right Commission Act of 2004 and the Independent Police Complaints Board, the modernization of the administrative support system of the judiciary. Some other key justice sector institutions supported by the UNDP include the Office of the Clerk of Parliament, IPCB, MoJ and HRCSL The Justice Sector Coordination Office (JSCO) and CARL.

²²Of this, only 37,157 (18,710 girls;18,447 boys) were issued with a birth certificate, a very large gap, which according to anecdotal evidence and observations, is due to several constraints including limited availability of certificates, delays associated with late naming ceremonies, and other demands and access barriers. A joint factfinding and engagement with NCRA and MoHS will be conducted in 2022.

²³This includes 67 district registrars (57 males;10 females), 798 health workers (183 males; 615 females) and 385 CHWs (306 males; 79 females).

²⁴This is a long awaited and important milestone towards improving quality early childhood education and learning.

²⁵To help ensure a comprehensive PER, UNICEF supported the inclusion of pre-primary, higher, technical and vocational education, with the final report expected in Q1 2022.

²⁶Targeting youth in Sierra Leone, the funds will be used to bridge the skills gap in the country's automotive repair and maintenance industry and to promote decent entrepreneurship skills through quality technical and vocational education training.

²⁷WHO/UNICEF JMP 2021

²⁸Improved source within 30 minutes round trip collection time.

²⁹Supported development and review of National Health & Sanitation Policy, National Health Sector Strategic Plan, Research for Health Policy, Medical Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Policy & Strategy, AMR surveillance strategic plan including a two-year costed implementation plan, five-year Antimicrobial Consumption/Use (AMC/AMU) surveillance plan, National Policy on Maintenance and Management of Medical Equipment and Devices, a revised Community Health Worker (CHW) policy, Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) strategy and costed plan, and Costed EMTCT of HIV and Pediatric HIV Strategic and Operational Plan 2021-2025 among others.

³⁰This included capacity building of 50 health care providers from 9 health facilities in Cervical cancer screening and treatment of precancerous lesions, refurbishment and equipping the health facilities and supportive supervision and mentorship.

³¹Approval of national in-service post-basic neonatal nursing certificate programme and start of post graduate diploma in paediatrics to affect sustainable human resource development.

³²The regional and national Structured operational research training initiative (SORT IT) was supported, and four manuscripts of participants have been published in the Special Issue of AMR in the Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases Journal. Supported local production of Alcohol based hand rub and a total of 41780 litres were produced and delivered to Central Medical Stores.

³³It will also serve as a guide to the transformation of the public health supply chain management system by 2025.

³⁴The process led to launching of the national equipment management policy and nurtured maintenance culture in the health sector.

³⁵Through collecting, analysing and reporting of public health events including priority diseases and the incident management system, implementation of all-hazard emergency preparedness and response plan and provided support to procurement of essential laboratory commodities for diagnosis of COVID-19.

³⁶Capacity of 625 health workers increased using quality improvement methodologies for sexual and reproductive health services including emergency obstetrics and newborn care.

³⁷Currently, a total of 6 residents have started Paediatric Post Graduate Education.

³⁸Haemorrhage causes close to 40% of maternal deaths in Sierra Leone

³⁹One high-dependence unit was established at Makeni Government referral hospital to care for critically ill pregnant and postnatal women, and technical support provided to PCMH and Bo Government referral hospitals, which receive the largest volume of patients.

⁴⁰Ranges between 6-17 percent among district, regional and tertiary hospitals

⁴¹For improving the quality of care for children and young adolescents in health facilities

⁴²Furthermore, a confidential submission was made by UNICEF in coordination with other UN agencies, with representation from 1,032 adolescents and young people (32 per cent female) who responded to a tailored U-report survey on CRC implementation, in addition to feedback from 6,189 respondents to a recent survey on progress of SDGs.

⁴³Achieved by mobilizing the child rights community for nationwide multi-stakeholder consultations to compile a comprehensive analysis of the gaps within the existing act. The CRA amendment will ensure explicit mention of FGM and child marriage as unlawful harmful practices and prohibit corporal punishment in all settings.

⁴⁴The list of the conventions and protocol are – the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97); the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143); the Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150); the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155); the Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160); the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181); the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187); the Domestic Workers

Convention, 2011 (No. 189); and the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention 1930.

⁴⁵The revision of the National Action Plan was in fulfilment of the Government's pledge to the International Year on the Elimination of Child Labour.

⁴⁶Overall, 3,277 girls and 2,738 boys registered through case management in both humanitarian and development settings by the government and civil society actors and were referred to relevant services. 1,322 new cases were registered in Primero, the Child Protection Information Management System, of which majority 488 were identified as out of school, 160 as lack of parental care, 156 cases of teenage pregnancy, 124 cases of child labor, 113 cases of GBV and 180 cases related to COVID-19).

⁴⁷Sierra Leone is one of the adopters of the One Stop Centre (OSC) model in Africa, established to facilitate comprehensive and ethical care for survivors and provide clinical management of GBV cases including free medical examination and treatment, legal aid (including investigations by the FSU) and psychosocial support. 8 OSCs have been established thus far with 5 powered by solar energy.

⁴⁸The government capacity was strengthened with support from the UN as shown by their ability to produce a road map, operational plan and resource mobilization plan. The government was also supported by the UN to give leadership from the presidency, first lady and ministerial levels is shown through representation at high level international forums.

⁴⁹The MBSSE developed teaching and learning materials for comprehensive sexuality education, dealing with topics including sexual reproductive health and rights, gender equality and critical thinking. Teaching and learning materials have been developed for students from Primary 1-6 and students in Junior Secondary One to Junior Secondary Three.

⁵⁰However, due to the short-term nature of safe space programmes that attempt to address an entrenched social norm, a field assessment conducted with support from UNICEF by the National Secretariat for the Reduction of Teenage Pregnancy led to the development of draft minimum standards and SOPs for all adolescent safe space programming.

⁵¹Including 531 young women have received vocational training and further supported to find jobs in Freetown City Council and other 3 cities councils. Done in collaboration with Ministry of Youth Affairs (MOYA), Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MOTHE), National Youth Commission (NAYCOM), National Council of Technical, Vocational and Academic Awards (NCTVA).

⁵²The SheTrades Outlook supports inclusive policymaking by strengthening women's inclusiveness and competitiveness in these value chains. It also provides governments with information and resources to implement gender-responsive trade policies.





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