EBOLA RECOVERY IN SIERRA LEONE

TACKLING A ROOT CAUSE OF EBOLA; THE BUSHMEAT TRADE

The 18-month project will address a root cause of the Ebola outbreak, the trade in ‘bushmeat’ (meat from wildlife). By offering safe, sustainable alternatives to the bushmeat trade, it will reduce the risks of future pandemics, protect livelihoods and address environmental concerns.

Expected results:

Reduced dependency on bushmeat as a source of protein and income in poor rural communities. The project will target approximately 7,500 people living in the vicinity of forested areas near borders with Guinea and Liberia, where the bushmeat trade is rampant.

Increased public knowledge of the health and environmental risks associated with consuming bushmeat. Advocacy and awareness campaigns in key target areas.

UNDP will lead the project in cooperation with the Ministry of Health & Sanitation, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, & Food Security, and the Sierra Leone Environment Protection Agency.

Why it matters:

Bushmeat’ is an important source of protein and income for many poor rural communities, but it poses serious risks related to future pandemics, other health concerns and environmental sustainability.

Wildlife such as bats, antelopes, monkeys and primates can host diseases that are deadly to humans, including HIV, Marburg, and Ebola. Hunting and handling bushmeat puts people at a serious risk of contracting and spreading these diseases through close contact with organs or the bodily fluids of infected animals.

Forested areas in Central and West Africa, including the countries hardest-hit by Ebola; Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia, mark the global centre of the bushmeat trade. The trade is a complex, well-established system that involves hunters, wholesalers, market traders and roadside restaurants. In Liberia alone, the bushmeat trade is worth around 42 million USD annually and likely around the same range in Sierra Leone.
A ban on bushmeat consumption during the Ebola emergency saw sales drop significantly, and the livelihoods of thousands of people involved in the bushmeat trade were impacted as a result.

With no viable alternatives, the bushmeat trade is likely to resume when the ban is lifted. Livelihoods need nurturing, but the risks of future pandemics, plus other health and environmental concerns mean alternatives must be found.

Evidence from other African countries shows that the domestication and commercial farming of wildlife can protect livelihoods, help meet the demand for animal protein and benefit local ecosystems. It should also help prevent transmission of dangerous diseases from animals to humans in future.

Project activities:

The project will run from May 2015 to October 2016. It will be thematically aligned with the National Ebola Recovery Strategy, in terms of preventing future disease outbreaks and supporting livelihoods in vulnerable communities in hotspot areas for the bushmeat trade. We aim to establish 150 community groups, targeting approximately 7,500 beneficiaries.

1. Reduced dependency on bushmeat as a source of protein and income in poverty-stricken rural communities.
   - Mapping hotspot areas for the bushmeat trade (e.g. the transboundary Gola Forest and the Outamba-Kilimi ecosystems). Undertaking stakeholder and market analyses and developing community engagement strategies.
   - Introducing alternative sources of animal protein, such as poultry or pork production, especially among communities reliant on bushmeat.
   - Commercial farming of wildlife species and nation-wide marketing.

2. Better public knowledge of the health and environmental risks associated with consuming bushmeat.
   - Building new knowledge networks between Sierra Leonean academic and Government institutions, and the Liverpool Institute of Infection & Global Health.
   - Creating a broad-based campaign to raise awareness of risks of the bushmeat trade and promote the production and consumption of safer protein sources. Radio shows will be broadcasted in both Sierra Leone and Liberia and will be carefully targeted to specific groups, along with a range of other targeted actions.

Budget:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Budget (US$)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reduced dependency on bushmeat</td>
<td>472,524</td>
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<tr>
<td>(consultancies; equipment, livestock; training; marketing campaign)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Public knowledge and awareness</td>
<td>219,845</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Consultancies; travel; radio shows)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>692,370</strong></td>
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1 The Institute of Infection & Global Health at the University of Liverpool implements cutting edge research on zoonotic and emerging/re-emerging diseases, in collaboration with the Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and CGIAR in Kenya. One of their areas of expertise is the factors involved in risk, transmission, persistence, spread, and disease burden of pathogens in both human and animal populations.
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Why UNDP?

Since 1965, UNDP has established trusted relationships with key Government partners, national research institutions, civil society organizations and local communities in Sierra Leone. We supported the country during previous crises, are committed to supporting the country on its path towards recovery from the impacts of the Ebola outbreak.

UNDP’s Energy, Environment and Natural Resource Management team in Sierra Leone is working at the forefront of knowledge-driven solutions for sustainable development challenges, with the capacity to deliver complex interventions at the national and local level. Our portfolio has grown rapidly, with an annual budget that increased from US$ 513,00 to over 3.5 million US$ in the last 3 years.