



# **UNDP Sierra Leone**

## **2020 Annual Report**

# Contents

- Contents ..... 2
- Forward ..... 3
- 2020 Development Overview ..... 5
- UNDP Sierra Leone in Action ..... 6
- COVID-19: a national fight against a global pandemic ..... 7
- PRIORITY ONE ..... 11
  - Fostering peace and social cohesion ..... 11
  - Strengthening Governance and Accountability Institutions ..... 13
  - Support to Media ..... 14
  - Support to Improve Access to Justice and Security ..... 15
- PRIORITY TWO ..... 16
  - Working with and for young people in the ‘last decade of action’ ..... 16
  - 2020 Social Good Summit ..... 18
  - Levelling the playing field for gender equality actions ..... 21
    - Framing the pathway for gender equality in Sierra Leone ..... 21
    - 16 Days of Activism: transforming norms and practices for GBV Prevention ..... 22
    - Mobilizing community action on the theme: Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect! .... 22
- PRIORITY THREE ..... 23
  - Integrating SDGs into national development plans ..... 26
  - Collaborating with UNCDF on Joint SDG Financing ..... 26
- Funding for the year ..... 28

# Forward

Dear friends and partners, I am pleased to present UNDP's Annual Report for 2020.

2020 was an exceptional year in many fronts, to the Government and people of Sierra Leone and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It was a year marking the 'Last Decade of Action' to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our mandate to serve was renewed with the crafting of a new Country Programme Document 2020-2023 which aligns with Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP). It focuses on 'area-based' programming and targets historically marginalized areas-putting us in full gear to accelerate national development. Our aspiration for 2020 and beyond however, became blurred with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sierra Leone's economy was negatively impacted and grew at a slower pace than expected, reducing progress towards the attainment of SDGs. Real GDP growth for 2020 was projected to drop from 4.2% to 3.8% in the best-case scenario and 2.2% in the worst-case scenario. At the household level, increased income inequality and food insecurity imposed greater burden on women and women headed households.

In the wake of this global shock, the Country Office was quick to realign mobilized resources for national COVID-19 response drive together with a robust financing framework under the leadership of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) which spearheaded collective UN agencies commitments towards addressing the aftershocks of the pandemic.

Despite challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, UNDP's strategic interventions were driven by universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity while promoting innovative ways to create social safety nets for all.

As part of managing the COVID-19 health emergency, UNDP led the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the 34 Military Hospital- a joint strategic UN support that constructed a specialized 13-bed COVID-19 treatment center at the hospital. Additional support was provided through the National COVID-19 Emergency Response Centre, to raise public awareness on COVID-19 in 190 chiefdoms and distribute facemasks and food items .

UNDP also adopted a sub-regional approach to providing additional support to the Governments and people of Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea through the Manor River Union partnership to ensure a sub-regional preparedness for future outbreaks and build a shared and holistic recovery plan post-Covid-19.

The Country Programme continued its interventions on young people through the Youth Employment and Empowerment Project (YEPP) and a review of the 2014 National Youth Policy by the Ministry of Youth Affairs. In addition, a comprehensive National Youth Strategy was developed following a nationwide consultation . In partnership with Ministry of Youth Affairs (MOYA), and National Youth Commission (NAYCOM), UNDP Sierra Leone's flagship event- Annual Social Good Summit (SGS) received record of over 150 applications for both the innovation and impact competitions ,demonstrating an increased interest in the Summit.

On policy formulation, UNDPs supported the newly established Ministry of Environment and other four MDAs (Environment Protection Agency, National Protected Area Authority, and the National Water Resources Management Agency) to review two Environmental Management and Protection Policies and five other Acts of the same sector, in readiness to confront the ever-growing issue of climate change.

Behind these results achieved are everyday determination of Sierra Leoneans with whom UNDP works. People like Jitta Kanneh, a Mammy Queen of Makpele Chiefdom, Pujehun District who is using her voice to promote peace and social cohesion in her district through Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs), 30-year-old Benson Kandeh, who uses his high-tech skills to install 10 hand boreholes in 10 slum communities in and around Freetown, and 29-year-old Samuel Mattia from Pujehun-2020 SGS winner, whose invention is a hydroponic technology that improves crop quality and minimizes pest and disease infestation. These are just a few of the examples of our work in 2020.

2020 was more than a year of pandemic. It was also a period of working out our best version while standing in solidarity with the most vulnerable. This annual report reflects on the results we jointly achieved with the people of Sierra Leone during 2020 as part of the UN family and our dedicated staff continued to facilitate development interventions, and the support of our development partners (both local and international). I am convinced that we can accompany the people of Sierra Leone out of poverty and address challenges of inequalities, disaster, and climate change if we all continue to work closely with the people whose lives, we seek to change towards attainment of the SDGs by 2030.

Let me commend the Government and people of Sierra Leone and development partners for the long-standing partnership that exists between us, and the several donors who generously supported our work before, during and after crisis, to ensure a resilient and empowered Sierra Leone.

I invite you to read the report and learn more about our COVID-19 response in Sierra Leone.

**Dr. Samuel Doe**  
**Resident Representative**  
**Sierra Leone**

# 2020 Development Overview

## Political context

Since the end of the war in 2002, Sierra Leone has been rebuilding and reforming its governance sector. In 2018, Sierra Leone conducted its third post-war Parliamentary, Local Government and Presidential elections, which were widely commended by observer missions to be free, fair, inclusive, transparent, and credible. Parliament saw representations from different parties for the first-time beyond the two major and traditional parties: All Peoples Congress (APC) and Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP). Violence between supporters of the two parties remained on a low level.

In January 2019, the current government of President Julius Maada Bio established a Governance Transition Team (GTT) with a mandate to assess the state of governance inherited from the previous regime. Development partners including UNDP continued to support to the government in strengthening governance and accountability institutions. This led to slight improvements in Sierra Leone's overall governance rank to 51 in 2020, ranked at 24th (out of 54) in Africa (MO Ibrahim Index Report). The country is ranked 117 out of 179 countries in the Corruption Perception Index of 2020, moving 3 places upwards from 2019. In the same year, Sierra Leone moved 7 places upwards in the 2020 Global Peace Index ranking 46 out of 163 countries.

In July 2013, the country began a process to review its 1991 Constitution and the final report was presented by the Constitutional Review Committee (CRC) in January 2017. Civil society organizations and activists believe that the recommendations in the CRC Report provides the state an opportunity to strengthen human rights protection for the next generation.

## Socio-economic context

In 2020, Sierra Leone's economic situation, like the rest of the world, was impacted negatively by the COVID-19 pandemic which slowed progress towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. The national economy with real GDP was estimated to contract by 2.7% in 2020 (from 5.4% in 2019). This decline was connected to Government regulations, restrictions on trade and over reliance on imports weak external demand for major exports, particularly diamonds, and to declines in the mining, transport, trade, and tourism sectors. Income poverty was projected to increase to 44.2 percent in 2020 from 40.6 percent in 2019, and the 2020 Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MDPI) is 57.9%, indicating that majority of the country's population suffer deprivation in basic services (energy, sanitation, health, and education).

To mitigate the impact of COVID-19, the Government instituted the Quick Action Economic Response Programme (QAERP) to maintain macroeconomic and financial stability. The health and economic response coupled with low revenue generating opportunities predicted to almost double the overall fiscal deficit projected at 5.8 per cent of GDP in 2020. The Debt Sustainability Analysis indicated that overall risk of debt distress remain "high". In February 2019, the Government launched Sierra Leone's Medium Term National Development Plan (2019-2023) that integrates the UN 2030 Agenda and African Union Agenda 2063 poised towards a middle-income status by 2035, under 4 (four) national goals: (1) A diversified, resilient green economy; (2) A nation with educated, empowered, and healthy citizens capable of realizing their fullest potential; (3) A society that is peaceful, cohesive, secure, and just; and (4) A competitive economy with a well-developed infrastructure.

# UNDP Sierra Leone in Action

Our work is inspired by a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. This aspiration is now guided by UNDP's strategic plan 2022-2025 through the six 'Signature Solutions' to achieve the SDGs.

## Inclusive Democratic Governance

1. **Strengthening Democratic Institutions** for good governance
2. **Rule of law, human rights, strengthening peace, and social cohesion** by capacitating oversight and accountability institutions to perform their mandates based on international human rights standards and practices while supporting dialogue for sustained peace in the country.

## Sustainable Environment

1. **Enhancing sustainable and equitable natural resource management** by empowering governance institutions, civil society groups and the private sector while promoting climate smart solutions to local development challenges for a sustainable planet.
2. **Strengthening national capacities** to recover from and build resilience against natural disasters.



## Inclusive Growth and Development

1. **Improving access to sustainable income-generating opportunities to reduce inequalities** and help the most vulnerable Sierra Leoneans get out of poverty and support their households to be food-secured.
2. **Improving access to sustainable income-generating opportunities to reduce inequalities** and help the most vulnerable Sierra Leoneans get out of poverty and support their households to be food-secured.

# COVID-19: a national fight against a global pandemic

In Sierra Leone, the COVID-19 pandemic worsened poverty, and socio-economic consequences, growing inequality especially for women and girls thereby slowing down hard-earned gains. For UNDP, realignment of mobilized resources for a COVID-19 Response Plan that is consistent with SDG 3 was quicker and critical pathway to developing a robust financing framework consolidated partners efforts and commitments towards managing the crisis.



The UNDP Sierra Leone strategic positioning was informed by the global strategy of continuing to support sustainable development and reaching the last mile in the 'Last Decade of Action.' UNDP Sierra Leone's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) was quickly activated, to enable the Country Office Team to deliver downstream response to the public health emergency- yielding results under specific UNDP indicators that reassure democratic good governance, peace and social cohesion

and adherence to the rule of law while strengthening existing national health systems, ground border preparedness, and protect jobs and livelihoods.

## UNDP' Support to COVID-19 Response

940	Community volunteers were trained and deployed in 190
80,000	people were provided with facemasks
5,000	Posters printed
800	placards
300	megaphones

UNDP spearheaded the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the 34 Military Hospital- a joint strategic UN support that constructed a specialized 13-bed COVID-19 treatment center at the 34 Military Hospital to the Government of Sierra Leone.

## Covid-19 Community Sensitization and Awareness Of Covid-19

The need for people to have knowledge about COVID-19 was prioritized by UNDP. As a result, various interventions were conducted to increase to sensitize the public preventive measures through public awareness campaigns in communities and in media nationwide. 940 community volunteers were trained and deployed in 190 chiefdoms to carry out public education. Over 80,000 people were provided with facemasks, 5,000 posters, 800 placards & 7 banners printed, 300 megaphones & public address systems procured. In addition, handwashing stations were supplied.

As a preventive action, UNDP supported the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) to conducted sustained media engagement on human rights norms and standard of operations procedures by security officers during lockdown. In addition, HRCSL adopted an innovative means of receiving complaints through dedicated cell phone numbers at regional level. The Ministry Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) empowered Local Councils to adopt the COVID-19 District Strategic Plan to help reduce the spread of coronavirus in rural communities. 22 Local Councils received direct funding to enforce COVID-19 prevention, and surveillance.

To protect the vulnerable and underprivileged in society, 65 organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and 5 partner organizations were trained on prevention measures on the COVID-19 pandemic and in 8 operational districts resulting to the formation of 8-member COVID-19 social mobilization committees, who partnered with District Coronavirus Emergency Response Centre (DICOVERC) to raise awareness on COVID-19.

## Covid-19 Socio Economic Response

A comprehensive cross-sectional socio-economic impact assessment and analysis of COVID-19 in Sierra Leone was conducted. This assessment report among others highlighted the fact that women suffered more than men in all respects at the household levels, ranging from food insecurity to receipt of cash grants, from job losses to revenues earned, and dips into savings where these exist.

During the lockdown, UNDP provided direct support to 750 persons with disability who received food items. Additionally, food items, education materials and protective equipment (including soap and face masks produced by PWDs) to school going children with disabilities in 8 operational districts.



## Courts & Corrections Centers

Support was also provided to aid the continuous functioning of the courts during COVID-19 through the provision of hygiene and sanitation facilities such as, COVID-19 kits including face masks and hand sanitizers. Mobile phones including top up for 3 months, were provided to Sierra Leone Correctional Services (SLCS) to keep the communication link between inmates and families opened during the pandemic. 5 correctional isolation units (provisional detention isolation facilities for newly admitted inmates) within five correctional centers were provided with essential hygiene items.

## Special Needs

As schools were closed down during the pandemic, learning materials such as FM Radios, notebooks and pens were supplied 400 school pupils with priority given to those in examination classes, i.e., getting ready to write NPSE, BECE and WASSCE. UNDP supported One Family People to collaboration with the Aberdeen Women Center and district health workers to deliver awareness raising trainings on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) to 600 girls and young women with disabilities and children of PWDs.

## Case Study: The Mask-up Campaign

“The pandemic stopped me from doing what I love most-sports. It stopped me from earning an income to take care of myself and my family. Now! I am using my influence in an effective way for my country and myself” – George Wyndham, a Sierra Leonean Paralympian.

George is the country most decorated Paralympian who volunteered to conduct public education in Western Area during UNDP supported ‘mask-up’ campaign. He was especially concerned by the plight of youth in Sierra Leone during the pandemic.

“I know what it was like for them during the war and then Ebola. With COVID-19, and the poverty is worsened by this disease, we experienced some violence in some places, but we must stay strength and work together for the best,” he emphasized.

The Campaign was accompanied by a theme song with key messages encouraging Sierra Leones to join the fight against COVID-19. According to Wahid, a young Sierra Leonean artist who composed the song, he was interested in mobilizing his peers to fight the spread of COVID-19. Wahid and other musicians across the country championed the campaign by creating and performing a national theme song to public education on COVID-19.

“We want to emerge from the other side of this fight stronger and walk into a brighter future,” he said.



Our collaboration with local artists, musicians, youth, PWDs, representatives of various vulnerable groups in Sierra Leone on risk communication and social mobilization activities saw our social media following grow by double to 20,000 followers on Twitter.

## **Using Music to fight COVID-19 whilst advocating for peace and sustainable development**

Praised by many to be the best COVID-19 social mobilization and risk communication song they have heard in the country (and elsewhere) so far, the COVID-19 theme song was developed to help boost awareness-raising on the pandemic and to help mobilize the nation.

"The country loves these young men and women. They are very influential and highly respected among our people, so the idea was exactly right to have them join and lead the fight for their country". said Solomon Jamiru, National Spokesperson for the COVID-19 response and also the brains behind the development of the song.

"Music has ability to attract attention and drive home messages faster and more effectively as a means of communication." added Solomon.

Supported by UNDP through the National COVID-19 Emergency Response Center's Risk Communication and Social Mobilization pillar, the COVID-19 theme song was developed and performed by a collection of various Sierra Leonean musicians.

"You know music is a universal language. Music in African culture has since time immemorial been used to mobilize people in communities and to communicate with them. That is why we opted to do this song in the typical Sierra Leonean traditional style", noted Nega Don, LXG, a celebrated singer and rapper.

The COVID-19 theme song also featured FantaCee Wiz, and Sierra Leone's much loved child musician Linus De Genius. This is symbolic of the unity and social cohesion against COVID-19 and for development they sing.

## **Promoting trade and sub-regional engagement during COVID-19**

Even during a global pandemic, UNDP supported the Mano River Union's (MRU) commitment to strengthen border security, and to accelerate economic growth, social progress, and cultural advancement of the neighboring countries. Following the confirmation of the index case in March 2020, the Government announced restrictions on MRU cross border trade. This negatively impacted the lives of citizens in border communities, especially among women traders who are the main source of income for their families.

In early May 2020, UNDP Sierra Leone in collaboration with the Independent Police Complaint Board (IPCB), Office of National Security (ONS) and the Mano River Union (MRU), supported training of 150 border authorities and the Joint Border Security Committees (JBSCs) established across communities located in border chiefdoms of Sierra Leone sharing borders with Guinea and Liberia.

COVID-19 infection prevention and control hygiene supplies were donated to the Mano River Union (MRU) and National Security (ONS). The items included 37 hand washing stations, 8,500 posters and flyers and 22 banners with COVID-19 mitigation information and risk communication, 350 reusable face masks, 48 cartons of liquid and bar soaps among other materials sent to support border communities in Kambia, Pujehun, Port Lokko and Kono Districts.

In August 2020, MRU, and UNDP in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs jointly assessed the Jendema/Bo Waterside Joint Border Unit to get first-hand information from the communities and observe the ground level situation. This assessment identified challenges and made recommendations which were useful reopening of the MRU borders.

In November 2020, UNDP Sierra Leone formed part of the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) from Sierra Leone and Liberia to jointly conduct a week-long simulation exercise at the Jendema/Bo Waterside Border. Facilitated by MRU in collaboration with Liberia and Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health, national and district

COVID-19 response structures, and the Joint Border Security Units, UNDP's support to the border exercise came timely to assess COVID-19 gaps that could hinder the realization of the rights of citizens especially women who are mostly involved in trade along the Liberia-Sierra Leone Border.

UNDP's joint border initiatives builds on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the MRU and four UNDP Country Offices in November 2019 for improved collaboration among member states and UNDP within the sub-region and to respond to situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Supporting Women in Parliament during COVID-19**

UNDP continued its support to women in Parliament to lend their voices and influence decision making processes and ensure women's safety and security even during COVID-19. With funding from the Norwegian Government, UNDP supported all 16 female Members of the Sierra Leone Parliament to organize over 300 district stakeholder engagements, 'breaking the silence' on women, peace, and security issues, and to ensure gender sensitive COVID-19 community byelaws at constituency level in the wake of the pandemic.

UNDP further supported Parliamentary Female Caucus constituency level engagements and garnered community feedbacks during phone-in sessions to solicit real time concerns from the general population for further COVID-19 response engagements.

# PRIORITY ONE

## INCLUSIVE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

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UNDP's continuous support to the Government in strengthening local and national governance and accountability institutions has contributed to slightly improve Sierra Leone's overall governance score from 50.9 in 2019 to 51 in 2020 as reflected in the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance Index Report. Sierra Leone has improved its performance in terms of participation of people in democratic processes, rights, and inclusion with a score of 56.8 and public administration with a score of 59.6.



However, land-based conflicts persist in different part of the country. UNDP is excited that despite COVID-19, one of our flagship interventions jointly implemented with WFP in 2020 '**mitigating local resources-based conflict**' was scored over 80% by rural communities in Moyamba and Pujehun Districts for enhancing peace and social cohesion through the Office of the Vice President.

### Fostering peace and social cohesion

A series of activities were carried by the Country Programme to foster peace building and social cohesion. Tension in the communities where the interments took place were triggered by access to natural resources .UNDP collaborated with the World Food Programme and Implementing Partner Fambul Tok International) to mitigate land resources-based disputes and social cohesion in four chiefdoms in Moyamba and Pujehun Districts:

- Multistakeholder dialogue mechanism were established, between landowners, local authorities, women, and youths to help them understand the land tenure, land deal negotiation and the operations of large-scale companies operating in their localities.
- 27 Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs), 3 Multi-Stakeholders Platforms (MSPs) and 2 Community Development Committees (CDCs) for sustained social cohesion and peace established in Moyamba and Pujehun Districts.
- UNDP support also continued to strengthen women's understanding and knowledge on gender laws and legal frameworks on human rights and land rights in Moyamba and Pujehun Districts.
- UNDP worked with local civil society groups to mitigate the impact of social unrests and resource-based conflicts .
- Policy alignment was fostered through the Land Degradation Assessment completed by the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) across the targeted chiefdoms to ensure land acquisition and land use processes are more inclusive. The assessment indicating significant forest degradation informed by indigenous perceptions in the 4 chiefdoms and backed by empirical evidence obtained from Landsat imagery.
- Climate-smart agricultural practices were maximized, and high yielding rice variety introduced in 31 inland valley swamps managed by 31 farmer groups comprising of 588 females and 1,269 males, who received inputs rice seeds, cash for work and farming tools- a livelihoods support approach for sustaining peace.

## Case Study: Mitigating Localized Resources-Based Conflicts and Increasing Community Resilience

*“It is almost one year now; we have not witnessed road blockades or any act of violence in the Pujehun District emanating from land related disputes or dissatisfied youth groups or a community member. We are grateful to UNDP and WFP and the Government of Sierra Leone.”- Jitta Kanneh, Mammy Queen of Makpele Chiefdom in Pujehun District.*

Jitta Kanneh is a Mammy Queen of the Makpele Chiefdom in Pujehun District. She is leading peace building efforts in her district and is using her voice to build bridges against vices that once brought unrest and land resources-based conflicts. She is a member of a Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs) established with funding from UNDP, making sure that women are include in peace building processes and land resources negotiations.

**“It was really scary for everyone in the district previously ”** she recalls with a mix feeling of the pain, and a sense of victory in her voice.



She is not alone in her joy. Her sense of victory over the community conflict is shared by other leaders.

*“In Malen Chiefdom, the multi-stakeholder platform is bringing all parties together. Community people are trusting each other again and the GRCs are providing opportunities to discuss grievances, and stakeholders’ views are sought on how they would like community matters to be taken forward,” -Chief S.R Moiguah, the Chiefdom Speaker for Malen Chiefdom.*

Courtesy of the UN Peacebuilding Fund, the “Mitigating Localized Resources-Based Conflicts and Increasing Community Resilience” project was [pilot in Moyamba and Pujehun Districts in 2019](#). Prior to the project, findings showed that the two districts were characterized by violent social unrests over rights and access to natural resources between the communities and multinational companies investing in the large-scale agriculture and mining sectors in the area. The project thus sought to promote peace and social cohesion in these areas through a combination of peace dialogues, through grievance redress committees and community policing and by supporting sustainable agricultural as well as creation of income-generating opportunities for the people.

## Strengthening Governance and Accountability Institutions

COVID-19 disrupted many things but UNDP support to key governance and accountability institutions in the country continued unabated.

1. The Parliamentary Service Commission reviewed the Parliamentary Service Act. As an outcome, the Parliamentary Budget Office is now also fully equipped to provide evidence-based information for MP's debate.

2. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development together with UNDP and the European Union Delegation jointly supported the development and finalization of the Decentralization Policy in 2020 and which received Cabinet approval.

3. Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone reviewed and validated the HRCSL Act 2004, based on the Paris Principles and international best practice with support from UNDP with funding from Irish Aid. This formed the basis for a legislative review and enactment of a new act by Parliament. A of the Human Rights Council of Sierra Leone was conducted comprehensive organisational capacity assessment leading to the development of a Capacity Building Plan (for the Council) The CBP and strategic plan will provide the blueprint for the work of the Commission over the next five years-2021 to 2025.

## National civil registration campaign: collating better data for SDG

In the last quarter of 2019, UNDP supported the National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA) to the review and harmonize the National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA) Act 2016. Once this is endorsed, it will enable the smooth transfer of data from the NCRA to the National Electoral Commission ahead of the 2023 presidential, parliamentary, and local government elections.

With UNDP and the Embassy of the Ireland joint support, NCRA collaborated with 22 local councils, CSOs and the media to successfully lead a 10-day nationwide awareness raising campaign on timely registration and a well-functioning Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system that kick-started in Kono and Kailahun Districts targeting local leaders including ward councilors and ward development committee members.

Civil registration and vital statistics of events, when successfully implemented, will develop and maintain an accurate electronic database of the population of Sierra Leone; issue national identification numbers to every citizen and resident in Sierra Leone; provide accurate information about civil status events such as births, adoptions, marriages, divorces, nullities and deaths; and provide accurate information about the demographic distribution throughout Sierra Leone, the rate of social change and civil status trends, all of which are catalytic towards achieving sustainable development.



## Strengthening local councils to deliver on devolved functions and manage resources

1. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and 22 Local Councils was supported by UNDP, successfully completed a Capacity Needs Assessment which led to the development of the Local Council Capacity Building Strategy-2021 to 2023 developed
2. Local Councils Association of Sierra Leone (LoCASL) constitution was reviewed to align with the Government's Mid-Term National Development Plan. Sixty-four (40% female) members of the association nationwide were involved in the process. This was a catalyst for the association's involvement in working with their membership across the country in the fight against the spread of the coronavirus.
3. Decentralization Secretariat trained Community Development Committees (CDCs) in Pujehun and Moyamba Districts in participatory approaches to development. The CDCs were reactivated in Masan and Komende communities. Priority initiatives in support of women and children were identified by CDCs such as the construction of quarter for Maternal and Child Health staff and rehabilitation of school buildings.
4. Round table dialogue was held in six Local Councils targeting young girls, civil society groups, women, and council staff. Further engagement with community stakeholders including women's groups, political and traditional leaders contributed to the formulation of various women's networks and commitment actions by traditional leaders for the purpose of promoting women's participation in national and local governance.
5. Supported a stakeholder engagement to integrate gender needs and interests into the Local Government Policy, resulting in the identification of gender gaps in the various policy frameworks of the councils. This consultative dialogue with various community stakeholders contributed to a better understanding of the issues and the need to reflect gender concerns into various policy and legislative frameworks guiding the operationalization of the councils.

## Support to Media

UNDP remained committed to supporting professional, free, pluralistic, and independent media that carry out its functions in a way that protect the basic interests of society for democratic governance and sustainable development. UNDP is also the single highest financial contributor of the UN systems to media development in Sierra Leone.

## Supporting media to mitigate information pollution during COVID-19 pandemic

- Prior to the announcement of the index case of COVID-19 in Sierra Leone, there was mass dis/misinformation on the virus. In 2019, UNDP and its partner, the Media Reform Coordinating Group (MRCG), undertook a mapping exercise that provided an in-depth understanding and documentation of the major sources, messages, channels, influencers and amplifiers of misinformation, disinformation, and misconceptions on COVID-19 in Sierra Leone and identified trusted sources of information. In 2020, funding from the UNDP Governance Centre, Oslo facilitated engagement of the IE and a more structured approach to understanding the nuances of information pollution was developed -a critical approach to addressing existing gaps within the media landscape during the pandemic.
- Additionally, UNDP through MRCG supported training of journalists on reporting on COVID-19, including dealing with fake news, mis- and disinformation.
- Collaborating with major institutions (Independent Media Commission, Ministry of Information and Communication, Sierra Leone Association of Journalists, Independent Radio Network, Guild of Editors, Women in the Media in Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone Reporters Union, Sierra Leone Broadcasting Cooperation, Sport Writers Association of Sierra Leone, and Department of Mass Communication at Fourah Bay College), UNDP supported the development of new Media Development Strategy 2020-2024 produced under the framework of MRCG.

## Repealing criminal and sedition libel law in Sierra Leone

During the year, there were key events in Sierra Leone on media development. The Parliament unanimously granted approval to repeal the criminal and seditious libel laws in Part 5 of the Public Order Act of 1965, through the passage of the Public Order (Amendment) Act 2020 which repealed the 55-year-old anti-press freedom legislation.

UNDP, over the years, had provided enormous financial and technical resources for consultations on the repeal of the criminal libel law. In 2020, Parliament also passed into law a bill entitled the Independent Media Act 2020, a review process also supported by UNDP.



*"a journalist should not go to jail for writing and publishing stories... The practice of journalism could only be enhanced through a civil libel law..." Emmanuel Saffa Abdulai Esq, a lawyer and civil society practitioner.*

## Support to Improve Access to Justice and Security

**Even during COVID-19, UNDP committed and facilitated support that brought measurable results to the Justice and Security sectors, strengthening oversight institutions to uphold human rights, improve access to justice and security.**

- In the year 2020, 4 institutions (Sierra Leone Judiciary, Sierra Leone Correctional Services, Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, Independent Police Complaint Board) concurrently received UNDP support to improve gender-responsive processes to ensure continuous delivery of justice and security services.
- With UNDP's support, innovative complaint handling procedure through dedicated cell phone numbers at regional level led the HRCSL to promptly respond to complaints and recorded some significant success by providing immediate redress to 600 (180 women) complainants who were in quarantine homes and deprived of access to sufficient food, water, and other essential supplies.
- UNDP support to the pilot virtual Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Court in Freetown demonstrates the Judiciary's resolve to address growing impunity for SGBV cases. A total of 199 reported cases received against the target of 72 cases, and 19 convictions secured against the target of 15 convictions.
- UNDP Support to the HRC contributed to ensure sustained public awareness raising on the SGBV and the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2019 in various parts of the country encouraging people to report incidents suffered to authorities.
- 88 (63 male and 25 female) security personnel from the Sierra Leone Police and Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) trained on human rights-based approach and the National COVID-19 Emergency Response Centre (NaCOVERC) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in responding to COVID-19.
- With the aim to ensure human rights protection in prisons, UNDP facilitated a countrywide tour of the Standard Inspection Department (SID) of the SLCS on its routine oversight of correctional center to assess their compliance with the Mandela Rules in management of such detention facilities.

## PRIORITY TWO

### INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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Sierra Leone has made several efforts in maintaining macroeconomic stability in post conflict period, and until the outbreak of Ebola in May 2014, the country was in firm grip seeking to attain middle-income status by 2035.

Despite these gains, 2020 World Bank's **'Poverty & Equity Brief'** states that Sierra Leone's trajectory of poverty reduction has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. Furthermore, about six in ten households report a decline in income, with income from self-employment being the hardest hit.

2020 UN Common Country Analysis also highlights youth structural unemployment rate in the country amongst the highest in the West African region.

In close partnership with the Ministry of Youth Affairs (MoYA) and the National Youth Commission (NAYCOM), the Youth Employment and Empowerment Project (YEEP) project supported the government of Sierra Leone to develop the national youth investment framework that specifically targeted Business Development Services (BDS), Agribusinesses (SMEs), Career Advisory and Placement Services (CAPS), and the Graduate Internship Programme (GIP). Implemented in collaboration with the Private Sector, NGOs, Njala University and University of Sierra Leone, over 1000 young people have benefited from this scheme and about 600 have secured permanent employment across the country.

## Working with and for young people in the 'last decade of action'

**UNDP's commitment towards youth development remains on course to ensure by 2030, the most vulnerable, particularly women, youth, adolescents, and children (especially girls), and persons living with disabilities are empowered and benefiting from increased social protection services, economic and social opportunities, gain access to basic and financial services for business development and job creation in line with the Sustainable Development Goal.**

#### Results at a glance

445	Graduate Interns trained in in transformational leadership, professional development, and life skills
240	Graduate interns placed in 58 institutions

- With support from UNDP, the National Youth Commission (NAYCOM) trained 445 (250 males, 195 females) Graduate Interns in transformational leadership, professional development and life skills that are essential for employability in the job market.
- UNDP also supported the placement of 240 (144 males, 96 females) graduate interns in 58 institutions where they are currently gaining professional. .
- We supported the Ministry of Youth Affairs, to review the 2014 National Youth Policy. In addition, a comprehensive National Youth Strategy through a nation-wide consultative process was also developed. An outstanding achievement that resulted from the National Youth Policy review process is the proposed establishment of "Youth basket Fund" where each Government revenue generating institution are mandated to contribute towards accelerating youth development in the Country.



## Supporting youth entrepreneurship and innovation

### Results at a glance

16	Financed proposals funded through Innovation Challenge
85	New jobs created through the Innovation Challenge
111	start-up trainees benefited from business development training and coaching

**Young people are recognized as critical agents of change in the 2030 Agenda. In line with the United Nations Youth Strategy (Youth 2030) launched in 2018, UNDP has actively engaged, promoted, and supported the power and positive role of young people as stakeholders, innovators, and partners around the world.**

In 2020, UNDP worked with the private sector particularly small-and-medium sized enterprises (SMEs), NGOs in urban and rural areas, and youthful populations of the most vulnerable communities to increase their contribution and encourage inclusive growth and employment through better access to markets, technical assistance, and financial aid. Also, grassroots innovative solutions identified with local actors (youth, women, community people) to address development challenges.

- In the Youth Entrepreneurship Project, UNDP conducted wide outreach campaigns across the country had a positive impact in the number and quality of proposals received. Out of 45 proposals received in the first Innovation Challenge, 16 financed, 5 led by women, 85 new jobs were created, out of which 27 young women benefitted.
- In the second Innovation Challenge, 25 companies were selected, and 9 were re led by young women.
- 111 start-up trainees benefited from business development training and mentoring activities, whereby 33 of the trainees are female. For the implementing team- consultants and mentors, 2 out of five are women.

### Youth Innovation

Following a nationwide exercise, UNDP Accelerator Lab's . UNDP developed a database of innovators through a validation process, involving key stakeholders in Government (DSTI), UN Agencies (FAO, WFP, and UNDP). Three solutions were successfully experimented and two upscaled. These are the installation of low-tech boreholes in 10 slum communities using local resources and the creation of a disable-friendly handwashing station that dispenses soap and water through a foot pedal that prevents people from touching the handwashing station- thereby reducing the spread of bacteria and virus.

Even in the wake of COVID-19, colleagues at our Accelerator Lab team persevered to keep UNDP agenda on track. A partnership with the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT) to run a 6-month (July to December 2020) online and limited in-person (due to the Pandemic restrictions), Design and Entrepreneurship Training for 20 (8 females; 12 males) high potential innovators to build their capacity, coach and mentor them. A private sector telecommunication company, Africell, provided the students with data services to ensure smooth running of the online sessions.

### Case Study: supporting youth in rural communities: from a feed processing center to chicks and eggs

*“When we first conceived the idea of animal feed processing center in Kono, we were responding to a glaring need in our district and to also take steps beyond youth engagements in mining diamonds, an incredibly attractive activity in Kono since the 1930s. We are grateful to UNDP Sierra Leone for trusting our initiative and funding the establishment of an animal feed process center in Kono District.” - Aiah Emmanuel Gborie, Head of Programmes for the newly established Animal Feed Processing Center and the Yormatah Youth Farmers Association (YYFA) he Co-founded in 2015.*



Following the construction of the Animal Feed Processing Center, Yormatah Youth Farmers Association is now self-producing and selling animal feed to local poultry and livestock farmers in Kono District, eastern Sierra Leone. A local poultry which shutdown owing to unsustainable animal feed supply is now revamping its operations in the district and purchasing feed supplied by young people in the district who are producing animal feed with 100% local ingredients.

About 25 more young people (15 females; 10 males) in the district have been engaged by YYFA. YYFA also supplied 12 tons of maize and fertilizer to local farmers to plant. Upon harvest, these farmers will sell to YYFA. This approach has now established small scale seed

enterprises with local farmers in Kono. Meanwhile, YYFA model is also giving technical knowledge and required skills needed to set up and run small-scale seed enterprises to 6 clusters of 30 youth farmers in 4 chiefdoms (Lei, Kamara, Sandor, and Sao).

According to Aiah, “We are expanding from a UNDP supported Animal Feed Processing Center to owning a poultry farm.”

YYFA has constructed a 2000 capacity poultry house from proceeds generated from UNDP’s funded Animal Feed Processing Center supported through the Smallholder Commercialization and Agribusiness Development Project-Sierra Leone (SCADeP-SL). With another set of 2000 day-old chicks imported by YYFA since March 2020, the group also hopes to start mass production and supply of ‘fresh chickens’ to the country’s national school feeding programme in Kono District which they already compliments.

YYFA vision is to produce and supply \$500,000 worth of chickens annually to locals and mining companies in the district together with managing the Animal Feed Processing Center.

## 2020 Social Good Summit

### Innovate to accelerate SDGs

Despite the pandemic in 2020, UNDP Sierra Leone flagship event- Annual Social Good Summit for the first time had a regional flavor and more. COVID-19 could not stop us from priding our young innovators and youth ambassadors in partnership with Ministry of Youth Affairs (MOYA), and National Youth Commission (NAYCOM).

The 2020 Social Good Summit marked the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition since UNDP Sierra Leone started using this event to collaborate with other innovation labs/hubs, and relevant stakeholders to work with and mentor these young budding innovators/entrepreneurs by providing entrepreneurial support and a ‘safe’ space to evaluate the viability of inventions and ideas before potentially growing and scaling them up. Following 2019 edition, UNDP and its partners planned on 2020 being a transformational year in the format for organizing the event. We had mini regional competitions before organizing a grand finale event. This was a necessary strategy in continuing our drive to take innovative thinking to the rural areas and to reach the last mile.

The 2020 final event was scaled down less in person attendees to witness the innovators pitch to a panel of judges who selects the winners. This time, the event placed panel of judges and the pitchers in a pre-recorded televised event and was also expanded to include a youth impact competition to run alongside the youth innovation competition. The former was driven by the (MoYA) in its efforts to recognize and celebrate young people who have in diverse ways contributed to their communities outside the scope of innovation with the title of National Youth Ambassadors. Today every district has a Youth Ambassador who is a source of inspiration and advocates within their communities and among their peers.

### A regional flavor - ‘Innovate 4 Bette Salone’.

All five regions in Sierra Leone, North, North-West, South, East, and West had the opportunity to send one male and one female participant to challenge in the final pitch event. Applications were screened per region with the best male and female innovators selected to represent and compete in their respective gender categories for top prize winner and runner-up.



Application were online and received through email, WhatsApp, web application and hard copies at identified regional offices around the country. Over 150 applications were received for both the innovation and impact competitions with 80% of the applicants using the new media for their submissions. Over 100 applicants utilized the youth platform to submit virtual applications from all regions. Submission rate would not have been possible with the traditional paper-based submission. This platform is now a one-stop-shop that provides information on youth responsive services and policies. Hosted by the Ministry of Youth Affairs, young people also use this platform to feedback stakeholders on their experiences or challenges.

### Providing business development services and alternative livelihoods to vulnerable communities

#### Results at a glance

6	Coastal communities provided with fish value chain support
5	Outboard engines provided to fishing communities
5000	Fishing community members will benefit from the fish landing site constructed in Shenge

Majority of Sierra Leones are engaged in informal livelihood activities-based skill sets commonly required to startup informal businesses. Coastal communities are not any different.

In 2020, through the Coastal Risk Management Project funded by GEF, UNDP worked to reduce poverty by providing improved capacities with sustainable livelihood

options in coastal risk communities.

- 6 coastal communities were provided with fish value chain support through the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources directly benefiting both men and women in fishing communities. This intervention supported to have alternative livelihoods skills and increase their adaptive capacity to Climate Change. Their capacity in fish processing skills was also enhanced by the construction of 5 raised platforms- one each in 5 coastal fishing communities.
- 5 Outboard engines provided to fishing communities, for example, support the men to expand on their fishing activities. This has ushered in increased access to livelihood options to more than 2,000 people living in targeted fishing communities.
- Also, more than 5,000 fishing community members will benefit from the fish landing site constructed in Shenge when completed in January 2021. This will help to improve the fish value chain and provide improved livelihoods for more than 5,000 fishing community members.
- 70 Persons with Disability (PWDs) were supported to participate in activities that support livelihood creation.

## Case study: Harnessing informal businesses through VSLA

***"Before this time, there was no financial group in this Island where petty traders like me could access a loan. Now, there is a lending/borrowing scheme among us that is bringing much confidence we have been waiting in such a community surrounded by water"-Satu Challey, petty trader in Bumpetok, Turtle Island.***

Satu Challey is a petty trader in an Island community called Bumpetok, Turtle Island, about 12 hours boat ride to and from Tombo-a fishing community in the Western Area Rural District, where they (petty traders in Turtle Island) would get their goods for business purposes. Satu has a strong desire of growing her business in the Island where she has been living since childhood. Satu trades in food items on the Island with a population of about 700 residents.



With support from UNDP, Satu Challey is among 180 Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) members in 6 coastal communities. She is part of a

30-member (Female 15; Male 15) VSLA Group in Bumpetok who benefited from trainings on the establishment of VSLA groups and alternative livelihood options including relevant techniques needed to provide adequate and continuous leadership over a community loan scheme. The UNDP supported trainings and training manuals were designed to be simple enough to cater for various levels of participants including illiterate members of the community who can easily understand how VSLA works.

Six months later, Satu and all 29 group members raised the sum of Le7,000,000 (\$700) from their every Friday contributions when members pay minimum sum of Le5,000 (\$50 cents) to get a share. Like Satu, every contributing member is automatically qualified for a loan with an agreed interest rate of 10%. Satu has used the loan obtained from the VSLA to upscale her petty trading business in the Island. She used her little profit to support her 7 children all of whom are still in school. Although she is overly concerned that loan received from the VSLA scheme is not enough for her business aspiration on the Island, she hopes for more supports that could help the group with a startup capital which she believes would give bigger results in her small coastal community.

## Levelling the playing field for gender equality actions

**UNDP continued effort to mainstreaming gender in all its processes and programs as we work to reduce poverty, build resilience, and achieve peace in communities and territories, while supporting Government partners to accelerate progress towards making the world a better place for all. In 2020, like in previous years, we achieved some outstanding gains while addressing gender gaps.**

After bringing **Silver Seal Certification** to strengthen the institutional capability of the Country Office, UNDP developed a Gender Equality Action Plan for 2020 and a Sexual Harassment and Exploitation and Abuse Action Plan. This informed actions for mainstreaming gender across programmes and projects and for effecting change in norms and practices perpetuating SH/SEA in the country office. Additionally, the Country Office strengthened the capacity of partner staff on SH/SEA and gender mainstreaming across policies, plans, programs, and research. The pre and post-test taken by the partners indicated 70% increased understanding of the gender tools and the concepts in mainstreaming gender. As a result, the partners developed a Gender Action Plan to guide their policies and programs and enhance equal participation and representation in decision making within their sectors.

Efforts made by the Country Office from 2018 to 2020 earned UNDP Sierra Leone silver seal certification for making significant efforts in getting gender equality outcomes in the office, programs and projects, communications, partnerships, results and management systems and processes

### Framing the pathway for gender equality in Sierra Leone

In November 2020, UNDP consulted with groups of women and men in hard-to-reach communities to understand the drivers and the structural gaps of gender inequalities. This engagement together with stakeholder consultations, and UNDP Staff Survey and partners validation formed the basis for our next National Gender Equality Strategy (2021-2023) to be rolled out consistent with UNDP Sierra Leone 2020-2023 Country Programme Document (CPD).



Consistent with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, our next Gender Equality Strategy intends to maximize emerging opportunities that respond directly to gender challenges and would not cast a slue to the earnest contributions our gender lenses have made glaring, but delineates the UNDP commitment to:

- Strengthen UNDP interventions tackling structural changes that accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Strengthen the integration of gender equality into UNDP's work on the environment, energy and crisis response and recovery.
- Better align UNDP programming with the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment to the achievement of sustainable development; and
- Build upon institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming such as the Gender Equality Seal and the Gender Marker, which provide measurable standards and incentives to drive development progress.

### Our Results on gender equality

- Enhanced a National Framework for addressing Gender Inequalities and Violence Against Women and girls. The Country Office supported the launching of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy to advance women's rights and gender equality in politics, employment in the public and private sector and inclusive growth.
- Dialogues on women and girls' responsive legislations, regulations and policies at central and local government levels have increased awareness among female councilors and women's groups and a call for a

review of decision-making structures at all levels to ensure gender sensitivity. Women's voices were amplified and most of their recommendations factored in the local government and decentralization reviewed policies. Additionally, UNDP's engagement with community stakeholders including women's groups, political and traditional leaders contributed to the formulation of various women's networks and commitment actions by traditional leaders for the purpose of promoting women's participation in national and local governance.

- 60-80% of WASH Committee Members in all UNDP project sites are women in the management committee and have been placed in charge of payments made for the use of the water points as well as the management and maintenance of the water points.
- 40% increase in the number of women represented in the District Committees for Disaster Response.
- 32% of women form part Sectional Grievance Redress Committees (SGRC) in Pujehun and Moyamba Districts that include women in peace building processes and land resources negotiations.
- 600 girls and young women with disabilities and children of PWDs who have reached maturity engaged on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), linking them to health facilities in the 8 targeted districts and provided with 600 dignity kits.

## **16 Days of Activism: transforming norms and practices for GBV Prevention**

In 2020, UNDP engaged over 200 traditional leaders, women's groups, and community actors in commemorating the 16 days of Activism in Jendema and Mongo Bendugu between the 1st and 5th of December. These communities are around border areas faced with high prevalence of teenage pregnancy and Female Genital Mutilation according to Sierra Leone 2017 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey. The community dialogue and reflections in Jendema, Pujehun District and in Mongo Falaba District challenged norms, attitudes and practices that contributes to the violation of the rights of women and girls in these communities and informed participants of the various GBV reporting channel

## **Mobilizing community action on the theme: Orange the World:**

### **Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!**

In Jendema, young men and women, town chiefs, and other community stakeholders including the media reflected on the effect of teenage pregnancy, sexual exploitation and abuse on girls and the community at large. These, they believed have increased the burden of care on parents, especially mothers who are fending for their Families. Communities were engaged in community dialogue sessions chiefly to mobilize community action in ending violence against women and girls at community level; influence positive change in attitudes and socio-cultural behaviors of the public and consequently mitigate violence against women and women's inferior status within the marriage and household; and ultimately, at ground level, prevent gender-based violence from happening in the first place by challenging cultural and social norms, through mobilization campaigns and a zero-tolerance policy.

## **Using folk media during 16 Days of Activism to influence GBV in rural Sierra Leone**

In rural Sierra Leone where border communities are located, literacy rate is extremely low (2018 World Bank Data is showing that only about 32% of people ages 15 and above are literate) to the disadvantage of rural population. Against this background, UNDP considered in earnest, effective yet local community engagements and communications strategies that are trusted and closer to the hearts of rural communities. 2020 commemoration of 16 Days of Activism engagements also featured local theatre to disseminate GBV messages and to trigger culturally rooted discussions during the community dialogues sessions at Jendema and Mongor Bendugu.

## **Young people voices matter!**

UNDP also engaged 378 school children and 42 teachers from 6 districts. These school kids targeted and engaged were exposed to a one-day sensitization meeting to raise awareness on Sexual Rights and Gender Based Violence, its implications on families, communities, nations, and future workforce. The school pupils actively participated in groups discussions highlighting the several types of GBV that are prevalent in their school environment.

## PRIORITY THREE

### SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

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In November 2019, Sierra Leone witnessed the establishment of new Ministry of Environment. This development was considered a major step towards mitigating the effects of climate change in the country, including the impact on air, land, and water while ensuring that preparedness systems are in place at community level to mitigate the impact of natural and manmade disasters.

In 2020, UNDP's technical and financial support enabled the Ministry of Environment and four MDAs (Environment Protection Agency, National Protected Area Authority, and the National Water Resources Management Agency) to review two Environmental Management and Protection Policies and five Acts of the same

sector, totaling seven legislations:

- The National Environment Protection Policy
- The Climate Change Policy
- The Forestry Act 1998
- Wildlife Conservation Act 1972
- Environment Protection Acts 2008/2010
- National Protected Area Authority and Conservation Trust Fund bill
- National Climate Change Act

Thanks to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), three UNDP projects (Climate Information and Early Warning Systems, Energy Efficiency, and Climate Change Adaptation Water Project) came to close after successful implementation which helped the Government and people of Sierra Leone to adapt and reduce climate change effects. The Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency installed five automated weather stations at Bonthe (covering Turtle Island, Shenge, and Lakka), and Tagrine (covering Conakridee and Government Wharf), to gather and disseminate weather information to over 50,000 people in the five project districts (Portloko, Moyamba, Bonthe, Western Area Urban and Rural). Before the intervention, these districts had no proper disaster preparedness system in place. Through the Energy Efficient Production and Utilization of Charcoal through Innovative Technologies and Private Sector Involvement in Sierra Leone (EEPUC) Project in partnership with Ministry of Energy (MOE) and GIZ, UNDP supported the construction of a modern building to accommodate the laboratory for the Cookstove and Charcoal Development Centre (CCDC) at Government Technical Institute (GTI) where test equipment for charcoal stove testing are installed and commissioned with associated training and capacity building.

Under the aegis of the Adaptive Capacity to Water Services Project, natural water resources were protected, new water facilities built for community people while influencing best Climate Change practices and raising awareness in five districts (Kambia, Kono, Pujehun and Western Area Rural and Urban Districts through partners and the Ministry of Water Resources (MWR).

## Case Studies

### Supporting tree nurseries to enhance community ownership and renewable bioenergy woodlots

*“As UNDP support to woodlot projects closes, and turning over full ownership to the hosting communities, we are very sure that newly established nurseries would enable local people to adequately respond to reforestation activities in the woodlots”-Fatmata Kabia, Chairlady of Mawoma Woodlot Committee.*



Wood fuels (firewood and charcoal) are the main energy source and the leading forest product for most Sierra Leoneans. What this means is that many communities want to hover with the act of deforestation for immediate economic gains.

Yet, from a village that was known for rapid act of deforestation, Mawoma Village is now charmed with people and ‘natural leaders’ who believe that ‘greening the blue’ by an act of planting trees gives hope to the next generation. With support from UNDP, Fatmata Kabia is among 320 members (Female -119: Male 241) from the four woodlot project communities who benefited from trainings on woodlots

protection, management, and maintenance, including relevant techniques needed to provide adequate and continuous leadership over a community woodlot project. Woodlot communities have also benefited from other trainings designed from the experience of wildfire incidents that hit Makolerr (2017), Robana in (2018 and 2019) respectively, and Moyamba Junction woodlots projects (2018 and 2020).

Today, nursery sites have been established in Moyamba Junction, potting, and staking of 10,500 seedlings was nursed while voluntarily, woodlot committee members have champion community action plans for the care of the seedlings. These nurseries would be used to propagate trees at a desired age appropriate for tree replanting campaigns. In all, over 48.6 ha. of Acacia Mangium, Acacia Auriculiformis Tectonia Gratis, Australia Eucalyptus, Cashew nuts, Mango, Elies and Gmelina Aborea trees were planted in Mawoma, Makolerr and Robana communities in the Mawoma section of Port Loko District and Moyamba Junction in Moyamba District. In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) and the Ministry of Energy (MoE), the woodlot project in Sierra Leone is consistent with SDG 13-Climate Action and resonates well with Mission 1.5 Degrees-an initiative of UNDP that aims to empower millions of citizens in the dialogue between people and governments on how to address climate change.

### Working with public and private sectors on climate-friendly initiatives to create sustainable livelihood options and improve lives in vulnerable communities

Management of the environment and natural resources is vital to the development of Sierra Leone. To harness its potential for citizens, UNDP implemented a number of environment-friendly initiatives through public-private partnerships per the objectives of the Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP).

- In 2020, UNDP supported the cookstove production center (Charcoal Cookstove Development Center-CCDC) and constructed modern facility to provide a safe as well as cheap energy source for cooking, while protecting the environment.
- A total of 320 management committee members were trained (M:241; F:119) on woodlots protection, management, and maintenance. They also received safety gears including rain coats, raincoats, and hand gloves ( in Moyamba Junction and Makoleer, Mawoma and Robana).

#### Results at a glance

500	Jobs created cookstove industry
320	People trained in woodlot woodlots protection, and maintenance
16	Water facilities constructed
12,000	Gained access to clean water

- Access to water was increased via two the construction of six rainwater harvesting systems and 10 hand boreholes were constructed selected health and urban poor communities in and around Freetown, such

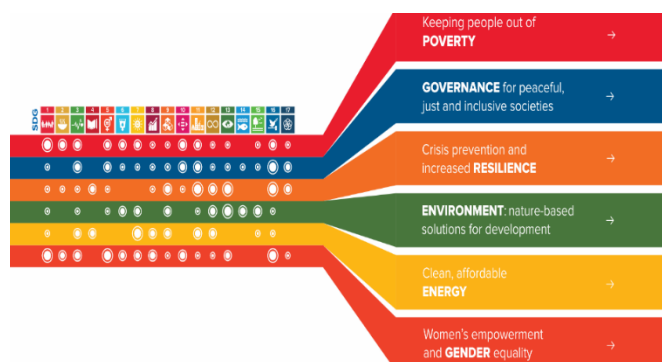


as the Princess Christiana Maternal children's Hospital, the Bishop Johnson school, Massam Kpaka school, the Freetown Teachers College) ,the Water Directorate, and Bio-energy Training Centre). An estimate of 6,420 (3,175 males, 3,245 females) people benefited. The 10 hand boreholes were installed in Old Wharf, Dwarzack, Greybush, Mabella, Susansbay, Oloshuru, Funkia, Moawharf, Kissybrook and Culvert communities. More than 5,000 (2,546 women and girls) people benefited.

- Awareness on climate change risk and mitigation strategies were increased through the broadcast of 24 episodes of season II of the Climate Change risk and mitigation awareness raising radio drama series on five community radio stations; and three short films on climate change risk in coastal locations were produced. In addition, the Disaster Resilience Handbook which was validated and is now ready for integration into the school curriculum.
- UNDP supported the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources to reclaim 12 hectares degraded mined out land. 10 hectares out of reclaimed mined out land was restored into agricultural productivity.
- Through UNDP support to the Disaster Management Department of the Office of National Security, the Disaster Risk Management Policy was developed which also saw the establishment of the newly created National Disaster Management Agency.
- UNDP support to the National Water Resources Management Agency saw the development of three regulations for water use, groundwater development and protection, and dam safety regulations. National Tourist Board constructed mangrove boardwalk at Aberdeen creek Lumley in Freetown supported by UNDP. The site is already promoting eco-tourism development and protect mangrove species and improve fish production.
- The indiscriminate sand mining and cutting of mangrove wood across coastal areas have had a significant impact on the seawater level, thus causing coastal erosion, depletion of land areas located near the sea and destruction of physical infrastructure. Climate change awareness raising activities organized in six coastal communities (Lakka, Hamilton, Tombo, Conakridee, Shenge and Turtle Island) have influenced community leaders to institute community byelaws against indiscriminate sand mining and mangrove cutting, thus minimizing disaster risk behaviors in those areas.
- For Gender responsive approach to climate action in the country, UNDP successfully advocated for the strong integration of gender and youth dimension into any climate action related activity or project. The Climate Promise Project got approval from the Director General of Environment Ministry to engage a dedicated Gender advisory position to provide oversight on all gender and youth related aspects of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) update process and all studies commissioned by the project. Mainstreaming Gender into Climate Promise yielded results by achieving a 30% increase of women participation in the overall project activities (grants, training, mentoring, consulting



## Integrating SDGs into national development plans



UNDP remains the lead UN Agency working with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED) to mainstream the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the African Agenda 2063 into the country's Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019 to 2023.

In 2020, UNDP supported Statistics Sierra Leone to update the existing national SDGs Results Framework geared towards tracking progress on implementation of the Agenda 2030. Additional support was provided to the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development to popularize the Medium-Term National Development

Plan in all 16 districts of Sierra Leone. One of the key outcomes of this process is that people in the communities especially in the rural areas are aware that Government priorities reflect their development challenges initially discussed during the planning process of the MTNDP in 2018.

## Collaborating with UNCDF on Joint SDG Financing

In 2019, Sierra Leone MTNDP had a financing gap of US\$ 1.55 billion I guess million? dollars. UNDP collaborated with UNCDF and successfully mobilized US\$ 930,000 dollars geared towards strengthening domestic resource mobilization for SDGs financing in Sierra Leone in line with Policy Cluster 8 of the MTNDP which focuses on resource mobilization from various sources. In 2020, Ministry of Planning Economic Development (MoPED) undertook a comprehensive Development Finance Assessment (DFA) for the country in order to identify innovative financing options (private and public sources) for the plan and the SDGs. The DFA presents findings and recommendations capturing different financing approaches and methods to finance the country's national development plan and beyond.

Key among the 2020 DFA recommendations gave birth to the 2020 Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) to oversee and drive forward financing and means of implementing the national plan. Implementation of the Joint Programme was based on the findings from these two reports, as well as consultations with GoSL, IFIs and other stakeholders, and is designed to realize two activities: 1) enhanced government revenue collection, and 2) increased domestic capital accumulation with expanded financial inclusion. It focuses on removing policy, institutional, systemic, informational, and access barriers, while facilitating strong governance and coordination mechanisms among government, private sector, and civil society actors. It will influence development of a gender responsive fiscal strategy that promotes women's contributions to the local economy. On many levels, this JP is a powerful means of enhancing domestic ownership of development finance.

This joint project directly addresses the objective of SDG 17-Partnership for the SDGs, particularly on domestic resource mobilization, which has led to increased capital accumulation in financial institutions and enable more private sector lending to promote economic growth and poverty reduction (SDG 1). It will also support GoSL to raise revenues in a sustainable manner to fill-up financial gaps in publicly funded SDG programs, which presently include universal health coverage for vulnerable groups (SDG 3), free quality primary education (SDG 4), and the Heforshe campaign on gender equality (SDG 5). Further, activities geared towards financial inclusion will help with economic empowerment, including for women in rural areas, where more than 58% of the population resides (SDG 5 and SDG 10).

## **Monitoring implementation and communicating result**

UNDP places high priority for project/programme monitoring to ensure they are on track, desirable results are accomplished, targeted communities and interventions are duly and equally benefiting both men and women and respect for value for money maintained during the entire process of project implementation and delivery.

Periodic monitoring activities are conducted by programme staff and County Office leadership. In 2020, the Country Office conducted two independent and spot-check missions led by Programme Support Unit (PSU), together with Monitoring and Evaluation and the Communications Unit. In early September 2020, in lieu of the pandemic, a remote monitoring mission focused on identifying project implementation bottlenecks, gaps in implementing Gen2 projects and offering solutions to address them. This exercise produced relevant information on implementing partners' internal project management capacity, including technical, human resources and efficient use of funds disbursed.

By the end of September, UNDP conducted an independent project specific monitoring exercise in compliance with the HACT procedures being part of continuous effort to strengthen national capacities and harmonise business process in line with the UN HACT framework. This exercise was critical to the CO transition plan moving into full National Implementation Modalities (NIM) in the future, lots of challenges and lessons learnt noted in the implementation of HACT are well documented in recent audits, assessments and reviews including the 2019 CO Management Audit.

### **Joint monitoring**

In 2020, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also conducted joint monitoring exercises with our donors, government counterparts and implementing partners with the overall aim of strengthening partnership between donors and the people of Sierra Leone.

# Funding for the year

