



CONSOLIDATING THE GAINS

The United Nations Joint Vision at Work in Sierra Leone

The United Nations Joint Vision is a part of the international community's response to the needs set out in Sierra Leone's national recovery strategy, the Agenda for Change. The UN Joint Vision for Sierra Leone aims to enhance the UN's contribution to the recovery strategy by fully integrating all of its available assets and resources in the country into the following five key areas:

- Consolidation of peace and stability
- Integration of rural areas into the national economy
- Economic and social integration of the youth
- Equitable and affordable access to health
- Accessible and credible public services

United Nations Support to Accessible and Credible Public Services

Together with its partners, the United Nations in Sierra Leone supports the efforts of Sierra Leone to improve the population access to Public Services. This support translates into a wide range of actions that aim at strengthening the government's capacity to deliver public goods and services to the people of Sierra Leone. These actions include:

- Technical support to the implementation of the Public Sector Reform, in particular the development of a modern and merit-based system of human resources management
- Assistance to the roll-out of the decentralization policy and the devolution of power from central to local level
- Support to local councils to develop policies and plans based on local resources and business opportunities
- Piloting of sustainable mechanisms for empowering local councils to provide basic infrastructures and services as well as to mobilize revenues at local level
- Strengthening the government's capacity to manage national resources of funding including through the development of a computerized cadastre system
- Building the capacity of the national statistics institutions for better management and use of data



Free and fair: the independent broadcaster SLBC beams the news and disseminates vital information to young people at a UNIDO-run Growth Centre. Photo: UNICEF/Olivier Asselin

Hearing the voice of the Youth



Young people under the age of 25 make up 55% of the population in Sierra Leone. The way they chose to channel their energy will shape the nation's future direction. The views below on peace and security were gathered at a meeting in Makeni, Sierra Leone, during June 2011.

"Listening to the radio you can learn a lot about human rights and personal freedoms. We young people are becoming aware how integrity is important if our country is to prosper"

"The rural areas are so important; we must make sure that we strengthen the incentives to stay in rural areas."

"Small scale farmers cannot do enough, if the incentives were created there would be more business opportunities in farming and more young people would consider that as a career."

"For community level development to happen they must engage the youth, otherwise it is impossible."

Indicators of progress

- From 2007 to 2010, the Kenema City Council has increased the local revenue base from 48 million Leones to 166 million Leones (Source: UNCDF)
- As of 2011, 46 out of 80 functions have been devolved from the central government to local councils since 2004 (Source: UNDP)
- In 2009, the net inflow foreign direct investment increased by 19,7 % from 2008, from 59.62 to 74.29 million dollars (Source: World bank database 15/07/2011¹)
- As of 2010, routine publication of budgets and actual spending are in place with comprehensible formats. Budget posted in the MOFED web-site (www.mofed.sl.gov) and financial statement by Accountant General is also posted in the website (Source: MOFED/Director of Budget 2010)
- Three annual statistics from Statistics Sierra Leone and other reports were published in 2010 (Human Development Index, MDG Report, SDHPS), and two in 2009 (First Transport Sector Bulletin 2009 and MDG report 2009)

¹Data for 2010 pending

"For Sierra Leone to be able to reap the benefits of agriculture, tourism and natural wealth, transparency is crucial; transparency by both companies and government in order to maintain credibility, ensure efficient bureaucratic processes and equity and to provide a fair return for the government, the people and the companies investing the country"

The Honourable Henry Bellingham, *United Kingdom Minister for Africa*

When Entrepreneurs can call upon Local Government...

An important Government goal in Sierra Leone is to make the population feel they are coming closer to the decision-making process, in an effort to rectify the over-centralization of government which was a contributory factor to the civil war. Strengthening local government is one way of doing this. This feature story describes how the UN support – through UNCDF and UNDP – helps make real differences for the livelihoods of local working people through assistance to the district and local Councils to identify and exploit available business opportunities.



"This is just the beginning for women. Through the power of our cooperation...we are discussing many improvements for our community."

Lyie Sesay, Village Chairperson

Busy, noisy, bustling and crowded: Ngegbema Market shows how rural areas can achieve economic integration and livelihoods can be

improved when local commercial structures and entrepreneurial activities are supported.

Photo: Therese Leijon

The sun has just risen, but the newly-built Ngegbema Market in Kenema District is already busy and noisy. Central among the jostling crowds pushing past the packed stalls stands 70-year-old Village Chairperson, Lyie Sesay. Behind Lyie is her own market stall where there's a display of peppers, onions and palm oil on the slatted table.

Just a year ago Lyie was selling her commodities on the streets of Kenema. "I was suffering under the burning sun or the floods of rain," she says, turning to hand a bag of onions to a customer.

Multiple problems defeating a trader

"Whatever the weather, I had nowhere to escape to and no way to protect my commodities. So I was desperate to sell." The extremes of the west African climate - humidity, heat and rain - often destroyed her produce as she had no adequate place to store them.

Her situation was made worse by the fact she was often sick with malaria or other illness. Because her earnings were so meagre she could not afford health treatment. Another difficulty was that she was not legally set up, had no shop for her business, and so had to occupy someone else's land or property. This meant she was often taken in by the police, forfeiting what she had earned.

... Livelihoods of the Communities improve dramatically

Positive benefits of economic enterprise

Ngegbema Market is one of many being set up in Sierra Leone. It is not only a means of fostering local economic activity - especially for women - but also has positive benefits for the community, providing revenue for the local Council.

Opened in 2010, the Market complex has more than a hundred stalls, a modern storage room and sanitation facilities. It was commissioned under the Tunkia Chiefdom in the District and is one of the micro-projects that fall within the Kenema District Economic Recovery Programme.

Empowering women represents a new beginning

"We were many women who had the same problem – and we suffered," Lyie claims. "We contacted our Council and asked for a market place." With the support of UNCDF and UNDP, the building of the market started in 2009. Around 150 people, the majority of them women, are now involved. Lyie continues, "This is just the beginning. Through the power of our cooperation we have gained the support of the local Council. In the community right now we are discussing the possibility of micro-finance loans and for building a healthcare centre."

Effort repaid by satisfied customers and well-fed children

At the other end of the market, Mrs Tianjay Kallon stands in front of her perfectly-piled hot peppers. A year ago, she was appointed Chairperson of the market. She had experienced the same problems as Lyie in selling her goods on the street. "But things have changed now," she says. "While before I had to carry everything to the market in the morning and bring it back at night, now I keep my commodities in the storage room there. I earn more money now. People coming to the market know I have good quality produce." With her increased income Tianjay and her two children eat better on a daily basis. Widowed during the war, she has raised her children alone, a task that was not easy as she was in the market all day. "There wasn't enough food at home - so they were always out looking for something to eat - now they come home after school for a good meal and stay safe in the house," she says.



At Ngegbema Market Lyie Sesay has boosted her market stall earnings thanks to support through the Kenema District Economic Recovery Programme (KDERP). Photo: Therese Leijon

Improved livelihoods all round

The successful women entrepreneurs of the Ngegbema Market are rapidly coming to exemplify the successful evolution of the Government policy of bringing services to local communities. Through support to structures that enhance cooperation between local Councils and communities the livelihoods of local working people are being dramatically improved.

Story from cover page:

At the UNIDO-run Growth Centre in Binkolo a solar-powered television is screening the news from the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation. It's an eagerly-anticipated daily routine for about 70 young people who come to the Centre to watch both educational and entertainment programmes.

In January 2010 Sierra Leone became only the second country in Africa where a public broadcasting system has been set up.

With the support of United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Mission in Sierra Leone and UNDP, the Government embraced the concept of a broadcasting service free of political interference, serving the objectives of peace building and promoting good governance. Since its creation, Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation has been empowering an information-hungry public, and will play a crucial role in information dissemination in the forthcoming elections.

About Sierra Leone

Whilst many country level indicators are slowly improving, it is important to remember where the country was a decade ago in order to put its recovery into perspective. The eleven year civil war (1991 – 2002) devastated Sierra Leone; over 50,000 people died, the country's infrastructure was destroyed and about one third of its people displaced. Today, celebrating its 50th year of independence, Sierra Leone has experienced peace for just a decade. Safety and security in the country grows and, for a post conflict country, crime is relatively low. In September 2010 the UN Security Council

lifted the arms embargo and the last remaining sanctions imposed on the country since the war because the Government had fully re-established control over its territory and all former rebel fighters were disarmed and demobilized. Investor confidence is gradually growing and the country is moving forward to another round of free and fair elections. From a country that received UN Peacekeeping troops to a country that now deploys Peacekeeping troops (to Darfur under UNAMID) Sierra Leone has made remarkable progress.



- population: **5.4 million**
- life expectancy at birth: **48 years**
- % population female: **51**
- % of adults literate: **40**
- % of women with no education: **65**
- % of women aged 15-49 having undergone Female genital cutting: **94**
- % of women married before 18: **62**
- % of population under 15: **42**
- % of population in urban areas: **40**
- % of urbanization per year: **3**
- % of undernourished people: **47**
- % of children underweight: **30**
- % of children stunted: **40**
- % births attended by skilled health personnel: **42**
- maternal mortality rate: **857** per 100,000 live births
- Under five child mortality rate (per 100 live births): **192**
- teenage pregnancy rate: **34%**
- Contraceptive prevalence rate: **7%**

Remaining Challenges:

→ **Poverty and unemployment.** Unemployment is particularly high among youths and ex-combatants. About two thirds of the population engages in subsistence agriculture, which accounts for 52% of national income. Rural to urban drift is a problem as youths seek work in the cities.

→ **International crime, drugs and corruption.** Drugs cartels, many from Columbia, increasingly try to use Sierra Leone as transit point to ship drugs to Europe fueling corruption and undermining earlier security and transparency gains.

→ **Management of natural resources:** Political stability has attracted back investment in mining and the country is seeing a revival in many areas, notably in bauxite, rutile and iron ore. Off shore oil discoveries were recently confirmed. Minerals are a blessing for any economy, but managed badly they can also be a curse.

Investing in Success



Sierra Leone is a successful example of a multi-lateral approach to conflict resolution. Under the general guidance of the UN Security Council, ECOWAS, Nigeria, the EU and the UK played important roles in bringing peace to the country. The focus today is shifting from peace and security and humanitarian operations to recovery activities and long term development.

"As a remarkable success story for post conflict reconstruction of Sierra Leone is taking tremendous strides forward. But sustained assistance is still needed to complete this process and consolidate the gains the country has made"

Ambassador McNee, Canada's Permanent Representative to the UN and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's Configuration for Sierra Leone

Whilst many institutions are back on their feet, progress is not uniform and many challenges remain. Donor commitment must not ease off now, since it is crucial to invest in the success achieved, maintain positive momentum and complete what is almost a great triumph for peace in the West Coast of Africa. The shift from peacekeeping to peacebuilding is complete. The UN Joint Vision signifies the start of the next shift from peacebuilding to ongoing recovery and further development. Traditionally this second shift is problematic and difficult to fund. The UN Joint Vision offers 20 well established and Government approved programmes that make a strong contribution to the peace dividend and continued development. Be part of the success through investing your country's voluntary contributions in the UN's Joint Vision for Sierra Leone!



This brochure is a series of five describing how the United Nations Joint Vision priorities 1-5 are working in Sierra Leone. To obtain more copies of this brochure, or a full set, or more information on the actual programmes within the Joint Vision please contact: **The Strategic Planning Unit, United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, Hotel Cabenda, 14 Signal Hill, Freetown, Republic of Sierra Leone.**

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