

# Country programme document for Sierra Leone, 2013-2014

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## I. Situation analysis

1. Sierra Leone has made notable progress in consolidating peace and strengthening democracy since the end of a devastating civil war in 2002. Nevertheless, reflecting accumulated development deficits, its 2011 value of 0.336 on the human development index positioned it 180<sup>th</sup> out of 187 countries and territories. Life expectancy has increased from 39 years in 2000 to 47 years in 2011, yet around 60 per cent of the population lives below the national poverty line; unemployment rates are high, especially among youth; and illiteracy is widespread. A gender inequality index value of 0.662 ranks the country 137<sup>th</sup> out of 146 countries in 2011. Only 9.5 per cent of adult women have reached a secondary or higher level of education, compared to 20.4 per cent of men, and only 13.2 per cent of parliamentary seats are held by women. Consistent with this situation, the country has made progress towards the Millennium Development Goals but only the Goal related to HIV/AIDS is likely to be achieved by 2015.

2. The post-conflict economic performance of Sierra Leone has been strong but heavily dependent on aid, with about 50 per cent of public investment programmes financed by external resources. Growth in the gross domestic product picked up from 4.5 per cent in 2010 to 5.3 per cent in 2011, with positive contributions from all sectors of the economy. Real gross domestic product is projected to expand by a staggering 32 per cent in 2012, driven by a jump in iron ore production, but even without that the economy is projected to grow by 6 per cent per annum on average during 2012-2014. Inflation remains high due to internal factors and external disturbances, including rising food and fuel prices. Despite improved domestic revenue mobilization, including through the introduction of a goods and services tax, the fiscal deficit widened in 2011 due to a higher wage bill, fuel subsidies and spending on infrastructure projects.

3. A combination of factors is holding back the economic recovery of the country and its prospects for longer-term development. These include a largely unchanged economic structure at low levels of productivity, with agriculture remaining the mainstay of the economy (46 per cent of gross domestic product) and providing employment for about 75 per cent of the rapidly growing population; inequalities in life expectancy, gender, education and income; an inadequate, poorly maintained infrastructure; shortcomings in the business climate despite recent gains; and, as a consequence of these factors, a small private sector. Recovery and development are also threatened by vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. The 2010 environmental performance index places Sierra Leone last out of 163 countries. Climate change will lead to low yields of critical crops and, potentially, an annual loss of between \$600 million and \$1.1 billion in crop revenues by the end of the century. Water, soil and forest resources are threatened by population growth, the dependence of energy consumption on biomass (80 per cent of the total), unsustainable mining activities, pollution of rivers, and rising demands from agribusiness, resulting in massive deforestation (3,000 hectares per annum) and increased vulnerability to soil erosion and landslides.

4. At the crux of the development prospects of Sierra Leone, however, remains the challenge of managing a complex political situation and building the consensus, norms and institutions to underpin peace and generate the stability and predictability essential for sustainable development. The overall situation remains fragile, with risks of political polarization marked by regional and ethnic divisions that could be exacerbated in the complex 2012 electoral process. The African Peer Review Mechanism country review report, presented by the President of Sierra Leone to the Mechanism in January 2012, identifies two potential flashpoints: (a) the nexus connecting youth unemployment to electoral competition; and (b) the political economy of mineral governance, especially in the wake of new discoveries. The relationship between chiefs, local councils and central government is often unclear, particularly with regard to tax collection, distribution of surface rent from mining or agribusiness, land acquisition and land use. The African Peer Review Mechanism report identifies key governance challenges including corruption, a weak public sector capacity to deliver services and implement government policies at national and local levels, and limited access to justice, particularly for the poor and vulnerable. It recommends continued strengthening of independent institutions and parliament, as well as a constitutional review. Another critical factor will be the expected

drawdown of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Mission in Sierra Leone, which will have implications for international engagement and for the role of those partners – including the United Nations country team – who will remain on the ground.

## **II. Past cooperation and lessons learned**

5. The previous cycle, 2009-2012, took place in the context of peace consolidation with the agenda for change, 2008-2012, guiding national priorities and a joint vision document, 2009-2012, aligning the United Nations response to the agenda. The joint vision served as the strategy document for the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Office and the country team, replacing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. The consolidation of planning frameworks was a key achievement strengthening internal cohesion and facilitating interaction with the Government.

6. Notable achievements during the previous cycle covered three main areas. First, *improved democratic governance* to help establish the institutional frameworks and capabilities needed to secure peace and improve respect for human rights. This embraced management of the election basket fund, which channelled technical, advisory and financial assistance required for the successful conduct of presidential (2007) and local elections (2008), and made possible gains in electoral management and mediation of election-related conflicts; improved access to justice using creative approaches such as the ‘Saturday courts’ addressing the substantial backlog of sexual and gender-based violence cases; public sector reform using a combination of measures bringing together diaspora experts, targeted training and recruitment of mid-level technical experts, introduction of performance management and performance contracting and technical advice to Government entities leading the reform process; and an initiative, funded by the India-Brazil-South Africa Trust Fund, to increase the capabilities of key governmental units – the cabinet office, the strategy and policy unit (presidency) and the policy and planning unit (Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Another effort, with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), piloted options for local economic development that led to increased revenues in targeted districts. Local governance was also addressed by enabling the Ministry for Local Governance to improve its functioning and through the establishment of the National Association of Local Councils.

7. Second, *facilitation of multi-partner efforts for peace consolidation*, with UNDP providing fund management and implementation services for multi-partner efforts, involving the Peacebuilding Office, the Peacebuilding Fund and bilateral donors in areas such as youth employment, strengthening the rule of law, and access to justice and the media. UNDP thus enabled the international community to help core institutions weakened by the war (including the Human Rights Commission, the judiciary and the Anti-Corruption Commission) to recover gradually while also supporting peace consolidation at the community level by exchanging weapons for small scale infrastructure projects.

8. Third, *employment generation and development of the productive sector*, specifically to enable the National Youth Commission to start-up its operations; provide access to income-generating opportunities for over 10,000 young people; establish a cadastre system with the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources to boost transparency in a major growth sector; and assist the Government in renegotiating select mining agreements, revealing the importance of capacities that can help the country to reap the benefits of private-sector growth and foreign investment while creating demand for the knowledge and skills required to negotiate successful public-private partnerships.

9. Evaluations and assessments commissioned during the previous programme cycle have shaped the approach to the next country programme document. UNDP has moved to consolidate its portfolio to rely on fewer, more strategic projects and programmes, closing down minor development projects; to strengthen its human resources in line with its portfolio; and to ensure cost-effective implementation and timely reporting to development partners.

### III. Proposed programme

10. The rationale and strategy for 2013-2014 is in line with emerging government priorities and the United Nations transitional joint vision, 2013-14. They have been shaped, in particular, by a set of critical variables representing either legacy issues or prospective risks that need careful attention. These include: (a) high levels of uncertainty in policy when the agenda for change comes to an end in 2012 and a new national development strategy, the agenda for prosperity, 2013-2017), being developed during 2012; (b) the challenges of navigating the elections in November 2012 without disrupting the momentum of recovery and consolidation; (c) the potential drawdown of the Peacebuilding Office, which will provide an opportunity for UNDP to lead the United Nations system in transitioning towards a country-team-driven approach emphasizing national leadership and capabilities and improved coordination with partners to ensure sustained international support for development; and (d) issues of programme focus, results, office capabilities and 'value-for-money' that require continuing attention.

11. The strategic approach to assistance will therefore rest on two main pillars: first, building institutions capable of deepening democracy and mitigating the risks associated with fragility; and second, ensuring that growth benefits the poor, emphasizing job creation as a key channel for doing so, particularly for youth. UNDP actions will be driven by three central considerations: first, an emphasis on better planning and resource management for development and aid effectiveness, including in connection with the 'New Deal' for fragile states and with those institutions expected to continue work supported by the Peacebuilding Office; second, incorporation of conflict-sensitivity into all interventions and a focus on the factors contributing to volatility: disputes on elections, chieftaincy governance and natural resources management as well as the marginalization of youth; and third, the targeting of gender disparities with particular attention to improving the representation of women through legal reform, access to justice and measures to tackle sexual and gender-based violence.

12. *Improved governance and risk management.* Assistance from UNDP will focus on three linked elements: (a) capacity-building of independent democratic institutions including electoral management bodies, Parliament and the media, to help entrench the norms, skills, systems and practices that can secure better oversight of government functions, coordination of development assistance and public confidence and participation in democratic processes, with an emphasis on women as voters, candidates and elected representatives; (b) public sector reform, using performance management to achieve multiplier effects on the effectiveness of state institutions, by helping to cascade performance contracts signed at senior levels throughout the service and establishing systems for appraisal and training with a view to assisting women in the public service to be stronger leaders and managers; and (c) expanding, jointly with UNCDF, the capacities of local councils to effectively perform core development promotion and conflict prevention functions by creating an environment for local economic development and mitigating tensions at the level of chiefdoms based on a better understanding of roles and responsibilities across various levels of government, investment in devolved functions for local level planning and service delivery, and the adoption of accountability tools such as 'citizens' scorecards' which also amplify the voice of women at the local level.

13. *Inclusive growth and management of natural resources and disasters.* The emphasis will be on job creation, targeting gaps in policy and services that hinder youth employment, building in analysis and options for reducing gender disparities in access and benefits. This will entail multiple strands of work to scale: up [?] private sector development and public-private partnerships to maximize local content and the employment potential of growth sectors; working with the National Youth Commission to implement the employment policy as well as a package of services to boost employability and enterprise formation (career advice, skills development, business development services and vocational training); and complementary work to provide increased access to start-up capital for young women and men in semi-urban and rural areas based on the adoption of client-friendly service delivery models and products and follow-through capacity among providers of financial services. Given its strong synergies

with investment for job creation and conflict prevention, UNDP will address natural resource management issues through a dual emphasis on transparency in revenue and sustainable resource management, implementation of the land policy, and the establishment of institutions for adjudication of land disputes. If financing and the relevant capacities are available, UNDP will consider investing in the management of natural disasters, specifically in developing and implementing a national disaster risk management strategy (including climate change risk); and the integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change into planning and budgeting processes.

#### **IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation**

14. Efforts will focus on increasing the capacity of implementing partners to facilitate a gradual transition to a national implementation environment over the medium-term. Nevertheless, direct implementation will remain an important interim modality given that over 50 per cent of implementing partners are assessed as high risk. Other modalities such as non-governmental organization and agency implementation will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

15. Reinforcing recent improvements, UNDP will make a sustained, substantial investment in results-based management. This will include enforcing norms on the allocation of project funding for monitoring and evaluation; reviewing and, if needed, revising baselines and targets; investing in national statistical and administrative reporting systems; using Atlas to monitor project performance; intensifying staff training; moving towards a portfolio management approach to focus on contributions to outcomes; and conducting a series of outcome evaluations. Steps will be taken with respect to risk management: the ongoing monitoring of the country situation to spot strategic risks; flexible programming to adjust interventions and budgets when needed; the use of several implementation modalities, including fast track; timely project and portfolio level monitoring; and full compliance with the minimum operating security standards.

16. UNDP will seek to expand partnerships through a variety of means: scaling up work, for instance, in local development by incorporating them into public investment programmes and co-financing by international financial institutions; expanding collaboration with India, Brazil and South Africa; tapping international investor interest to raise resources for socially responsible investments; reinforcing links within the country team – such as with the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization – on employment; addressing performance issues so as to attract additional funding from bilateral donors; and pursuing new opportunities presented, for instance, by dialogue and action on the ‘New Deal’ for fragile states. In order to underpin this strategy and the wider programme, UNDP will look beyond the change process implemented during the previous cycle to address next-generation issues such as improving conditions for attracting high-quality national and international staff, especially women; adopting creative options to attract specialized talent from universities at an affordable cost; aligning the office structure to enable collaborative work across programme areas; and seeking out cost savings that do not undercut operational performance.

## Annex. Results and resources framework for Sierra Leone, 2013-2014

**Joint vision clusters 1 and 4.** Support to good governance – national institutions to perform their core functions more effectively and deliver services at national and local levels in a transparent, equitable manner; social protection, child protection, gender and human rights. Goal: Capacity and regulatory framework for human rights, gender equality and child protection.

**Outcome indicators:** Number of elections successfully conducted and validated by independent observers; assessed level of service delivery at national and local government level; increased effectiveness of parliament to perform its oversight functions; % change in number of SGBV cases cleared by Saturday courts and mobile courts and % of magistrates servicing the provinces;

**Related strategic plan focus areas:** Goal 1. Achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty; Goal 2. Fostering democratic governance.

Government contribution	Other partner contributions	UNDP contribution	Indicator(s), baselines and target(s) for UNDP contributions	Indicative country programme outputs	Indicative resources by outcome (in dollars)
The Government will ensure the independence and funding of electoral management bodies; invest steadily in the capacity of line ministries for improved service delivery; focus on fiscal transfers to local councils to deliver basic services; and sustain international commitments and advances on human rights, including gender equality, with a focus on issues of policy, capacity and financing	Development partners will strengthen financial oversight capacity and accountability of Parliament. The European Commission, DFID and the World Bank will continue to support civil service reform. The Bank will continue to support fiscal decentralization. CSOs will support civic education, election monitoring and performance of Members of Parliament. UNIPSIL will monitor the political processes.	UNDP will contribute policy advisory services, technical inputs, services (such as coordination), access to good practice and expert networks and in-kind contributions to enable policy and regulatory reform, design and management of institutional functions, targeted improvements in skills and rollout of specific interventions (such as voter and civic education). This will be done in three key areas at the core of the on-going transition and future transformation of the country: (a) independent democratic institutions including electoral management bodies, parliament and the media; (b) reform of the public sector; and (c) service delivery and local economic development at the decentralized level. UNDP will address the representation and engagement of women as a core concern, through targeted action in public service reform, legal reform, participation in electoral processes and improved access to justice, in addition to combating SGBV.	Elections assessed as being peaceful and successfully organized <b>Baseline:</b> 2011 local elections, assessed by independent domestic observers (including male/female participation). <b>Targets:</b> Elections through the next cycle, assessed by independent domestic and international observers (including male and female participation) Number of MDAs that meet minimum service delivery standards (including outreach to and utilization of services by women) <b>Baseline:</b> 6 MDAs in 2011 <b>Targets:</b> 12 by 2014 in core areas, using performance monitoring systems; Number of parliamentary assistance coordination offices operational <b>Baseline:</b> 1 in 2011. <b>Target:</b> 8 by 2014 Reduced number of SGBV cases that are backlogged <b>Baseline:</b> 547 in 2011 <b>Target:</b> 20% reduction by 2014 Number of local councils in disputes with chiefs over revenue distribution <b>Baseline:</b> 100% in 2011 <b>Target:</b> 60% reduction by 2014	<b>1.</b> Key elements of the electoral system (re)designed and implemented (boundary delimitation, voter and civic registration, dispute settlement and conflict management, increased female electoral staff, outreach to women voters and candidates). <b>2.</b> Capacity assessments conducted and gaps in organization, systems, standards and skills addressed in phases to meet MDA service delivery standards at the national and decentralized levels. <b>3.</b> Key oversight functions identified, current methods, processes and skills reviewed and focused reforms and changes implemented to boost management, skills and use of data and analysis (such as on public accounts, human rights and gender equality in Parliament and the media). <b>4.</b> Outreach, education and legal aid services expanded to reach women affected by SGBV and measures for expedited case management adopted in the judiciary. <b>5.</b> Options for the resolution of local-level chieftaincy disputes tested, assessed and gradually applied, in cooperation with stakeholders.	<b>Regular:</b> 7,200,000 <b>Other:</b> 12,123,000

**Joint vision clusters 3 and 7.** Natural resources and disaster management – Goal: To ensure that natural resources are sustainably and equitably managed and threats and impacts from natural and man-made disasters are reduced. Economic development and employment – Goal: To improve the ‘enabling environment’ for investment and employment creation. **Outcome indicators:** % change in mortality and casualties and economic impacts of natural and man-made disasters; % change in public perception on the way in which land tenure is regulated according to 2011 baseline; %

change in number of customers having access to business-related financial services, broken down by geographical location, age and gender; employment policy and related action plan(s) mainstreaming the youth employment issue finalized, enacted, budgeted and under implementation; aid management system of MFED improved to better incorporate reporting and dissemination of relevant data; and donor coordination improved. **Related strategic plan focus areas:** Goal 1. Achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty; Goal 3: Supporting crisis prevention and recovery; Goal 4: Managing energy and the environment for sustainable development.

<p>Government, through the Bank of Sierra Leone, will continue to implement the Financial Sector Development Plan; finalize the development of the employment policy; reinforce institutional and coordination capacities, including with civil society, for improved environmental management; and serve as a self-selected pilot country for the implementation of the 'New Deal for Fragile States'</p>	<p>ILO, the World Bank, FAO and GIZ will continue to support youth employment and empowerment and increasing the participation of youth through the National Youth Commission. UNEP is supporting capacity building of the EPA on natural resources management and environmental protection. FAO and UNICEF are providing technical support in disaster preparedness and response to the Office of National Security</p>	<p>UNDP will contribute across four main clusters: (a) foster a more 'employment-friendly' environment, especially for youth, centred on improving government skills and access to experiences to negotiate PPP arrangements that boost local content using labour-intensive means, and expanding access to services tailored to the target group; (b), work to improve transparency in revenue management, particularly with growing income from mining, in line with extractive industries transparency initiative standards; (c) policy reform and awareness-raising on sustainable natural resources management, targeting improved resource use, property rights and resolution of disputes; (d) help build consensus and facilitate technical assistance for actions and systems to implement and monitor a 'New Deal' integrated within the national aid management framework. Provided there is funding and technical expertise, UNDP will also invest in managing post-disaster risks: (a) preparation of a national disaster risk management strategy and benchmarked initiatives to develop implementation capacity; and (b) integration of specific actions and investments in national and local planning and budgeting</p>	<p>Coverage of skills and business development services targeting youth (number of participants, 'graduation' rates)  <b>Baseline:</b> 5 business development centres operational serving 7 districts (2012)  <b>Target:</b> 10, serving 12 districts, by 2014  Number of placements for graduates of vocational training programmes  <b>Baseline:</b> 100 in 2011  <b>Target:</b> 650 by 2014  Number of active clients aged 15-35 (m/f) that have used financial services  <b>Baseline:</b> 150,000 in 2011  <b>Target:</b> 270,000 by 2014  A national land tenure policy in place and under implementation  <b>Baseline:</b> Not in place.  <b>Targets:</b> Policy adopted by Government and pilots underway in 2 regions by 2014  An agreed country-specific strategy on a 'New Deal' agreed and under way  <b>Baseline:</b> In early stages of discussion  <b>Targets:</b> Strategy endorsed by Government and development partners with first phase of implementation under way by 2013  Operational national and local mechanisms for the prevention and management of natural disasters  <b>Baseline:</b> Limited capacity to assess risks, take preventive action and respond to disasters.  <b>Target:</b> Benchmarks for minimum operational capability met for disaster prevention and management</p>	<p>1. Job creation package and associated service models designed, public-private-CSO partnerships agreed and access to services secured for target groups (with particular attention to women).  2. Technical studies, design work and consultations completed on a land tenure policy and its first phase of implementation.  3. Integrated water resource management 'road map' prepared, consulted upon and agreed by stakeholders.  4. Background analytical work completed, proposals and options developed and dialogue organized (if requested by Government) to agree upon a 'New Deal'.  5. Capacity assessments conducted against benchmark operational requirements for disaster prevention and management, and targeted assistance provided to (re)organize institutional arrangements, build and maintain information systems, prepare contingency plans, develop skills across key categories of personnel (public, private, community) and design and deliver outreach and communication programmes that ensure women's active engagement.</p>	<p><b>Regular:</b> 5,265,780  <b>Other:</b> 5,877,000</p>
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## **Abbreviations used in annex table**

CSO: civil society organization

DFID: Department for International Development

EPA: Environment Protection Agency of Sierra Leone

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

GIZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

ILO: International Labour Organization

MDA: ministry, department and agency

MFED: Ministry of Finance

PPP: Public-private partnership

SGBV: Sexual and gender-based violence

UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

UNIPSIL: United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone

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