



UNITED NATIONS  
SIERRA LEONE



# 2023 UN ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT Sierra Leone







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# UN COUNTRY TEAM IN SIERRA LEONE

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) is composed of the heads of all the United Nations (UN) agencies, funds and programmes active in Sierra Leone. The UNCT leads the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2020-2024, with its steering committee co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and the Minister of Planning and Economic Development.

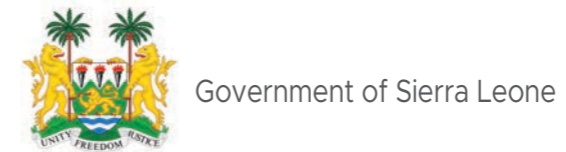
21 UN Agencies, Funds, and Programmes signed the UNSDCF 2020-2024. The UNCT is composed of 17 resident agencies and 4 non-resident agencies. 4 International Financial Institutions (IFIs) also closely interact with the UNCT. The UN family works as one with the Government and development partners to deliver sustainable development interventions across People, Prosperity, Planet, Partnership, and Peace.



# KEY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

The key development partners of the UN in Sierra Leone are the Government of Sierra Leone, IFIs, donor governments and development agencies, civil society organisations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations, the private sector, other public sector institutions, academia, the mass media, and the people of Sierra Leone. Through productive collaborations, we have together advanced objectives of the UNSDCF in 2023. The UNCT also wishes to thank our dedicated implementing partners in helping us to progress the 2030 Agenda in Sierra Leone.

We wish to give special acknowledgement to the co-chair of the UNSDCF Joint Steering Committee, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, and the Government Ministries who serve as members of the Committee – Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security; Basic and Senior Secondary Education; Gender and Children’s Affairs; Health and Sanitation; and Social Welfare.







# FOREWORD

As we wind down in the twilight of the current UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework – UNSDCF- (2020- 2024) to begin the articulation of a new one in 2025, I am pleased to be the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Sierra Leone at a time that the collective efforts of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), coupled with the vision of the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres’ ‘Our Common Agenda,’ have supported the needs and priorities of a country that continues to make progress in building peace and strengthening state institutions, amidst development challenges.

As the UN Resident Coordinator, it is both a privilege and a responsibility to witness and document the impactful work undertaken by our dedicated team in collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone and our valued partners.

2023 marked a pivotal moment for Sierra Leone as it navigated through multifaceted challenges while striving to achieve sustainable development. In the face of adversity, our collective commitment to LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND remained unwavering. This report serves as a testament to the strength, determination, and collaborative spirit that define our efforts in supporting the people of Sierra Leone.

As you read this report, you will be introduced to our key achievements in each of the 4 Outcome Areas: (1) Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition Security, and Climate Resilience. (2) Transformational Governance. (3) Access to Basic Services. (4) Protection of the Most Vulnerable. They are the strategic and mutually reinforcing priority areas of the Cooperation Framework (CF) underpinned by a theory of change that articulates the key challenges and the transformative agenda that the UNCT supports in order to meet the targets established in the Medium-Term National Development Plan.

I am therefore pleased to report on behalf of the UNCT the progress made in 2023 through the 4 Outcome Areas towards achieving the goals of the UNSDCF. The report outlines our joint support through capacity building and strengthening, technical assistance, sustainable management of resources and promotion of sustainable development, direct service provision, and ensuring no one is left behind.

From promoting inclusive economic growth to advancing healthcare, education, and gender equality, our initiatives were designed to catalyse positive national and community changes.

As we reflect on the achievements of 2023, we must also acknowledge the challenges ahead. While much progress has been made, much remains to be done to realize the vision of a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable Sierra Leone. In the years to come, the UN remains committed to standing shoulder to shoulder with the government and the people of Sierra Leone as they continue their journey toward sustainable development.

In closing, I sincerely thank our partners, donors, and the dedicated members of the UNCT for their unwavering commitment and tireless efforts. Together, we have made significant strides and will continue to work towards a better future for all in Sierra Leone.

*Seraphine Wakana (Ms)*  
UN Resident coordinator



# SIERRA LEONE AT A GLANCE



POPULATION 8.8 mil

75% of the population is under the age of 35 59.2% of the population live in poverty



## FGM PREVALENCE

Proportion of all women and girls who have undergone FGM is 83%  
Support for female genital mutilation/cutting is highest amongst older rural women with little or no education



## NUTRITION

26.2% of children under 5 are stunted  
5.2% of children under 5 are malnourished



## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

62.6% of households have access to basic water services  
45.5% of the rural population do not have access to improved drinking water  
23.9% of schools have no sanitation services



## MATERNAL AND INFANT MORTALITY

443 deaths per 100,000 births  
About 1 in 10 maternal deaths is due to unsafe abortion  
1 in 4 maternal deaths is due to hemorrhage



## GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

83% of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years have undergone FGM  
9% of girls are married before the age of 15



## CHILD MARRIAGE PREVALENCE

30 percent of all girls are married before the age of 18 years





# 1 COUNTRY CONTEXT

Sierra Leone is a West African coastal country with a population of approximately 8.8 million and an annual population growth rate of 2.2 percent. 75 percent of the population is below age of 35, and 40 percent below age 15 while only 3 percent are age 65 and older. Up to 44 percent of the population lives in urban areas. Life expectancy at birth is 59 years for males and 62 years for females.

The country has 4 political regions further divided into 16 districts, with 190 traditional chiefdoms that were first established under British colonial rule. Since the cessation of the civil conflict in 2002, Sierra Leone has made important progress in building peace and strengthening state institutions. However, significant development challenges remain. Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) estimates show a decline in the incidence at the national level from 64.8 percent in 2017 to 58 percent in 2019.

Sierra Leone's economy experienced overlapping setbacks during 2022- 2023 which worsened food insecurity: High global energy and fertilizer prices coupled with a weaker currency translated into accelerating inflation which rose from 12 percent in 2021 to 27 percent in 2022, and further to over 50 percent by August 2023. GDP growth was predicted to reach 4.5 percent for the two-year period of 2021–2023, driven mainly by agriculture and mineral-related production. The economy experienced a slowdown with global supply chain disruptions, exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities and undermining stability. Growth is expected to reach its pre-pandemic levels by 2025 and has increased to 3.1 percent in 2023. Following the Coronavirus Disease (COVID)-related shocks, the country's economic recovery was severely hindered by the sharp rise in global food and fuel prices in the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the pass-through effects on domestic prices. These impacts, combined with the depreciation of the local currency, resulted in extremely high annual inflation (51 percent as of August 2023), with food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation reaching 57.21 percent in December 2023.

The Government of Sierra Leone has been making significant efforts towards aligning its national legislation with international human rights standards. For instance, the abolition of the death penalty and creation of a national reporting mechanism are positive developments. However, there are some outstanding treaties to be ratified and domesticated, including the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

# 2 UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM RESULTS THROUGH THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

## 2.1 Overview of the Cooperation Framework Results

The United Nations System in Sierra Leone represented by the Resident Coordinator and the Government of Sierra Leone, represented by the Minister of Planning and Economic Development (MOPED) signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2020 -2023 in October 2019. The UNSDCF was extended by a year (therefore 2020 – 2024) to align with the national development planning cycle.

The implementation of the UNSDCF involves 17 resident and 4 non-resident UN agencies, funds, and programs working to support Sierra Leone's national development priorities and strategies as outlined in the Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019 – 2023, as well as the progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This report documents progress made in 2023 towards achieving the outcomes and outputs of the UNSDCF. The 2023 Annual Results Report outlines the support provided by the UNCT to Sierra Leone through capacity building and strengthening; technical assistance; sustainable management of resources and promotion of sustainable development; direct service provision; and protection of those left behind.





## 2.2 Cooperation Framework Priorities, Outcomes, and Outputs

# OUTCOME 1

## SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

By 2024, Sierra Leone benefits from a more productive, commercialized, and sustainable agriculture, improved food and nutrition security, and increased resilience to climate change and other shocks.

### Contributing Agencies



## Key Achievements

Over 9,000 households benefited from support provided by the UN towards strengthening the value chains for cocoa, oil palm, rice and vegetables. The support has contributed to improved yields, especially for rice and vegetables.



Through the African Regional Migration Program, the capacity of 12 (F:3; M:9) government officials has been strengthened on migration, environment, climate change data management and integration of human mobility in the context of climate change, and environmental degradation.



Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) schools' coverage was scaled up from 55 to 97 schools and 16,978 to 27,981 beneficiaries (65 percent increase from 2022).



## WFP: Empowering Women and Diversifying Meals

In the heart of Sierra Leone, the transformative power of agriculture and education intertwines in a story of empowerment, resilience, and delicious innovation. The collaborative efforts of the Government and WFP have given rise to a strategic plan aimed at expanding the HGSF initiative. With a dual focus on localization and diversification, this initiative strives to increase the involvement of smallholder farmers while broadening the school meals menu.

The intervention unfolded across five districts, involving 25 women farmer-based organizations (FBOs) comprising approximately 750 farmers. These women, armed with vines, tools, training, and seed money provided by WFP, embarked on cultivating Orange Flesh Sweet Potato (OFSP), traditionally considered a domain dominated by men. "I had never seen OFSP until WFP introduced them to our community. The soil responded well to this crop, and for us, it was easy to handle," shares Isha Kargbo, the chairperson of the Tamareneh Women Farmer's Association, in Kambia district, reflecting the newfound enthusiasm among the women farmers. After just 3 months, the women farmers proudly sold 25 metric tons of OFSP directly to WFP, injecting over USD 8,600 into their hands. Isha notes, "OFSP cultivation and having WFP as our buyer have helped us a lot because we were able to save money and support our household

The impact of this agricultural initiative echoes beyond the fields. WFP, acting as a bridge between the farmers and the schools, delivered the freshly harvested OFSP to 73 schools, benefitting over 17,000 children. As a substitute to rice once a week, OFSP has not only diversified the school menu but has also contributed to a healthier, more balanced diet for the students.

In a bid to address the nutritional needs of children 5-23 months especially when it comes to the introduction of complementary feeding, WFP has pioneered a groundbreaking initiative: the establishment of small-scale food processing facilities managed by Mother Support Groups. The driving force behind this initiative is the recognition that traditional feeding practices needed a modern touch.

**25 WOMEN FARMER-BASED ORGANISATIONS.  
759 FARMERS.**







## FAO: Fostering inclusive decision making and responsible agricultural investments

Fatmata Binta Jalloh grew up in Makeni, the largest city in northern province of Sierra Leone. Her mother, a nurse who used to go to rural villages to treat women. "She often told me about women who were victims of gender-based violence (GBV) but who depended on their husbands to feed themselves and their children," she recalls, adding "Sadly, this is still happening today." Most of the issues affecting women are because they are not financially independent; so, they must rely on abusive husbands or family members," explains Fatmata. "[Rural women] deserve equal opportunities, but society makes it very difficult." Today, through her work as a gender and youth expert in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, she helps rural women access technical training, inputs, or other opportunities to make the most of their agricultural activities.

In another remote village, Foday Kamara grew up in a subsistence farming family. They often lacked adequate food for all family members. This led his parents to send him at the age of 10 to live with his aunt. Today he is the director of a local NGO that supports youth and women's empowerment.

Fatmata and Foday's commitment to championing rural women in Sierra Leone led them to participate in a project of FAO in collaboration with the NGO Solidaridad West Africa. The project equips women and men with the skills and knowledge to thrive in the agricultural sector through responsible investments in agriculture. It also strengthens the position of rural women to be able to participate in decision-making processes.

Two-thirds of families in Sierra Leone rely on subsistence farming and petty trading as sources of food and income. Rural women rarely have another source of income on which to rely. "Being able to invest in their agricultural activities represents a qualitative leap forward that would enable rural women in particular to shift from subsistence farming to agribusiness, expanding their economic opportunities," continues Maud Oustry, FAO Capacity Development Expert.

"Most rural women farmers are illiterate. They don't have business skills, and they can rarely access finance. Even if they do, perceptions and societal norms are a hurdle," explains Fatmata. "If women had the same access to productive resources, services and decision-making processes as men, they would be able to invest in agriculture, develop their agricultural activities and become agri-entrepreneurs with their own businesses," explains Oustry. "The dialogue sessions were very powerful," relates Foday. "For instance, women were telling the ordeals they go through to access land despite the new law granting them customary lands rights. Many local decision-makers were unaware of the legislation since its popularization is still underway."



## Output 1.1

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





**5 hectares of Climate Smart Inland Valley Swamps (IVS) farms** were established and cultivated with the support of the UN. The establishment of the 5 hectares model climate smart IVS site has ensured the availability of a learning platform on climate smart IVS development and cultivation for IVS farmers and promotes agronomic best-practices and easily transferable techniques to farmers through climate smart agricultural practices



**418 youth at risk trained** and capacity strengthened with productive and agricultural inputs such as seeds, tools, and fertilisers including climate smart agriculture practices. This enables the trained youth to embark on prioritised livelihood activities along value chains such as cassava processing, groundnut processing and rice production in 11 communities. This resulted in an increase in yield, income and contributed to making the youths at risk in Kenema and Tonkolili food secure



**1,500 smallholder vegetable producers** benefited from training in good agronomic practices, critical agricultural inputs resulted in improved vegetable production, access to reliable vegetable markets and increased income among women supported in Port Loko, Bombali, Moyamba and Western Rural



**626 vegetable farmers in Port Loko** benefited from 4 out grower schemes supported by the UN. The programme piloted 10 private sector contracts in cassava (3 partnerships), vegetables (2 partnerships) and palm oil (2 partnerships), financial services (2 partnerships) and business development services (BDS). The interventions created 254 jobs and improved 1090 jobs with technical and management skills. This has afforded more than 899 farmers access to better paying markets for vegetables, cassava and palm oil. The pilots are all ready to scale up in 2024



**5 enterprises (2 women-owned) were supported** with organic fertilizer, adapted seeds and other inputs including safer processing technologies for palm oil, palm kernel oil and cassava (high value cassava flour and poultry feed). This ensured at least 33 percent productivity increases at unit level for palm oil



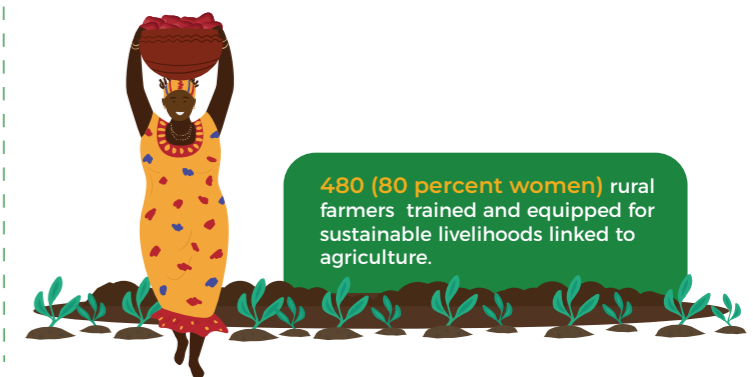
**SMEDA, Local Content Agency, SLeCAD, Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce, NAYCOM** were trained in business development services to ensure that enterprises are well supported and resilient in decent job creation

- Get Ahead (54 trainers), SIYB (17 trainers), COOP (25 trainers), Coaching (46 trainers) all fulfilled their requirements and were certified as ILO Trainers.
- Psychosocial support training to certified trainers (23 trainers). 538 (70 percent women) entrepreneurs were trained in 2023 bringing the cumulative number of trained GET Ahead entrepreneurs to 1658.
- 895 SIYB entrepreneurs trained, and they directly created 115 new jobs (85 percent women) without programme support.
- 168 Get Ahead entrepreneurs have received coaching support over a 9-month period and are now ready to receive micro-loans.

- Post harvest loss among beneficiary communities was reduced and food security was improved. 90 farmers (F:84; M:6) across 3 chiefdoms in Kono were supported with farming inputs and value addition equipment including 6 tricycles, 3 cassava grater machines, 3 rice milling machines, 6 solar powered freezers, 300 bags of fertiliser, 6 digital weighing scales and other basic farm tools.
- The capacity of national stakeholders was strengthened through a national awareness and sensitization mission on land use, exchange and forestry. The mission was conducted nationally, providing guidance on how to overcome challenges and address barriers by strengthening their institutional capacities for developing REED+ and mobilisation of resources required in the land use, exchange and forestry sector.
- 3 rounds of data collection in Emergency Monitoring across the 16 districts targeting 2800 households each was conducted by the UN. The data generated was used to support the Cadre Harmonise analysis which informs national food security decisions by the government and programs developed to support vulnerable farmers.
- Mobility and monitoring capacity of block extension workers in rural areas and border communities in 4 districts were enhanced through the provision of 8 motor bikes.
- 480 (80 percent women) rural farmers in rural areas and border communities were trained and equipped for sustainable livelihoods linked to agriculture.
- The production of cocoa was increased through the development of cocoa tool banks for cooperatives in Kenema and Kono district, including the delivery of important pruning equipment targeting 1,205 cocoa farmers.
- Local partners' understanding of mainstreaming gender was increased through the use of the WEE programming through knowledge building on gender and barriers that inhibits women's optimum economic empowerment, and on SGBV, HIV and SRHR.
- The livelihood of 17,887 (F:12,250; M:5,637) farmers was improved through the provision of 18 machines to support value addition in rice, cassava, groundnut, corn and palm oil by the UN. The farmers' capacity on sustainable agriculture to support climate smart agriculture was strengthened.
- Through the provision of 8 motorbikes, the UN enhanced the capacity of block extension workers in rural areas and border communities in 4 districts in the country. 480 (80 percent Women) rural farmers in rural areas and border communities who were particularly impacted by travel restrictions and border closures during the COVID 19 pandemic are fully trained and equipped for sustainable livelihoods linked to agriculture.
- Through the Temporary Investment Fund (TIP), the UN invested USD177,462.29 into 76 rural financial institutions (17 Community Banks (CB) and 59 Financial Services Associations (FSAs) to create opportunities for rural communities to access finance for various economic activities. Through this investment, over 4,000 households were able to access loans from the rural financial institutions to undertake various economic activities and in the process become shareholders of the banks. As a result, total share capital for the rural financial institutions grew by 3.5 percent and 4.1 percent from March to December 2023.

- Over 9,000 households benefited from support provided by the UN towards strengthening the value chains for cocoa, oil palm, rice and vegetables. The support has contributed to improved yields, especially for rice and vegetables.
- As a learning platform for climate smart cocoa production and productivity, the UN supported the establishment of two (5ha each) model cocoa climate smart farms with farm facilities (stores, solar dryers, toilets and water wells) in Pujehun and Kenema Districts. These model farms are used by cocoa farmers in these districts to learn climate smart cocoa farming practices.
- The UN facilitated the linkage of 164 smallholder rice and vegetable farmer groups in nine districts to local primary schools under the Home-Grown School Feeding initiative, collectively selling 125MT of smallholder produced and processed rice of a combined value of USD92,840, 25MT of OFSP at a value of USD8,600 in addition to selling fresh vegetables daily to assisted schools. Bringing a market to the doorstep of assisted farmers enabled them to address their market access challenges, in addition to stimulating increased production. To position farmers to access markets beyond WFP, the project also supported some high performing groups to develop their own branding and marketing strategies, contributing to diversification of sales whilst strengthening brand identity and group cohesion.
- In collaboration with MAFS the UN assessed post-harvest and storage facilities of assisted Farmer Based Organisations (FBOs), revealing major gaps in post-harvest infrastructure, particularly drying floors and stores, contributing to substantial grain losses. The purpose of this assessment was to address the critical issue in Sierra Leone's agricultural sector, the significant post-harvest losses, particularly in rice production, is estimated to be 40 percent.
- FBOs post-harvest capacities were strengthened through the provision of rice processing machines, including threshers and rice mills, in addition to solar dryers by the UN. Farmers were also supplied with tarpaulins to facilitate drying of rice, in addition to receiving training improved post-harvest management practices, including harvesting, drying, threshing, and milling.
- 48 FBOs and aggregators were trained in improved practices at trainings held at smallholder aggregation centres. This facilitated practical demonstrations and strengthened interconnectivity between smallholder farmers and aggregators. These efforts were crucial in reducing post-harvest losses and ensuring the production of high-quality rice that meets national food safety standards.
- To better understand the soil management requirements of the Inland Valley Swamps (IVS) that FBOs are cultivating, the UN collaborated with the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI) to conduct soil fertility analyses across 140 sites. The findings of the report were presented to the Food Security Working Group to contribute to broader sectoral knowledge.
- The capacities of 139 smallholder FBOs of 750 women was strengthened through community-level Farmer Field Schools (FFS) held by the UN and the MAFS. Each FFS was led by a MAFS extension worker and Community Youth Contractors CYC, with FFS focusing on improved practices for rice production (Technical Package for Rice Production), and cultivation of nutritious crops.
- Accessibility of remote and rural areas for agricultural support was improved through the provision of 35 motorbikes to the MAFS by the UN. This initiative enhanced the mobility of MAFS staff, facilitating their technical assistance to farmers engaged in agriculture and marketing activities. The motorbikes were distributed across 8 districts, significantly aiding the reach of

- The UN and MAFS identified that a lack of access to financial services can undermine FBOs ability to pool savings to address their farming challenges, which can in turn impact on governance and long-term sustainability. To increase financial inclusion, the UN and MAFS supported the establishment and training of 42 VSLA groups (1,260 members in total) with two thirds women.
- Existing small-scale irrigation systems were improved through UN support to 8,427 (F:3,083; M:5,344) smallholder farmers to rehabilitate approximately 1,200 hectares of Inland Valley Swamps across seven districts (Kenema, Pujehun, Moyamba, Kambia, Tonkolili, Koinadugu, and Falaba). Overall, farmers received a total of USD 724,536 to incentivize 30 days of intensive earthworks. This intervention enhanced farmers' ability to engage in year-round cultivation, contributing to food security and resilience against climate variability.
- Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) schools' coverage was scaled up from 55 to 97 schools and 16,978 to 27,981 beneficiaries (65 percent increase from 2022). Cash assistance was transferred to schools for the purchase of fresh vegetables daily, to make the food basket more nutritious and diverse, whilst simultaneously contributing to smallholder farmer income. Cash to schools is transferred through bank accounts, through an existing MoU with Ecobank and a manual reconciliation exercise is undertaken at the end of each term. However, since School Feeding operates in rural areas, bank coverage is not universal and community banks have to be brought into the fold. This increases transaction time, is labour intensive and leads to operational delays. As HGSF is expanding, a transition to mobile money is needed, to limit operational delays and ease financial flows.
- To enhance dietary diversity further and improve micronutrient intake, the UN distributed approximately 25 Mt of Vitamin-A rich, Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP) to 73 schools benefiting 17,000 children. The OFSP substituted for rice in the food basket, once a week.
- These OFSP were produced by 25 women farmer-based organizations, comprising 750 smallholder farmers. For this orange-fleshed sweet potato (OFSP) pilot, the UN undertook centralized distribution. However, this was a cost and labour-intensive process, due to unpredictable harvest times, quantities and perishability of the commodity. As the programme looks at scaling the OFSP inclusion in the food basket, the UN will decentralize the OFSP purchase to make it more efficient.
- To aid programme implementation and the delivery of school meals, 12 new fuel-efficient stoves were secured and a total of 62 installations of both old and new stoves were completed in schools. A kitchen performance test indicated that these stoves were approximately 44 percent more fuel-efficient than the traditional method of cooking using open three-stone fire. To date, 110 fuel-efficient stoves in 55 schools have been installed, which results in 330 Mt of firewood saving per year.



**480 (80 percent women) rural farmers trained and equipped for sustainable livelihoods linked to agriculture.**



## Output 1.2



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



The UN supported the government to carry out the legal gap assessment of the forest laws in Sierra Leone. Recommendations were made to the government for the next steps in protecting the forest.



The UN contributed to improving the protection and adaptation measures for coastal communities resulting from work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in developing 4 policy guidelines on natural resource management and revising the Disaster Risk Management Policy both of which further stemmed into the development of four Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Plans that integrated climate change sea level rise-induced risks into these plans. The ICZM Plans serve as knowledge products, guiding practitioners and local councils to include climate change mitigation actions in their development plans thereby ensuring the sustainable management of climate risks for coastal communities with the 2023 Coastal Vulnerability Assessment revealing a 45 percent reduction in the vulnerability to climate hazards for six coastal communities.



To monitor the food security situation in Sierra Leone, the UN supported the Ministry of Agriculture in conducting bi-annual food security assessments and monthly market price monitoring. The food security monitoring system (FSMS), implemented by the UN and the Ministry of Agriculture, provided critical data during both post-harvest and lean seasons. This timely information informed the food security working group and the Cadre Harmonisé, aiding in shaping project design and implementation. Additionally, a quarterly market price bulletin was developed and shared with government and development partners, further contributing to informed decision-making and strategic project planning.

## Output 1.3

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



- The UN supported MoHS in capacity building training of 1,448 PHU health workers in 16 districts on promoting counselling on IYCF/M at facility level and over 7,000 CHWs at community level focusing on counselling skills and knowledge in promoting “Stronger with Breast Milk Only” (SWBO) and cooking demonstration. This led to a strengthened locally made complementary feeding practices for children 6-59 months, covering 3 health facilities per district and an increase in the percentage of Minimum Dietary Diversity (DDS) of both poor and borderline households. This increased from a baseline of 13.3 percent to 22.9 percent in promoting increased production and consumption of nutrient dense food particularly for children.
- With support from the UN, a significant milestone has been achieved in Sierra Leone's journey towards compliance with international standards with two MSMEs being certified for ISO 9001:2015. The certifications highlighted the commitment of these MSMEs to implementing robust quality management systems and meeting international standards but also sets a new benchmark for quality infrastructure at a national level. By obtaining ISO 9001 certification, these MSMEs have demonstrated their commitment to implementing robust quality management systems and SLSB the ability to demonstrate and prove their compliance. Competitiveness of MSMEs has been improved thanks to the packaging training provided by the UN and the support to implement ISO 22000 Food Safety Management System.
- The UN collaborated with partners to validate and finalise formative research on adolescent health, nutrition, and support systems in Sierra Leone. The study gathered important perspectives from adolescents on their needs and priorities in various areas, including adolescent-health, mental health, psycho-social needs, nutrition, physical activity, gender-based violence (GBV), and participation. Key recommendations included creating an action plan with specific roles and responsibilities, developed key indicators and a framework for measuring progress. Dissemination of findings up to chiefdom levels will be prioritised in 202.
- The UN provided technical and financial support to the MoH for the development and implementation of the Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN), Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) strategy and a costed implementation plan developed covering all aspects of SBC that include risk-responsive communication, community mobilization and demand creation to increase uptake of both routine and COVID-19 vaccination services. This has brought a leap increase in coverage of routine immunization among young children, COVID-19 among targeted population and HPV in 10-year-old girls. Additionally, a baseline and midline survey were conducted using the LQAS methodology to monitor progress around MIYCN behaviour.
- A Formative Research on adolescent health, nutrition, and support systems was also conducted to influence the adolescent centred and gender responsive programmes.
- Building on sensitization efforts around Breastmilk Substitutes (BMS) Act (2021), Stronger- with- Breast Milk-Only (SWBO) campaign continued including advocacy for complementary food/recipe demonstrations across the country. Infant and Young child feeding focused on communication activities through food demonstration sessions to promote locally produced/available food items and local recipes for child feeding.

- Capacity building on complementary feeding messages and to conduct cooking demonstrations were completed in 3 PHUs in all 16 districts.
- Promotion of voluntary counselling and testing of adolescents and pregnant women in 7 high-prevalence districts was successful. Through index case family testing, 3,832 pregnant women, newborn, children, and adolescents were tested for HIV with a positivity rate of 4.4 percent, 168 are linked to appropriate care.
- The UN, through multi stakeholder activities in One Health in the country, has contributed to an improvement in Food Safety level from Level 1 (No capacity) to Level 2 (Limited capacity) which was recorded in the Joint External Evaluation (JEE) scorecard.
- The UN supported the FSTWG in developing 6 standard operating procedures (SOPs) on Food Safety (including Inspection of food establishment, Sample Collection and Laboratory Analysis, Inspection on slaughterhouses and Aflatoxins in food plants and in milk for animal products. These documents will be validated early 2024.
- The UN Nutrition Network supported the Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) Secretariat in strengthening multisectoral coordination and nutrition governance which resulted to the conduct of the National Nutrition fair, engagement with Parliamentarians for inclusion of nutrition messages in their manifestos, the conduct of a SUN Joint Annual Assessment and validation of the Joint UN Nutrition work plan. With support from the UN, REACH provided financial and technical support to the SUN Secretariat in the implementation of the annual work plan.
- The UN expanded and enhanced services for newborns and children through the Baby Friendly Hospital initiatives (BFHI). As such, the capacity of Senior Nutritionists on WHO competency verification toolkit was enhanced to improve supervision in targeted Health facilities. In the bid to raise awareness and ensure full compliance by healthcare providers on the Breast Milk Substitute Act of 2021, UN supported the development of a user-friendly handbook for health workers and conducted an orientation session for six Hospital Management and District Health Management Teams.
- The UN Nutrition programming, particularly the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement, enhanced nutrition governance. This collaboration contributed to an increase in government commitment, particularly in improving food systems and securing matching funds for the treatment of severe acute malnutrition. Strong partnerships at national, district, and community levels have been instrumental to build government service delivery. This inclusive approach allows government officials to contribute to the design and monitoring of program activities, as evidenced during the evaluation of the Irish Aid five-year strategy.
- The UN aimed to ensure that pre- and primary school children in food insecure chiefdoms, have access to adequate, safe and nutritious food throughout the school year. The programme supported the Government's National School Feeding Programme to achieve educational outcomes as well as, contribute to the health and nutrition of boys and girls in school by providing one-third of the daily caloric requirements. Through its local purchases under the home-grown school feeding, the UN aimed to spur local agriculture, strengthen food systems, and build community resilience.
- Preventing the multiple drivers of malnutrition in Sierra Leone requires a holistic approach. To improve Maternal, Infant and Young Child Feeding (MIYCF) practices, the UN forged strategic partnerships to both improve the ability of vulnerable groups to access an affordable nutritious diet, whilst intensifying Social Behaviour Change (SBC) communications. The UN worked closely with nutrition partners, including Helen Keller International, and Action Against Hunger to pinpoint its strategic approach. These collaborations enhanced the quality of SBC messaging for complementary feeding.





## Output 1.4 **An enabling environment for sustainable agriculture, food and nutrition (regulatory, institutional, research and policy framework) is in place.**

- In collaboration with the MoHS, the UN supported 4 women groups to establish small scale climate friendly Local Complementary Food (LCF) processing centres, improving access to affordable complementary food for 2,400 infants aged 6-23 months. These facilities create nutritious supplementary food using 6 uniform recipes: 3 are rice-based and 3 utilize Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP), each fortified with either soybeans and pigeon peas, sesame seeds, or groundnuts. This was facilitated through constructing and equipping 4 LCF processing centres in Kambia, Moyamba and Pujehun, each operated by a Mother Support Groups (MSG). Mother support groups are key actors in addressing the root causes of malnutrition in Sierra Leone. Strides have also been made in improving gender equality by actively involving male MSG members.
- All LCF production and processing machinery was manufactured in Sierra Leone, whilst each site was fitted with an off-grid solar installation to minimize production costs and reduce carbon emissions. Each MSG contributed to developing a brand and marketing strategy for their LCF, collectively developing the Nyam Pap brand. A local branding and marketing specialist also supported the group to develop engaging and educational packaging materials. LCF produced by the women groups is based on an ethos of affordability, to enhance access among low-income households. To kickstart production, each MSG received seed funding capital totalling USD50,000 to purchase raw materials and operate their production centres. Although technical challenges with the processing machinery and power generation contributed to delaying the project, in 2023 the centres successfully produced 4.6MT of LCF, which was supplied to 600 children aged 6-23 months.
- To build the capacities of the 4 centres to produce quality, safe food, 64 members (F:49; M:15) were trained on good manufacturing practices in partnership with the Institute of Development and Humanitarian Assistance (IDHA), a local organization specializing in entrepreneurship and business management. Furthermore, 4 field staff were deployed to provide on the job coaching to the 4 groups in group dynamics, raw material sourcing, entrepreneurship, and business management.
- In collaboration with DFN, the UN engaged with Mother Support Groups across 150 communities in Kambia, Moyamba and Pujehun districts to deliver monthly activities to improve MIYCF practices. Activities included community-led food demonstrations using locally available fresh food commodities, targeting pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and primary caregivers, complemented with nutrition counselling sessions at health facilities. Local fresh foods promoted included, Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP) and soybeans, in addition to other seasonal fruits and vegetables rich in Vitamin A, iron and protein, all essential for complementary feeding.
- As MSGs have both male and female members, social behaviour changes activities successfully reached both men and women, facilitating knowledge sharing and the adoption of practices. This approach proved pivotal in driving transformational change and sustaining future progress. Through bi-weekly focus group sessions, the UN reached over 17,000 people (F:4,015; M:2,738) including 10,406 pregnant women, improving knowledge and adoption of optimum MIYCF.

- The UN has supported the government for the review of the National Seed policy and the Cattle Settlement policy. This has strengthened the seed regulation system in the country, reduced the illegal importation of seeds and further strengthened the capacity of the seed agency in the country. The cattle settlement policy is yet to be approved, however, when approved has the tendency to reduce conflict among livestock and crop farmers.
- The UN strengthened the sustainable management of the fisheries system by constructing a fishery landing site at Conakry-Dee which has facilitated economic growth by enhancing the contribution of marine fish resources to the local economy. Through value-addition initiatives aimed at fish products in Sierra Leone, the project has directly benefited approximately 10,000 individuals, fostering greater economic prosperity and livelihood sustainability within the community.
- The food security monitoring system (FSMS), implemented by the UN and the Ministry of Agriculture across all 16 districts, provided critical data during both post-harvest and lean seasons. This timely information informed the food security working group and the Cadre Harmonisé, aiding in shaping project design and implementation.
- Additionally, a quarterly market price bulletin (data generated from monthly market price monitoring) was developed and shared with government and development partners, further contributing to informed decision-making and strategic project planning.
- Through UN intervention, Sierra Leone has its first ever plan of action for the implementation of recommendations on Human Mobility in the context of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters in Sierra Leone.



**Over 9,000 households benefited** from support provided by the UN towards strengthening the value chains for cocoa, oil palm, rice and vegetables.

## Output 1.5

**Improved competitiveness and trade compliance of selected value chains .**

- The UN, in collaboration with the Agriculture Engineering Division of MAFS, developed complex Inland Valley Swamps (IVS) across 6 beneficiary communities in Kono district and were supported with critical agricultural inputs and resulted in the cultivation of 9Ha of IVS for Rice and Maize production. Field assessment reports confirmed that there was an increase in the yields, value proposition and income among the two crops supported.
- The UN, through the Opportunity Salone Programme, undertook feeder road maintenance work in Bo, Kenema, Port Loko and Bombali districts mainly to improve farmers' access to the markets for their products. A total of 33.05 km was successfully done using labour-based technology and employing 720 women and men. Through this intervention, local communities who supplied labour were trained on feeder road maintenance, occupational safety and health, paid daily wage, thereby creating alternative livelihoods and employment opportunities for them. This work continued with another 103 km which was still work in progress in December 2023.
- The UN, through its project titled "Promotion of climate adaptation technology and business model innovations and entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone" was approved by the GEF CEO on 7 December 2023. The interventions were designed in line with the national development priorities of Sierra Leone aimed at catalysing diversified economic activities for sustained growth and socio-economic transformation with sections to strengthen the climate resilience of vulnerable communities and strengthen the economy by unlocking adaptation-oriented technology innovation and entrepreneurship in Micro, Small and Medium sized Enterprises (MSMEs).





## Output 1.6

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



Enhanced forecasting, early warning, and evidence-based surveillance systems have been established at MAFS with technical support from the UN. The capacity for early disease detection, rapid and real-time reporting, and rapid response to animal disease outbreaks was also strengthened. A functional in-country laboratory diagnostic capacity capable was established to test for 10 out of 16 (63 percent) Priority Zoonotic Diseases (PZDs) & Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) using serological & molecular techniques. This has led to the availability of reliable and evidence-based surveillance epi-report generated by MAFS on quarterly basis used by government and partners for planning purpose.



With support from the Target for Resource Assignment from the Core (TRAC) funds, the UN improved its capacities and its effectiveness through training and the establishment of 16 Disaster Management Committees (CDMC) in Karene, and Falaba districts in 2023. These resulted in the development of 16 disaster preparedness and response plans to mitigate and prevent community disasters with a capacity of 498 (F:116; M:382). With this, the UN established and strengthened the capacities of 52 CDMCs in total covering 141 wards from 2021-2023 working in 5 rural districts.



In a significant environmental monitoring effort, the UN's Asset Impact Monitoring from Space (AIMS) unit conducted satellite imagery analysis on the Western Area Peninsular National Park. The report indicated a loss of approximately 195 hectares of forest cover, primarily due to uncontrolled human-induced activities. While the rate of forest loss was slightly reduced compared to previous reports, the findings raised concerns about ongoing deforestation both along and deep inside the park's boundary.

In preparation for potential flood incidences, the UN trained 60 enumerators in Freetown for rapid deployment and timely data collection, emphasizing the importance of operational readiness in emergency response.

Through the African Regional Migration Program, the capacity of 12 government officials (F:3; M:9) have been strengthened on migration, environment, climate change data management and integration of human mobility in the context of climate change, and environmental degradation.





# OUTCOME 2

## TRANSFORMATIONAL GOVERNANCE

By 2024, people in Sierra Leone benefit from more gender and youth responsive institutions that are innovative, accountable and transparent at all levels and can better advance respect for human rights and the rule of law, equity, peaceful coexistence, and protection of boys and girls (children, girls), women and men including those with disabilities.

### Contributing Agencies



### Key Achievements

Women's representation in National Parliament and Local Councils increased to 30 percent and 34 percent respectively in the 2023 general elections. More women were appointed to cabinet positions, 31 percent. This exceeds the Government regulatory threshold set in the Gender Empowerment and Women Equality (GEWE) Act (2021).

Access to Justice was improved: tracked 1,963 cases uploaded into the Justice App; and provided affordable justice services for 1,178 indigents (F:948; M:230) through mediation, legal aid services and representation. 802 backlog cases were reviewed and cleared by the judiciary as well as 623 cases from the prison court both of which resulted in 1,779 (F:52; M:1,727) inmates who had suffered prolonged arbitrary detention. A total of 142 convictions were secured during the 'Judicial Week' demonstrating a commitment to eliminating all forms of GBV against women and girls.



### UNICEF: Youth Peace Ambassadors promote peace and unity to eliminate violence around election periods



Magaret Kamara and Desmond Kanu (19-years-old) were walking together and visiting every corner of their community, Binkolo, a moderately populated town in Bombali District, northern Sierra Leone. They are known as "youth peace ambassadors" who were moving and promoting peace from one market stall to the other and from one motorbike parking lot to the other. Their audience comprised mainly young people, traders, and some community elders on the importance of keeping the peace and promoting a violence-free environment around election periods in Sierra Leone.

In Sierra Leone, violence is can be rife among young people particularly around election periods. UNICEF has utilized U-Report to among other things, reach out to more than 185,000 U-Reporters who are mostly young people to gauge their opinions on peace and other issues around election periods.

To promote peace and maintain a violent free society, UNICEF, in collaboration with the UNDP and with support from the PBF, implemented a project amongst young people to promote an enabling environment for the conduct of peaceful elections and the strengthening of social cohesion in Sierra Leone. "We became inspired and motivated to be part of this peace promotion campaign as we are tired of seeing so much violence and rancour among young people who were once friends and suddenly became archrivals and enemies around election periods because they support different political parties and candidates," said Magaret.

In collaboration with civil society partners, the project was implemented in 30 communities in five violent hot spot districts including Bombali. Furthermore, 120 young people were trained and enlisted as youth peace ambassadors to reach out to their peers and community stakeholders. Through the PBF, about 250,000 youths and adolescents and more than 185,000 community members received education on peace promotion and violent-free election.

"We were trained and recruited as peace ambassadors to promote peace and political tolerance among our peers and others to foster unity and love which we usually enjoyed in our community, and we have been doing this for the past five months reaching more than 500 young people." added Desmond.

As Magaret and Desmond moved around their community, they reached a motorbike parking lot where about a dozen young motor bike riders were waiting for passengers whom they could convey to various neighbouring villages around Binkolo community. Adjacent to them was a small cluster of petty traders. As soon as these young peace ambassadors started speaking, the whole area became quiet, and everybody was listening attentively. "Stop the violence! Let us promote love and unity among ourselves so that we could be responsible citizens and leaders in society as the foundation of any strong society rests on us the young people," Magaret and Desmond echoed as they admonished the curious groups of motorbike riders and petty traders. Apart from promoting unity, peace and harmony among young people, this project has also helped in building boldness and confidence among the peace ambassadors such as Magaret and Desmond.





## Output 2.1

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

In 2023, with the consolidated effort of UN agencies, saw the institutionalisation and implementation of the GEWE Act, the increase and transformation in leadership and political participation of women parliamentarians and councillors in governance.

- The GEWE Act was mainstreamed, popularised, and domesticated through political parties integrating the GEWE Act in their policies, constitutions and regulations, established a corporation of transformative female and male leaders to promote gender equality, women's empowerment and leadership. This was achieved with the support of the UN, in collaboration with All Political Parties Women's Association (APPWA).
- Cross border committees were formed and managed with representatives from all major sectors enhancing local community stakeholders including youth and women in maintaining social cohesion, advocating for women's participation in decision making.
- Women's voters in the 2023 general elections increased through the improved transformational leaderships of 35 women political leaders of APPWA and civil society that influenced the election management bodies, political parties, traditional leaders, the media and promoted women and girls' leadership and political participation.
- Violence, intimidation, discrimination and harmful cultural practices against women was reduced through advocacy, positive masculinity; the use of 12 social media influencers that promoted gender, peaceful and credible elections content, reached 12,125 via social media platforms and engaged 100 Male Champions (including political, traditional and religious leaders), 99 Bike Rider Peace Ambassadors (F:20; M:79) across all regions as agents of peace and change.
- The UN supported the increase in PWD voters with 68 percent of polling centres improved with access for PWDs through the provision of curb sides, ramps and slabs resulting in an 83 percent voter turnout and 94,000 visually impaired voters were able to vote independently with easy access to polling stations.
- Women's Situation Room were established during the elections, which provided the facility to record cases of violence against women (202 cases recorded).
- The UN promoted reconciliation and reintegration of politically displaced persons through the engagement of more than 1,040 people including traditional authorities, political parties and other CSOs.

## ONE-STOP-CENTRE

### KAILAHUN DISTRICT

#### UN Women: Disabled Father Gets Justice for His Daughter, a survivor of SGBV

Saidu (not his real name) a 60-year-old visually impaired father, steps into the One Stop Centre (OSC) in Kailahun District holding the hand of his 15-year-old hearing and speech-impaired daughter. His quest is to get justice for his daughter who was raped three years ago in their home by a perpetrator who broke into her room. With full support from the One Stop Centre, the matter was committed to the Kailahun Magistrate Court, where a sign language linguist was assigned to aid with court proceedings. "Finally, the rapist has been sentenced to 6 years of imprisonment at the Correctional Centre." Bariatu's father reports. "My daughter is slowly recovering; each time we visit the Centre we get psychosocial support and that makes my daughter feel better." Says Saidu.

"This case is not the only one in the district", says Doris E.R.S Mansaray, Centre Manager. "We have so many victims of cases ranging from sexual abuse to incest practices, and physical abuse." This high increase in SGBV, particularly against very young children, led the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs in collaboration with UN Women and UNFPA, in April 2020 (with funds from Irish Aid) to establish OSC to address SGBV cases in 7 districts across all regions. Since its inception, the OSC have provided support for a total of 2,343 cases.

#### UNDP spearheads UN efforts for peaceful and inclusive elections

On 24 June 2023, Sierra Leone witnessed a momentous occasion as over 2,8 million voters cast their ballots during the general elections. UNDP Sierra Leone, with financial support from the governments of Ireland, Canada, Iceland, the European Union, the UN Peacebuilding Fund, and UNDP core resources, implemented the Electoral Assistance Project "Fostering Peaceful, Credible and Inclusive Elections" to strengthen the capacities of the Election Bodies including the Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone, the Political Party Regulation Commission, the Judiciary, NAYCOM and security agencies. UNDP also enhances collaboration with civil society and pertinent stakeholders. The Project contributions resulted in a significant rise in the number of registered voters from 3,178,663 in 2018 to 3,374,258 in 2023 (F:1,759,529) and 22,385 PWDs). It also succeeded with distribution of over 3 million voter ID cards; a robust nationwide voter education drive relayed by partner Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) which sensitized an estimated 2.5 million voters leading to 83 percent voter turnout.

The project interventions and partnerships put a greater focus on gender equality (resulting in 52 percent registered female voters, 36 percent nominated female candidates, and 33 percent elected females); the inclusion of all Sierra Leoneans, particularly women, youth, PWD and National Youth Commission innovative engagement which reached 1.5 million youth. The Project expanded the space for PWD's access to polls through targeted awareness programmes, the printing of 120,000 tactile ballot guides, and the modification of 128 polling stations).

Through the PBF project, UNDP and UNICEF worked to prevent and mitigate electoral violence, resulting in increased capacities for electoral security and conflict prevention; improved information integrity through UNDP's iVerify platform (which helped fact-check 270 stories and counter mis/disinformation and hate speech); enhanced political dialogue and commitment for peace and social cohesion through inter-party dialogue, the signing of a formal peace pledge and Agreement for National Unity.





**The UN prompted inclusive and peaceful elections through:**



Improved technical and operational capacities of 17 government institutions (including election management bodies, judiciary, and security agencies), 710 women leaders and female candidates/aspirants in delivering effective campaigns (campaign strategy, communication, coaching political participation, leadership and networking skills).



In partnership with the UN Police Standing Capacity, reviewed and engendered the Office of National Security (ONS) election training manual, election and communication strategies and developed the pocket guide for police officers providing security on election day.



Deployed 88 people respectively from the All-Political Parties Women/Youth Associations as well as 454 community peace monitors (F:202; M: 252) on conflict monitoring and reporting.



Strengthened the capacity of 500 security personnel from the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), and Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) Military Assistance to the Civil Power (MACP) to protect Women and Girls against Violence before, during and after the 2023 presidential and Parliamentary election which resulted in strengthened Inter-Agency Collaboration between SLP and Military as well as contributed in building national cohesion a total of 70 Gender Focal Point Officers across RSLAF have adequate capacity to handle gender issues, principles, international instruments, local statutes and RSLAF policies



The UN supported the role and effectiveness of the Parliament management undertaking a detailed assessment of the PoSL infrastructure, refurbished the facility by constructing covered walkway, water reservoir, sewage connection works, and PV solar solutions and the ICT system of the PoSL was also upgraded through the roll out of an automated ERP system.

## Output 2.2

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

- Post-election conflict was mitigated through UN support to inter-party dialogues and the Agreement for National Unity.
- The New Sierra Leone National Action Plan (SLiNAP III) was developed with the support of the UN, it is anticipated to be launched in early 2024.
- The Criminal Procedure Act (CPA) (1965) was reviewed through broader stakeholders' consultations. The capacity of Parliamentarians on the new CPA Bill (2023) was enhanced and the legislative review process was enabled through UN support and advocacy.
- The justice sector needs were met through the UN support and review and validation of the proposed amendment to the Sierra Leone Correctional Service Act (2014).
- UN supported the Republic of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces and the SLP to engender their human resources and procurement processes; and resulted in a female officer appointed as members of the Ministry of Defence/RSLAF decision making Committee, another as a Battalion Second in Command and SLP appointed a female Police Commissioner as the head of the Somalia peacekeeping mission for both Individual Police Officers (IPO) and Formed Police Units (FPU) through the barrier assessment on meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping missions for RSLAF & SLP.
- Gender equality and awareness was mainstreamed into 28 government ministries as mandated by the GEWE Act (2022) through UN support.
- The national action plan on Trafficking in Persons, dedicated to the prevention and protection of women, children, youth, and persons with disabilities from the scourge of human trafficking and related issues was reviewed and updated.
- The strategy and action plan on Integrated Border Governance (IBG) was supported by the UN in collaboration with the Office of National Security, Immigration department and other key partners. This action plan will streamline cooperation and coordination of border management and control among and between all border agencies in the short, medium and long, and will be the basis for the development of a border commission as an integrated architecture for cooperation.
- Tension between crop farmers and cattle herders related to transhumance through the DTM-Transhumance Tracking Tool was mitigated through establishing a data analysis unit at the Falaba District Council. This serves as a hub for early warning information along cross-border tension between cattle herders and crop farmers on transhumance movement. Through this data analysis unit, accurate and timely information is provided to community stakeholders within those cross-border localities.

- The Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan IV (JSRSIP 2019-2023) was implemented which subsequently informed the development of a 5-year JSRSIP V (2024-2028) was reviewed. 75 people (F:23; M:52) including 3 PWD.
- The Police Family Support Unit updated the SGBV Case Management Manual to reflect cybercrimes and better service survivors of sexual crimes with support of the UN. 310 personnel were trained on the updated manual improved knowledge of on provision of psychosocial services, investigation, and prosecution as part of nationwide training.
- The electoral dispute resolution mechanism was strengthened through the development of the Training Curriculum; enhancing skills of 39 High Court judges, 20 magistrates and 76 court registrars; production and dissemination of 1,000 copies of the Compendium of Laws Awareness of 300 stakeholders (F:124; M:176) including 47 PWD and 51 youth. The training curriculum was improved with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- Accelerated Community-Led Responses ensured that communities of people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV, and key populations, were empowered, enabled, and resourced to lead HIV service delivery, advocate for, and enjoy their right to health, through UN technical support and advocacy.
- The UN supported the revised National AIDS Strategic Plan (NASP) 2021-2025, and costed operational plan, performance framework, and new national target (98:98:98) to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the national response.
- The UN supported the National HIV Epidemiological Estimates to measure progress towards national strategic plans, identify remaining gaps and inequalities, set targets for Global Fund and PEPFAR funding applications and for donor reporting, and report on Sustainable Development Goal 3 on HIV incidence through the Global AIDS Monitoring (GAM) reporting.
- Reporting on national and global indicators was improved through support to National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) to review HIV tools and configuration in National Health information systems (DHIS2).
- The capacity of 5 personnel from the Sierra Leone Immigration department was enhanced through an intensive training on Integrated Border Governance under the framework of the African Regional Migration Program and the United PBF. 6 law enforcement agencies on protection mainstreaming were trained.



## Output 2.3

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

- 300 police officers (F:92; M:208) were trained on the SGBV Standard Operating Protocol and the Case Management Guidelines, 100 police and social workers (F:33; M:67) on diversion; and 100 Local Court staff (F:13; M:87) were trained on child protection/justice and the Local Court Act 2010.
- 802 backlogged cases reviewed and cleared as well as 623 cases of convictions were made through UN support. This provided access to justice to 1,779 inmates (F:52; M:1,727) who had suffered prolonged arbitrary detention, flawed sentences and bail proceedings.
- 142 convictions were secured during the Judicial Week demonstrating a commitment to eliminating all forms of GBV against women and girls. This contributed to a cumulative total of 350 convictions indicating 220 percent of the CPD target.
- The Legal Aid Board provided access to affordable justice services for 1,178 indigents (F:948; M:230) through mediation, legal aid services and representation in the customary justice system meeting the justice needs of the poor through UN support.
- 11 clerks of Magistrate Courts (F:1; M:10) improved their skills through refresher training on the Justice App. The Justice App mobile-based application using tablets has transformed the court process by enhancing accessibility, efficiency, transparency, and reporting of cases. It has enabled real-time updates, quick document access, and scheduling, improving overall collaboration for monitoring and reporting of assigned cases.
- The case supervision capacity of the judiciary was strengthened as it provided the opportunity for tracking 1,963 cases uploaded into the Justice App. The use of the Justice App has been expanded to capture cases from the High Courts, especially the Sexual Offences Model Court and the Anti-Corruption Court with an additional 13 tablets supported for reporting.
- 1,482 people's knowledge and 144 survivors' access were expanded regarding access to legal, medical, transport, psychosocial and counselling services was improved. This complemented prosecution and enhanced access justice.
- Collaborated and partnered with the judiciary of Sierra Leone to address HIV/KP-related human rights, and the law, through field visits and a 2-day national level consultative dialogue involving the Judiciary (The Leadership, Supreme, Appeals and High Court Judges, and Magistrates), Recipients of Care (RoCs), CLOs, the National Aids Secretariat (NAS), the UN and Development partners, and HIV service providers, from across the country.



## Output 2.4

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

- The Civil Registration System was improved by the UN, in synergy with education, elections and public sector reform fields. It has strengthened democracy and governance by setting up district civil registration centres including establishing sustainable local registration centres. The UN also supported the civil registry system by setting up network connectivity between the central hub of the national civil registration system and the district offices. Support was provided to develop manuals, procedures, and regulations and the annual Vital Statistics Report.
- 139,119 people gained access to legal identity through enhanced capacity of NRA.
- Data was improved through 4 Population Mobility and Public Health Risk Mapping exercises for coordination of border management public health measures, border management security regulations, common disease prevalent at the cross-border communities and Local regulations on cross-border.
- The capacity 120 Women Focused CSOs coalition strengthened – this doubled their effort in conflict prevention/mitigation and meaningful participation of women for the achievement of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325.

## Output 2.5

Local governance institutions are well resourced, service delivery functions are devolved to them, and they are service oriented.

- Solar infrastructure, ICT equipment and furniture were installed in the Sexual Offences Model Court in Kailahun to facilitate its functioning and ensure speedy trails.
- Social protection was incorporated in the MoF new developed fiscal decentralization strategy. This is a key stepping-stone for further engagement with local councils regarding social protection in the context of ongoing decentralization processes.
- The UN contributed to the development of a template for district councils plans to contain key child indicators. Through this engagement the aim is to insert strategic child indicators in the template which would encourage councils to pay adequate attention to children in their district plans.
- Through a UN PBF project, the UN worked with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Office of National Security, and the Falaba District Council to construct one border post in Koindukura and rehabilitated 1 border post in Walia cross-border communities to contribute towards the management of an orderly cross-border migration, security, social cohesion and peace.
- A local government budget and expenditure analysis was completed for 5 districts on child protection and disability inclusion by the UN and the Government. The findings of the study showed that expenditure on child protection and programmes for persons with disabilities was uneven across districts, fluctuated from 1 year to another. In some districts there was no expenditure on disability-related programmes. This study is an important first step towards strengthening equity-based fiscal decentralisation, as well as further capacity building for district councils on planning and budgeting.





## Output 2.6

### Government has strengthened Public Financial Management

- Tax compliance and revenue generation was improved through public-private dialogue with businesses in the informal sector on compliance and advantages of business formalisation held by the National Revenue Authority (NRA) and the Fiscal Decentralization Unit of the Ministry of Finance and supported by the UN.

## Output 2.7

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

- MOPED assessed the Diaspora Finance with the support of the UN. This is among the 18 recommended Financing Options that are guiding the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) in Sierra Leone.
- The Effective Aid Coordination efforts and the implementation of SDGs in Sierra Leone (SDG monitoring at local level were supported and strengthened with the production of a pilot Voluntary Local Review-VLR; and the creation and maintenance of the development assistance database (DAD) platform.
- A Sierra Leone SDG Investor Map was developed by the Government with UN support to attract donors and investors including the private sector to invest in SDGs.
- The UN supported the government's INFF to strengthen public financial management and domestic revenue mobilization in the context of implementing the SDGs in 2022 and 2023 Supported the Ministry of Trade and Industry to produce evidence-based analysis to ascertain Special Economic Zone (SEZ) location selection and identify conditions required to set up efficient SEZs in the country.
- The Government succeeded in setting up the Sierra Leone Evaluation Association (SLEA).



# OUTCOME 3

## ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

By 2024, the most vulnerable, particularly women, youth, adolescents and children (especially girls), and persons living with disabilities are empowered and benefit from increased social protection services, economic and social opportunities.

### Contributing Agencies



## Key Achievements

Access to learning opportunities for children of victims of trafficking (65 adolescent girls), and sustainable reintegration through skills training (micro business management) of 788 returnees was improved with UN support.

7 oxygen plants and equipment were procured and installed, and accessories were completed, with testing, commissioning, and operationalization in 3 oxygen plants located in Makeni, Bo, and Kenema. 12 operators/technicians were capacitated to offer maintenance support to the oxygen plants.

10 REDUCE INEQUALITIES

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

5 GENDER EQUALITY

640,000 women are currently using a modern method of contraception in Sierra Leone, resulting in averting an estimated 240,000 unintended pregnancies, 87,000 unsafe abortion and 700 maternal deaths.

## IFAD: Enhancing the status of women through increased access to financial resources.

Access to Financial Services is increasingly changing the lives and mindset of rural women, thanks to the Rural Finance and Community Improvement Programme. This initiative has set up 17 functional Community Banks (CBs) and 59 Financial Services Associations (FSAs) throughout Sierra Leone, effectively addressing the issue.

Kadiatu Bah a 40-year-old businesswoman based in Bo, embarked on her entrepreneurial journey in 2016 with a one-month business loan of SLE 500 (USD 85) from Baoma FSA. Her goal was to enhance her existing table fabric business. Owing to her commitment and unwavering integrity, Kadiatu has progressively grown her business over the years by securing additional loans in varying amounts, moving beyond her initial SLE 500 to SLE 2,000 (USD 328) then SLE 10,000 (USD 1,640) followed by SLE 30,000 (USD 4,920). Since 2019, her achievements have been remarkable, as she successfully obtained loans of SLE 100,000 on five separate occasions. This financial support has pushed her business to an international level, enabling her to travel to China and significantly broaden her business. She adopted an initial strategy of taking out loans and quickly repaying them, rather than opting for longer-term loans spanning nine months or more.

“The aim was to familiarize myself with the bank since I was a new customer and to quickly build my credit history,” she said. “Within just one year, I was able to increase my loan amount to SLE 30,000 which I used to expand my table business. But my goal was to travel to China to procure more merchandise” she added.

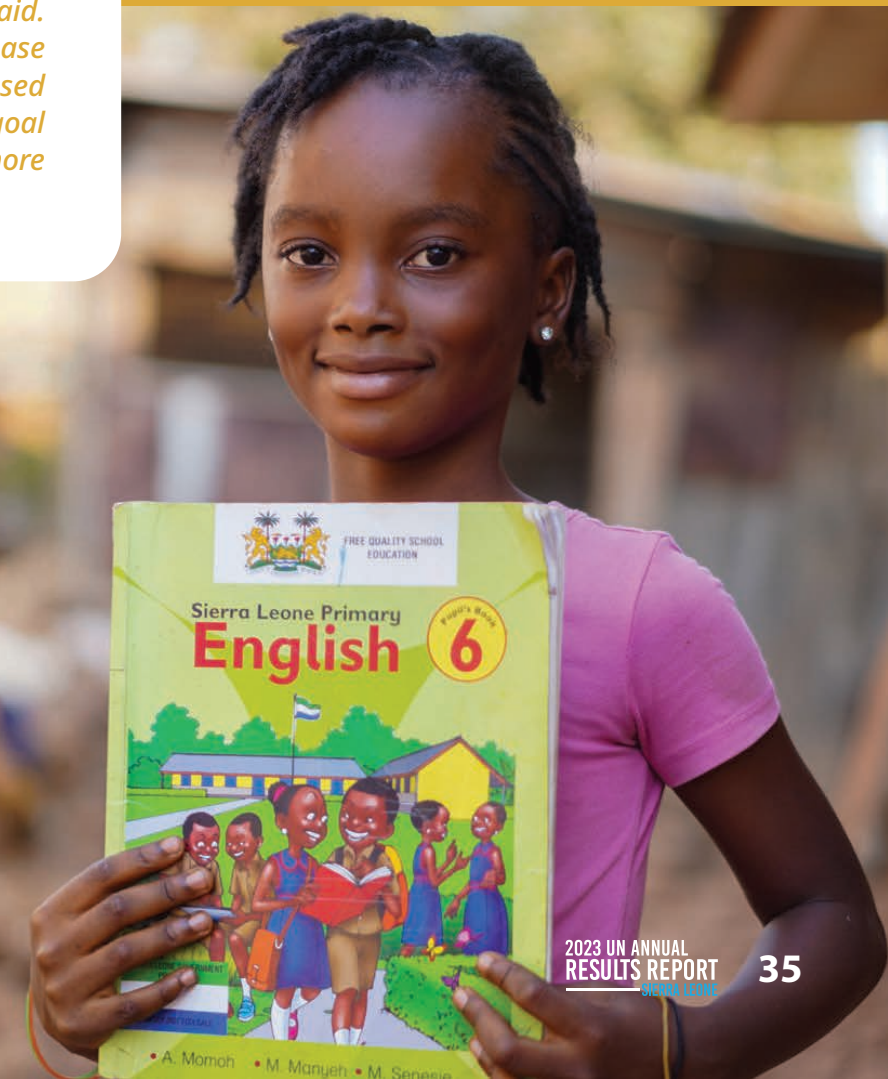
## UNFPA: Reintegrating vulnerable adolescent girls into formal education in Sierra Leone - the story of Finah Koroma

When 14-year-old Finah Koroma’s parents passed away in 2019, she was unable to continue her education despite having passed her school entrance examinations. Even her uncle, who became her guardian, was unable to provide the financial support she needed to continue her basic school education. “My parents’ passing had a significant impact on my school. I was unable to continue school, and this hugely impacted me as I believed that my dream of becoming a lawyer had been abandoned at that point,” said Finah from Kondembaia in Koinadugu District.

To ensure that girls like Finah and others who are marginalized have access to education, the Government launched the National Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools in 2021, aimed at eradicating barriers that exclude learners from school. In particular, the policy emphasizes reaching pregnant and parent learners, learners with a disability, learners living in extreme poverty, and learners in underserved communities.

In line with this policy, UNFPA is partnering with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, with support from Irish Aid, to facilitate the reintegration of girls into formal education. Through this initiative, more than 2,800 girls including Finah have been reintegrated into formal education since March 2022. Finah was able to return to school in 2023.

“I am grateful for the opportunity to go back to school and realize my dream of becoming a lawyer.”







**WHO: capacity-building program strengthens the health workforce at the Maternal Health in Rokupa Government Hospital.**

When Margaret Titi Sesay, a beneficiary of the WHO capacity building program on the use of the Integrated Obstetric Care guidelines, was posted to the Maternal and Child Health Care unit of Rokupa Government Hospital in 2020, the monthly maternal deaths were worrying. On average, the hospital recorded 3 to 4 maternal deaths per month, which was a big concern for the community, government, and hospital authorities. Margaret, a Matron, mentor, and supervisor said that since her arrival, the health facility recorded approximately 3 deaths in a year.

To help reduce the number of deaths among mothers, WHO supported the Ministry of Health Sierra Leone in developing and disseminating the National Integrated Obstetric Care (Preconception, Antenatal Care, Intrapartum, and Postnatal Care) guidelines that bring together new and existing recommendations to promote the quality of pre-pregnancy, labor, and childbirth care with capacity building. Margaret says that the training received from WHO enhanced her mentorship, supervision, and engagement skills with her staff, a boost that has seen the monthly death rates curbed. "I monitor, mentor, and supervise nurses and midwives and, in the process, make immediate corrections during my routine supervision inwards as well conduct onsite mentorship," said, Margaret. The capacity building was made possible through the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

**ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES**

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



**Output 3.1**

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

- The Government has maintained a high level of spending on education, exceeding the 20 percent of domestic spending benchmark and fostered a policy landscape that promotes innovative, inclusive foundational learning, including the National Policy on Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD), the Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools (PRIS), and the Comprehensive Safe Schools Policy, and the Basic and Senior Secondary Education Act 2023. Noteworthy, through the Free Quality School Education (FQSE) program, the enrolment substantially increased at all education levels of education by 40 percent, from 1,982,475 in 2018 to 3,43,470 in 2023. Primary education has witnessed remarkable growth in the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER), exceeding 100 percent since, currently standing at 157 percent (162 percent girls). The country has witnessed a significant increase in the transition rate from primary to secondary education, rising from 75 percent in 2017 to 121 percent in 2023. Furthermore, the primary completion rate has risen from 64 percent in 2017 to 101 percent in 2023.
- The capacities of education systems were enhanced for effective planning, implementation, monitoring, and sustainability of quality education. This support was achieved through research, advocating for evidence-based policies, and offering technical assistance. Notable accomplishments encompass aligning teacher training with up-to-date curriculum standards, optimising teacher deployment through the Teacher Allocation Study, and evaluating the early childhood development program. Data-driven collaboration with the ministries of education has led to improvements in teacher management and the promotion of foundational literacy and numeracy initiatives, resulting in positive educational transformations, greater equity, and enhanced learning outcomes across all educational levels.
- The percentage of children aged 3-5-years attending early childhood education programs substantially increased, which rose from a baseline of 12 percent in 2017 to over 25 percent in 2023. A total of 29 Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres has been constructed. The UN contributed to improved early-grade education by enhancing the pedagogical skills of 14,145 teachers (F:4,192; M:9,953) in pre-primary and primary schools, leading to significant improvements in teachers' literacy and numeracy pedagogical skills. Classroom observations of trained primary teachers showed a 21 percent increase in literacy teaching (from 27 percent at baseline to 49 percent at endline) and a 40 percent improvement in numeracy (from 16 percent to 57 percent).
- The number of qualified teachers at all education levels, particularly for foundational years significantly increased; 5 percent increase in pre-primary, primary and secondary schools between 2022 and 2023. These were achieved through the implementation of the 'National Curriculum Framework for Basic Education', development of foundational numeracy materials for early grades (primary 1 to 4), through a structured pedagogy approach aligned with teacher training, instructional core, detailed lesson plans, and TLMs.
- Equity in education was promoted - bridging the gap and ensuring that all teachers and learners had equal access to learning resources, through printing and distribution of 570,103 age appropriate TLMs, in partnership with CODE and EDT. With UN support, a total of 5,148 solar radios and 6,810 SD cards were distributed to 6,925 trained teachers from 1,857 primary schools. This reinforced classroom and pedagogical skills for teachers and consequently improved learning outcomes. 23,193 young people (30 percent girls) were empowered with digital skills, leading to enhanced active citizenship, and improved socio-economic opportunities. Another 1,000 youths and community



members were reached with climate change awareness campaigns, and this contributed to building a more informed, engaged, and resilient society in the face of climate change challenges.

- The capacity of the 38 Situation Room staff (18 percent females) from 16 districts was strengthened in data processing, analysis, and the utilisation of GIS for data mapping using geospatial technology, which utilised for various purposes such as distributing school subsidies, allocating teaching, and learning materials, determining school feeding allocations.

- Learners' performance in primary, junior, and senior secondary national examinations improved. The pass rates for the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) improved from 77 percent in 2021 to 82 percent in 2023. The Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) pass rates increased from 77 percent in 2021 to 93 percent in 2023, and the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) recorded a substantial increase, rising from 64 percent in 2021 to 83 percent in 2023.

- The UN enhanced development of the Automotive learners through development of staff development plan, for the Government Technical Institute (GTI) Kissy Campus in teaching methodologies and technical and entrepreneurial skills including gender sensitive approaches, Training of Trainers (ToT) for Automotive trainers and covered 17 technical modules, covering all areas of Automotive maintenance and repair.

- The UN supported the procurement of 3 vehicles for training to enhance learners' skills in both basic and advanced vehicle technologies across various automotive systems and functionalities.

- The Employment Act was reformed, with UN support, stating the minimum age to commence an apprenticeship with a craftsman is set at 14 years or after completion of basic education.

- Access to educational opportunities for 66 children (Boys:39 Girls: 27), and sustainable reintegration through skills training (micro business management) of 703 returnees (F:285; M:418) and 95 survivors of human trafficking (F:91, M:4) was improved with UN support.

- UN supported the development of the Staff Development Plan (SDP) for upgrading skills of all trainers of the GTI Kissy Campus in teaching methodologies and technical and entrepreneurial skills including gender sensitive approaches.

- The Automotive and Entrepreneurship Curricula was developed based on the findings from the Labor market and Needs assessment survey conducted.

- UN through the Automotive project support the procurement of 3 training vehicles from Toyota for the training centre.



## Output 3.2

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

- The UN significantly impacted the landscape of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services in Sierra Leone, marking a pivotal year of advancements and strategic developments. There was a marginal increase in access to basic water supply services to 65.3 percent, up from 65.2 percent in 2022. This growth represents a cumulative increase of 7 percent from the 2017 baseline of 58 percent, underscoring a steady progression towards wider access. This achievement was notably supported by the UN's direct assistance, which facilitated an additional 40,317 individuals gaining access to basic water supply services. The efforts included the deployment of 11 climate-resilient water systems (a mix of Gravity Fed and Solar Powered Motorized Systems) to extend safe water access to 20,955 women and 19,362 men.
- Access to basic sanitation services increased to 23 percent in 2023 from 19 percent in 2022 reflecting a cumulative increase of 7 percent against the 2017 baseline of 16 percent. 102,607 people gained access to basic sanitation, contributing to a broader impact where 171,474 people now reside in open defecation free communities across five chiefdoms. This progress is part of the UN's concerted efforts to eradicate open defecation and promote improved sanitation practices across communities.
- The UN supported capacity development of community groups, including Community Hygiene Volunteers and VSLAs across 621 communities within 3 chiefdoms located in the Port Loko, Koinadugu, and Moyamba Districts. This equips communities to sustain safe hygiene and sanitation practices among households.
- The access to basic hygiene services presented a mixed picture, standing at 18 percent in 2023, down from the baseline of 23 percent. Despite this decline, an estimated 118,692 people enjoy access to basic hygiene services, emphasizing the importance of handwashing facilities equipped with soap and water.
- Institutional capacities and enhanced sector coordination were strengthened. 2 pivotal data management platforms were finalised and launched. These include the National Outcome Routine Mapping Survey (NORMS) and the WASH Information Management Systems (WASHIMS); the rollout of 2 strategies including the Sanitation Policy Implementation Guideline; the review of the national ODF protocol, and the provision of four technical trainings (Market-based Sanitation, Hygiene Promotion, Water Systems Operations and Maintenance, and WASHFIT) to over 150 government and NGO staff. This comprehensive approach underlined the UN's commitment to building a robust foundation for sustainable WASH interventions.
- The Sanitation Technical Working Group was established and this underscored significant advancements in sector coordination and collaboration.
- The UN's interventions in educational and healthcare settings, through the provision of WASH facilities in 13 schools and 11 healthcare facilities, highlighted an integrated approach to enhancing the quality of care and learning environments. This initiative directly benefited 8,851 children with emphasis on promoting safe menstrual hygiene among an estimated 1,642 adolescent girls.



## Output 3.3

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

To promote and protect the health and well-being of the people living in Sierra Leone, the UN continued to support the Government to expand access to and utilisation of full range tracer interventions and quality health services. Global monitoring report tracking universal health coverage (UHC), Sierra Leone made progress in UHC coverage of essential health services with an index of 41 percent, which is an improvement over the 2019 index of 38 percent. Segments of the population continue to be impoverished as a result of high out-of-pocket expenditure on health. It is reported that 16 percent of households continue to spend at least 10 percent of household total income on health and 3 percent spend at least 25 percent of their household total income on health.

- The Government was supported to develop and adapt a framework for the persons-centred Life-stages approach to health service delivery and finalised the essential health service package. These results provided the platform for all persons at all ages to have their health needs considered in the framework of service provision.
- To ensure a continued enabling policy environment for the delivery of quality RMNCAH&N services, the UN supported the development of the following national strategies and guidelines:
  - RMNCAH&N Strategy 2017-2025,
  - National Strategic Policy on Elimination of Cervical Cancer and corresponding Clinical Guidelines,
  - National Strategy for the Elimination of Obstetric Fistula,
  - National Clinical Guidelines and Standards for Post Abortion Care,
  - Child Survival Action plan,
  - Acceleration plan for End preventable maternal mortality (EPM) and ENAP (Every Newborn Action Plan),
  - Integrated Obstetric Care guidelines,
  - Self-care guideline for SRHR and Costed Scale up plan for Self-injected contraceptive method
  - The Integrated Management of Newborn and Childhood Illness (IMNCI)/integrated Community Case Management (iCCM).





- Other policies and strategic documents developed with UN support to enhance the overall efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the national response included:

- The National Viral Hepatitis Strategic Plan,
- The Costed Digital Health Roadmap 2024-2026,
- National EPI policy,
- COVID-19 national deployment and vaccine plan (NDVP),
- Comprehensive cold chain and improvement plan, revised tuberculosis treatment guidelines,
- The revised National AIDS Strategic Plan (NASP) 2021-2025,
- The 5 year Strategic Plan for the Pharmacy Board of Sierra Leone,
- Sierra Leone's Accelerated Action for the Health and Wellbeing of Adolescents and Young People 2024-2030,
- The 5 year National Health Supply Chain Strategy and High-level Costed Implementation plan (2023-2027).

- Norms and regulations for regulating the practices of traditional medicines were developed through the development of 4 documents, including the Policy, Implementation Strategy, Legal Framework and Code of Ethics and Practice to institutionalize Traditional Medicines practice.

- The District Health System was strengthened through the engagement of various stakeholders to implement and disseminate the Community based PHC model.

- The health financing Progress matrix was developed to improve the capacity to track health financing progress. This was done through UN support and informed by the progress towards UHC and to provide a basis for financial protection for the vulnerable and the population at large in accessing health care.

- The National Health Accounts for 2021 was finalized and data collected for 2022 investments, and the Local Budget and Expenditure Assessment (LGBA) completed in 6 districts to support the financial decentralization process.

- A Midwifery Census was undertaken to support the Government in determining the optimal distribution of midwives as well as identify ways of addressing gaps in coverage. Additionally, a curriculum for universities and midwifery schools on combating AMR was developed to ensure sustained capacity-building efforts especially at the pre-service levels.

- 274 midwives received pre-service training at the country's 3 midwifery schools of Makeni, Bo and the National Midwifery School in Freetown; 93 were deployed across the country to provide maternal health services, especially in hard to reach and underserved communities. A post-basic certificate in neonatal nursing course is completed by 21 nurses in 2023 as a first cohort.

- An estimated 640,000 women are using a modern method of contraception in Sierra Leone because of which 240,000 unintended pregnancies, 87,000 unsafe abortion and 700 maternal deaths are averted. The UN fulfilled more than 90 percent of the public health sector's contraceptive supplies' needs.

- Capacity building for improved quality of care and services were undertaken and included the training of 60 service providers from Kenema, Kono & Bonthe in Subcutaneous Depot Medroxyprogesterone Acetate Self-Injectable Contraception (DMPA SC), while 556 front-line supply managers in 431 health facilities were equipped and certified with the required competencies in Standard Operating Procedures for logistics management of health commodities.

- Through community engagements and outreach as well as capacity building of health care providers, 18,757 women and girls in targeted districts were able to access sexual and reproductive health services.

- 28 health facilities were supported to implement quality improvement projects aimed at improving the quality of the Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) services for improved maternal health outcomes. 9 of these facilities specifically integrated cervical cancer screening and treatment into the SRH care package of services; and provided cervical cancer screening services to 2,716 women. 50 health care providers were trained on cervical cancer screening and treatment and another 50 health care workers trained on respectful maternity care in Bombali, Koinadugu, Kailahun and Bo districts.

- Through a holistic and integrated approach for prevention, treatment and social reintegration aimed at eliminating of obstetric fistula in Sierra Leone, the UN supported the development of the National Fistula Elimination Strategy; the undertaking of fistula repair surgeries, rehabilitation, and reintegration of 124 women living with obstetric fistula. 4,000 women and girls were reached with information on obstetric fistula prevention and other sexual and reproductive health information.

- With support from the UN and other stakeholders, the Government advanced family planning by launching commitment as part of the FP2030 global partnership. To accelerate progress towards universal access to family planning, Sierra Leone's FP2030 commitments aim to improve policy and legal environments, improve access for hard-to-reach areas and most-in-need groups (adolescents and youth), strengthen supply chains, transform harmful social and gender norms, and increase and diversify financing for family planning.

- A Computerised Medical Maintenance System (CMMS) for inventory and management of medical devices in hospitals and PHUs was developed and institutionalised. An online vaccine stock management tool (e-Supply Management Tool) was rolled out to all 16 district vaccine stores. 1 refrigerated van and 720 motorbikes were procured and distributed to District Health Management Team (DHMT) and PHC, strengthening last-mile supply distribution, outreach services, and supportive supervision.

- A guidance document on governance and coordination mechanism for streamlined health supply chain was developed and put into action. This clarifies roles and responsibilities in the supply chain, defines stakeholder engagement mechanisms with clear horizontal and vertical linkages, provides standard terms of reference for working groups with communication and monitoring frameworks to ensure and measure effectiveness of the working groups.

- 7 oxygen plants, equipment was procured and installed, and accessories were completed, with testing, commissioning, and operationalization in 3 oxygen plants located in Makeni, Bo, and Kenema. 12 operators/technicians were capacitated to offer maintenance support to the oxygen plants.

- The Government's capacity to provide quality health service delivery was enhanced through the procurement of 4 vehicles and 14 ambulances for the Integrated Health Projects Administration Unit under the Sierra Leone-Quality Essential Health Services and Systems Support Project (QHESSSP).

- Through the support of the Fleming Fund, the implementation of the National Action Plan to fight the threat of antimicrobial resistance was supported and resulted in improved capacity of laboratories to undertake Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (AMST). 3 Microbiology Laboratories were renovated, equipped, and supplied with commodities. Skills of laboratory staff in AMST for bacteria were also enhanced through capacity building programs.

- To expand access to quality and person-centred preconception and comprehensive obstetric care, the healthcare workers capacity was strengthened on the new Integrated Obstetric Care guidelines in Western Area Rural and Western Area Urban and in managing the complications of spontaneous or induced abortion.

- Efforts were also geared towards infrastructure improvement. The UN constructed 1 new Basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (BEEmONC) facility for about 19,000 beneficiaries at Jojoima, in Kailahun District, which further strengthened the health system capacity for improved maternal and child health outcomes. This hospital is playing a critical role providing health care services including surgery facilities with proper equipment.

- The UN provided quality emergency obstetrics care support to the country's largest maternity referral hospital, Princess Christian Maternity Hospital (PCMH), which resulted in increased capacity to respond to obstetric emergencies and 8,743 women successfully delivered at the Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC) facility in the hospital. The capacity of 50 health care staff at the hospital was strengthened through training in obstetric emergency care.

- Improved access to prevention and control of reproductive cancers through the provision of technical support for the comprehensive training for 40 health workers on cervical cancer prevention and treatment protocols. This initiative resulted in the screening of 476 women, detecting 62 cases, leading to 10 Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedures (LEEP) and 47 thermal ablations. Recognizing the need for broader implementation, the UN donated 10 LEEP, 20 Thermal Ablation equipment units, 1 handheld mini digital Colposcope, 36 Graves LLETZ and 16 Kogan Endocervical Speculums and 1 Electrosurgical Unit Mobile Cart, to expand cervical cancer prevention and treatment services in 10 secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities across the country.

Additionally, 20 health personnel were trained by specialist doctors from the Hunan Provincial Maternal and Child Health Hospital on Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment in Sierra Leone and 12 health personnel in China, to expand cervical cancer prevention and treatment services in 10 secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities across the country. This multifaceted approach underscores the commitment to addressing reproductive cancers and improving women's health outcomes.

- Quality Improvement (QI) Bundles were developed and rolled out to contribute to addressing the leading causes of maternal, child, and newborn deaths in health facilities with the support of the UN. The rollout exercise targeted the 4 regional hospitals of Bo, Kenema, Makeni, and PCMH with a total of 40 healthcare workers trained in each hospital. Additionally, 28 Health facilities were provided with quality improvement support aimed at improving the quality of EmONC services.



### 7,979 newborns (F:3,405; M:4,574) in 16 Special-Care Baby Units' lives were saved

in 2023 with the continued technical and financial support from UN and partners. This is a 12 percent increase from 2022. 1,622,337 children were treated using IMNCI/ iCCM protocol for malaria and pneumonia, an increased Vitamin A supplementation coverage for semester 1 from 78 percent to 79 percent in 2023, and an 11 percent increase in deworming service to 75 percent.



### The cure rate for severely malnutrition in children increased from 84 percent in 2022 to 98 percent as 11,000

children affected by severe malnutrition and 19,041 moderate malnutrition benefited from the life saving treatment using RUTF.



### 3,832 children and adolescents were tested for

HIV through index case family voluntary testing in 7 high prevalence districts with a positivity rate of 4 percent and linked to appropriate care.





- Laptops and solar inverter devices were procured to fill the infrastructural gap within digital health space with the support of the UN and the development of costed national Digital Health Road Map 2024-2026. Additionally, the Nutrition surveillance system was linked with District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS-2) to collect strategic and quality data for evidence-based decision-making. Progress was made in promoting real time data uses from DHIS2 through the development of the immunization dashboard which was supported by 'Thrive 360' Sierra Leone project. Sierra Leone continued to monitor the incidence of epidemic prone disease and maintain surveillance through early warning systems. The use of the DHIS2 e-tracker app the electronic Integrated Surveillance and Response (e-IDSR) deployed to all health facility reporting points in the country contributed to maintaining the reporting rates above 95 percent.
- Partnership and resource mobilisation initiatives for tobacco control was established. Support from key line ministries, including Health, Finance, Trade, Local Government, and Youth Affairs, as well as the National Revenue Authority, was garnered with UN support to facilitate the implementation of the Tobacco and Nicotine Act. Intensive awareness creation through the dissemination of the provisions of the Tobacco and Nicotine Control Act were undertaken, accompanied by key advocacies:
  - 7,301 skilled/ equipped CHWs and 853 peer supervisors are continuously providing essential integrated health and nutrition services in their respective communities focusing screening and referral.
  - The Community Health Information system linked to DHIS2 has been redesigned.
  - Focal persons from each Peripheral Health Unit have been trained to establish a robust CHW performance management system to track the performance of individual CHWs, making incentive payments efficient and reliable.
- 272,485 and 280,406 children were given the 3rd dose of Penta and the 1st dose of Measles/Rubella respectively before age 1. This was a result of enhancing community leadership participation in vaccination efforts, plus combining routine and outreach strategy for vaccine delivery, with periodic intensified routine immunisation (PIRI) for bringing vaccines closer to communities. The UN continued to support COVID-19 vaccination in the country to ensure the population is protected. Coverage of the population as at the end of 2023 stands at 6,053,668 (95 percent) individuals above 12 years fully vaccinated.
- The UN provided support for the piloting of the Pregnancy Registration and Service Tracking System (PreSTrack); an innovative initiative developed by the Directorate of Science Technology and Innovation and the MoH to facilitate the registration, tracking and real time monitoring of pregnancies. The application, which was piloted in 39 health facilities, will be rolled-out in all referral clinics, peripheral health units and community health centres, will enhance the timely identification and management of complications for improved health outcomes and will ultimately contribute to the reduction of maternal mortality in the country.
- A robust public health surveillance system was sustained with the electronic transmission of weekly epidemiologic data and case-based investigation findings. The electronic IDSR data transmission system has been kept operational at all levels with UN support. On average, 99 percent of the expected health facility weekly epidemiological reports.

- The national RRT investigated a yellow fever outbreak in rural western areas and disseminated the findings to the MoH and other partners for rapid response with UN support. These gains are a result of the rollout of the 3rd edition of IDSR technical to all public health facilities, including private and faith-based organisations and the deployment of protocols for multi-hazard 'One Health' approach.
- The National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS 2018-2022) was implemented, and Sierra Leone improved its overall score under the JEE from 36 percent in 2016 to 46 percent by 2023. This indicates that the country has developed or demonstrated capacities in several technical areas, such as surveillance, laboratory, health services provision, and health emergency management.
- The State Party Assessment Report (SPAR) report shows that Sierra Leone has increased its average score in the IHR core capacities from 36 percent in 2016 to 40 percent in 2022. This suggests that the country has made progress in implementing the IHR and reporting to the global community.
- The UN worked with the MoH towards reducing vertical transmission of HIV infection through the development and validation of guidelines for integrating eMTCT and Paediatric HIV into RMNCAH and nutrition programmes. The integration of eMTCT guides into the integrated obstetric care guidelines and Training packages contributed to improving access to and coverage of eMTCT services among pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- The national EPI programme was strengthened and cMPYP was implemented with UN support to the MoH. This has resulted in significant progress on capacitating the health system to deliver vaccines to save lives. Currently 94 percent of health facilities are equipped with functional cold chain equipment, among them are 230 sets of solar refrigerators and 1 refrigerator van.
- District officers received training on vaccine and cold chain management and were provided with installation and maintenance tool kits. Sierra Leone successfully introduced the HPV vaccine in a cohort of 10 years old girls as well as routinization of the vaccine in 2023 additional 25,535 girls were vaccinated with the HPV vaccine, contributing to the efforts to protect women and prevent cervical cancers.
- Continuous technical support to health facilities was provided for development of measles outbreak preparedness and response plans, simulation exercises, reactive campaigns including conduction of outbreak response for measles in 6 districts completed.
- The UN supported the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs to strengthen and continue with Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) service provision in 4 existing SRH hubs in Koinadugu and established one SRH hub in Falaba district to provide free SRH services to 1,151 adolescent girls in hard-to-reach areas.
- Accelerated the use of Differentiated Service Delivery (DSD) models in the national AIDS response, the support to implement DSD national guideline and operational plan contributing to 70percent increase in Multi-Month Dispensary (MMD) of HIV drugs (ARVs); from 10,777 in December 2023 compared to 3,285 in December 2022.
- To reduce Breast and Cervical Cancer, and HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) among Women Living with HIV (WLHIV) and Female Sex Workers (FSWs) in Sierra Leone, 512 Women Living with HIV (WLHIV) and Female Sex Workers (FSWs), and community women, in Western area Urban

and Rural districts were reached with HIV and STI testing, and Breast and Cervical Cancer screening, and empowered on prevention, and earlier detection of Breast and Cervical Cancer, and STI, through sensitization, by WELL Woman Clinic.

- The quality and effectiveness of HIV services for all people was improved through support to the development and implementation of the consolidated guidelines on HIV Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment, and Care. 21,834 new HIV cases were identified in 2023, and 24,145 in 2022. Additionally, 71,838 and 58,407 were on treatment in 2023 and 2022 respectively.
- The UN supported the Government to develop the FP2030 commitments, a set of specific actions to expand access to voluntary, rights-based family planning. The UN supported the development of an Integrated National Supply Chain Strategy (2023-2027).
- Safe Blood Transfusion services were provided with equipment and consumables to improve availability of safe blood in the blood bank at the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital (PCMH) and Jui Friendship Hospitals by the UN.
- MIYCN, SBCC strategy and a costed implementation plan developed covering all aspects of SBCC that include risk-responsive communication, community mobilization was developed and implemented. This has brought an increase in coverage of routine immunization among young children, COVID-19 among targeted population and HPV in 10-year-old girls. Additionally, a baseline and midline survey were conducted using the LQAS methodology to monitor progress around MIYCN and other health care behaviour. A Formative Research on adolescent health, nutrition, and support systems was also conducted to influence the adolescent centred and gender responsive programmes.
- A national accountability framework for ending AIDS in children was developed, and a 2-5-year priority action plan to end HIV by 2030, through supporting Community-Led Organizations (CLOs).
- Advocacy work resulted in the inclusion of Drop-in-Centres (DIC) of the Key Populations (KPs) in the DHIS2 as organisational units like health facilities, providing a platform for documentation of service uptake by KPs and tracking of health outcomes.
- The Universal Health and Preparedness Review (UHPR) mechanism was launched. This resulted in the highest political level commitment for enabling an environment of governance, sustainable financing, and investment towards a resilient health system. The process harnesses 'One Health' approach to health security engaging all-of-government and whole-of-society, development partners and civil society, to advance better health preparedness and response. The UHPR examines best practices, gaps, and challenges, along with priorities in three areas of the health response: governance, systems, and financing for health emergencies, as part of the universal health coverage. The commitments from the UHPR process further stimulated the creation and launch of the National Public Health Agency, a semi-autonomous body managing health emergencies across.
- 2 levels of the Field Epidemiology and Training Programme (FETP,) frontline and intermediate, are in place in the country. Sierra Leone launched the FETP Light, a less demanding programme, that equips a wider range of technical staff with preliminary analysis skills.

## Output 3.4



### Population has improved access to renewable energy in rural areas.

- 0.6 MW of renewable energy-based generation capacity and electrified 11 rural communities of Sierra Leone were installed by the UN.
- 2,477 electricity connections to 2,221 households were provided by the UN, this benefits over 13,326 people of which 51 percent were females and 1 percent PWDs. The electrified households have resulted in improved livelihoods through increased household economic activities 11 community Health Centres (CHC) in rural Sierra Leone are connected to mini-grid electricity benefiting 26,653 patients (60 percent females). As a result of electricity in these CHCs, medicines and vaccines are stored, and pregnant women can safely deliver their babies at any time.
- 22 schools in 11 communities by the UN. This positively impacts a total of 5,500 students (46 percent females; 1 percent PWDs). ICT equipment usage in those schools has increased significantly. The schools have arranged extra learning sessions in the evenings where students from the non-electrified schools have opportunities to study and extend their learning opportunities.
- 198 commercial businesses are electrified. This includes 991 businesspersons (51 percent females; 5 percent PWDs) who are stimulating their businesses by up taking mini-grid electricity. The electrified businesses are observed to be expanded and opened for longer hours.
- 22 other public service institutions were electrified (including, police stations, churches, and mosques) These institutions can improve their service delivery with a reliant supply of electricity.
- Renewable energy-based 1 megawatt (MW) generation capacity for Moyamb was installed to provide electricity connections to around 15,000 beneficiaries from households, schools, community health centres, and commercials/ businesses. All the preparatory activities including site selection, technical design, social and environmental screenings are completed. The procurement process is completed and materials supply at the site is ongoing.
- Site selection process, technical designs, and environmental & social screening for installing stand-alone systems to electrify 500 schools and 200 health facilities in Sierra Leone was completed.
- The Ministry of Energy, and Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission (EWRC) capacity was strengthened in ensuring a harmonic approach to regulate the sector. As such, the cost drivers of the mini-grid tariff model are reviewed by undertaking a mini-grid End-user tariff comparison and analysis in Sierra Leone.
- Through the construction of renewable energy, Carbondioxide (CO2) was reduced by 650 tonnes.
- A local entrepreneur in Kenema, Green Energy Charcoal Briquettes enterprise, an innovative business which makes charcoal from agricultural waste like rice husks, coconut shells, cocoa pods and groundnut shells was supported by the UN. The process involves carbonising the waste material and mixing it with a cassava extract which is used as the binding agent. The enterprise has made charcoal briquettes 4 domestic cooking and industrial usage. This operation has created upstream and downstream employment opportunities for places like rice mills, cocoa processing facilities and coconut selling points dotted all over the city employing 14 youths and working with 216 other people.
- The City Council in Kenema no longer has problems with littering from those selling coconut because all the shells are collected, and the company buys from an organised network of more than 216 people around the city who are collecting all this waste. The company has also reached out to places like rice mills and trained the rice Millers on how to carbonise all the rice husks. This means the waste at rice mills now has commercial value.



# OUTCOME 4

## PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT OF THE MOST VULNERABLE

By 2024, the most vulnerable, particularly women, youth, adolescents and children (especially girls), and persons living with disabilities are empowered and benefit from increased social protection services, economic and social opportunities.

### Contributing Agencies



### Key Achievements

**54 Communities were empowered to take ownership and action against GBV.** Adoption and implementation of by-laws in those communities served to minimise incidences of GBV and harmful practices, empowering communities to take proactive measures towards protection and empowerment.



**With support from the UN, Sierra Leone became the 1st country to launch the GBV Information Management Systems (GBVIMS+) in a development setting, to facilitate timely and survivor-centred services, thus ensuring effective support for GBV survivors.**

10 REDUCE INEQUALITIES



**The UN supported the implementation of the GEWE Act (2022) by strengthening the capacity of 28 government ministries and gender units, thus ensuring that gender issues are mainstreamed into public policies, strategies, and programs.**



**2,015 vulnerable girls were integrated back into formal education** after having dropped out of school due to pregnancy, child marriage, disability, or extreme poverty.



### IOM: Find Light through the Dark: the story of a returnee overcoming societal challenges.

Fatmata just finished secondary school and was hoping to go to university when the Ebola virus broke out in Sierra Leone. Her dream was to study Business administration and become an entrepreneur. The Ebola virus not only ravaged lives but also destroyed hopes and dreams. Fatmata's hopes of going to university were shattered when her uncle who was sponsoring her studies died of the Ebola virus. "Life forced me to do many things to survive," she shares. During those trying times, she learned about the 'temple run' journey; a journey many Sierra Leoneans see as an escape from poverty and unemployment at home and risk everything for a life abroad. Fatmata found new hope that if she made it to Algeria, life would be better.

Fatmata got arrested along with other migrants during a police raid. "We were arrested and held in detention for some days, and later armed police escorted about 40 of us to somewhere in the desert and told us to find our way," she says. Fatmata, having realized the increasing difficulties in her journey, decided to return home.

With help from IOM, Fatmata was part of the 149 Sierra Leonean migrants who were assisted to voluntarily return home in August 2022. Upon returning home, Fatmata and other migrants received support from IOM on cash-for-work reintegration assistance from IOM Sierra Leone. Through this work, she managed to save some money to sponsor herself to study a short course in cosmetology. Having completed her course, Fatmata now earns money doing beauty make-up and hairdressing for clients.

**"With the help of IOM, I have found hope to start a new life, I am now a certified cosmetologist,"** Says Fatmata with a beaming smile replacing the earlier pink flush of embarrassment from her cheek.





## PROTECTION AND EMPOWERMENT OF THE MOST VULNERABLE

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



### Output 4.1

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

The UN contributed to progress on protecting and empowering the most vulnerable members of society by addressing harmful social norms and ensuring communities have increased understanding and respect for human rights.

- Harmful social norms were transformed through the work of the UN, including in helping to shift societal attitudes towards gender equality and the rights of women and girls. Through targeted initiatives, such as engaging 50 traditional and religious leaders in discussions on gendered social norms and harmful practices, the UN facilitated increased understanding and respect for human rights within communities. Paramount Chiefs demonstrated clear commitment by developing work plans to support community-led initiatives aimed at addressing harmful social norms. Through initiatives like the HeForShe Campaign, male involvement strategies have been deployed, promoting positive masculinities and empowering women.
- Collaborating with the Office of the First Lady, the UN commemorated the UN World Day for the prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence. This event reached over 300 participants, raising awareness of the prevention and healing of survivors of child and adolescent sexual exploitation, abuse, and violence. Awareness for the prevention of FGM was increased, including through advocacy engagements with key stakeholders including government institutions, development partners, and civil society organizations.
- 18 "husband schools" which facilitated the engagement of 450 males in discussions surrounding the consequences of GBV, child marriage, and SRHR were established. These initiatives aim to foster improved mindsets and behaviours against GBV and harmful practices, with participants further engaging in community sensitization efforts.
- Communities were empowered to take ownership and action against GBV. Through increased engagement with traditional and community stakeholders, the UN has garnered buy-in and ownership for GBV prevention initiatives. Adoption and implementation of by-laws in 54 communities serve to reduce incidences of GBV and harmful practices, empowering communities to take proactive measures towards protection and empowerment.
- 108 Mobile Accountability and Participation and Empowerment Specialists (MAPES) were mobilised and trained, which facilitated capacity building, advocacy, and awareness-raising efforts on women's rights, GBV prevention, and SRHR in 48 communities across four districts. These initiatives have reached an estimated 3,250 individuals, including youth, women, men, chiefs, and 'Mammy Queens'.
- Collaboration with governmental and non-governmental partners has resulted in the successful engagement of over 59,000 community members, including children, religious and traditional leaders, and young people, in intergenerational dialogues. These dialogues aim to address issues such as child marriage and support the rights of adolescents and girls, fostering a culture of inclusivity and empowerment.



## Output 4.2

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

The UN has been instrumental in advancing legal, policy, and regulatory frameworks aimed at safeguarding the rights of women, children, and persons living with disabilities. Through collaborative efforts with the Government and various stakeholders, significant progress has been made in promoting gender equality, child protection, and disability inclusion.

To advance disability inclusion, the UN supported the development of a checklist for assessing alignment with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) as well as the establishment of an SDG Monitoring Platform to ensure data disaggregation and integration of inclusion-related targets. Capacity-building efforts have empowered 180 key stakeholders to utilize monitoring tools effectively, promoting inclusivity and adherence to international instruments.

The UN has continued its support for the implementation, monitoring, and review of the SLiNAP II. Regional consultations have been initiated to inform the development process of the new SLiNAP III, emphasizing a behavioural and transformative shift in gender equality and women's empowerment.



The UN supported the Government in implementing GEWE. By strengthening the capacity of 28 government ministries and gender units, gender issues have been mainstreamed into public policies, strategies, and programs.



Collaboration with top private companies has resulted in commitments to the Women Empowerment Principles (WEP), promoting gender equality and women's representation in institutions.



A UN multi-agency fund has been established to support gender mainstreaming efforts, ensuring effective implementation of GEWE.



Stakeholders were equipped with effective child rights advocacy. Efforts to advance child protection included supporting the review of the Child Rights Act and facilitating the drafting of the State party's report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Training initiatives have equipped stakeholders with the necessary skills to contribute effectively to child rights advocacy, with upcoming consultations focusing on the legal prohibition of FGM and the development of a new regulatory framework for Social Workers.

- > Direct implementation and gender mainstreaming efforts have amplified the voices of women and girls, fostering increased community actions for GEWE policy implementation. Regional engagements and awareness campaigns have contributed significantly to transforming social norms, particularly in underserved communities.
- > Awareness and dissemination of legal knowledge reached over 2000 individuals across 5 Freetown communities, focusing on key aspects of the Sexual Offences legislation. Translation into local languages has facilitated a broader understanding and uptake of legal protections.
- > Collaboration with NGOs and government agencies has facilitated the pilot testing of draft tools, aiming to ensure a community-based and socially sensitive approach to disability assessment.



## Output 4.3

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

The UN, in collaboration with the Government, prioritised efforts to enhance access to quality services related to protection, GBV, and other harmful practices affecting vulnerable populations. Through a range of initiatives, significant strides have been made in reducing GBV and addressing harmful practices against women, girls, and other marginalized groups.

- The UN facilitated the establishment of 8 OSCs and 5 SRH Hubs across program districts. These centres have provided essential services, including clinical management, legal advice, and counselling, to survivors of GBV. Additionally, the 116 GBV service hotline has played a crucial role in referring survivors to health and protection services.
- Various personnel, including police officers, social workers, and court staff, were trained to enhance their response to GBV and child protection. Training focused on operational response, diversion, child-friendly approaches, and case management, strengthening the overall capacity for prevention and response.
- Collaborative efforts, including community engagement and awareness raising, with local councils and stakeholders led to improved coordination and commitment to preventing and responding to GBV. Paramount Chiefs and district committees developed detailed action plans, increasing community understanding and support for SGBV prevention and response.
- The launch of the GBVIMS+ enhanced the capacity of government and civil society for GBV case management and information management. This system has facilitated timely and survivor-centred services, improving support for survivors of GBV, particularly those below the age of 18. The system was piloted in Western Area Urban, Bo and Kailahun with 4 user organizations.
- Specialized support was provided for vulnerable populations, including children in conflict with the law and survivors of sexual violence. Efforts focused on comprehensive case management, psychosocial support, and alternative care services, contributed to the resilience and well-being of affected individuals. Targeted support was also given to families for tracing and reunification of 406 stranded and vulnerable Sierra Leonean children.
- Enhanced the capacity of the Consortium for the Advancement of Right for Key Affected Populations (CARKAP), and its members (11) to accelerate the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of CLOs, through technical support in partnership with the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC) West Africa including: development of guide, tools, data management platform and trainings.
- Facilitated the development of commitments on communities lead for equity, inclusion, and equality to end HIV-related stigma and discrimination, among PWDs, in partnership with NAS and Disabled Rights Movement (DRIM).
- 50 PWDs from across the country, were sensitised on HIV prevention, and availability of service, HIV-related stigma and discrimination, and positive living, contributing to the reduction of HIV prevalence among PWDs.





## Output 4.4

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

The UN implemented initiatives to equip vulnerable groups, particularly adolescents and young women, with essential life skills and knowledge. Through targeted programs and partnerships, efforts have been made to empower individuals with the tools and resources necessary for personal development and resilience.



> **2,015** vulnerable girls, who had dropped out of school due to pregnancy, child marriage, disability, or extreme poverty, were integrated back into formal education as part of the UN support for the implementation of the National Policy on Radical Inclusion in schools.



> **50 schools** were identified for Child and Adolescent Health Life Skills education (CAHLS) implementation, and 53 teachers received training in the delivery of CAHLS; a curriculum-based instruction method which equips young people with, culturally and age-appropriate knowledge, skills and values necessary to make healthy and informed choices about their lives, including their sexual and reproductive health.



> **UN partnerships** with youth networks and government entities have enabled the empowerment of adolescents and young women on SRHR and GBV. National summits and dialogue sessions have provided platforms for discussing critical issues and advocating for policy changes.

- Innovative digital initiatives and campaigns, such as the Body Right Campaign, have been launched to raise awareness and prevent online gender-based violence. Participation in international forums and events has further empowered young people to engage in global discussions and initiatives.
- 200 young people were brought together to discuss the state of GBV in Sierra Leone and the role of young people as agents of change. Additionally, 25 young people were supported to virtually participate in the 2023 ECOSOC Youth Forum under the theme "Accelerating the COVID-19 recovery and full implementation of the 2030 Agenda with and for youth."
- Accelerated empowerment and engagement of adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), through support to the First Lady of Sierra Leone, who is a UNAIDS champion and a strong voice for the empowerment of women and girls in Sierra Leone and beyond.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), supported the implementation of the 3-year operational plan (2022-2024) for the Education Plus Initiative (EPI), and developed an investment case to advocate for increased technical and financial resources to implement the initiative.
- 100 AGYW were empowered on adolescents sexual and reproductive rights, through support to Girls Advocacy Development Network (GADNET) to organize interactive dialogue session involving the UNAIDS Regional Director for West and Central Africa (WCA).
- Over 500 adolescents and young women were empowered on SRHR and overcoming challenges, including SGBV, by supporting GADNET to organize the 2023 Sierra Leone National Girls Summit.



## Output 4.5

Vulnerable groups have improved entrepreneurial and financial literacy, and employability.

- The UN, in collaboration with various stakeholders, prioritized efforts to enhance entrepreneurship and financial literacy among vulnerable populations. Through targeted training programs and support services, individuals have been equipped with the skills and resources necessary for economic empowerment and resilience.
- 1,200 women, youths, and girls' livelihoods were improved through skills enhancement programs and training in various sectors, including mechanical engineering, construction, and entrepreneurship. Startup kits and equipment have been provided to enable individuals to start and scale their ventures effectively.
- YouthConnekt centres were established in selected districts to provide cohort training on ICT, construction, mechanics, and entrepreneurship. Awareness sessions on gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health have complemented skills training, fostering holistic development among youth participants.
- Financial assistance and technical support have been provided to 18 women-led cooperatives and MSMEs to promote business growth and scalability reaching 5,400 indirect beneficiaries (F:4,320; M:1,080) in 11 districts.



## Output 4.6



Quality data is available and used for decision-making.

Efforts have been made to enhance data availability and utilization for evidence-based decision-making within the UN in Sierra Leone. Through capacity-building initiatives and strategic partnerships, progress has been made in strengthening information management systems and promoting data-driven approaches to programming.

- The capacity of national and district-level monitoring and evaluation (M&E) personnel has been strengthened, regarding strategic information management for HIV/AIDS programs. UN tools and methodologies have been utilized to identify gaps, monitor progress, and advocate for resource allocation.
- The National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA) launched the annual Vital Statistics Report with UN support. This provided up-to-date information on the country's birth, death, marriages, and divorces, thus providing the necessary evidence base for policy formulation, programme planning and implementation.
- Findings from costing studies and strategic information management have been leveraged for evidence-based advocacy, particularly in advocating for increased resources for community-led organizations (CLOs).
- Adolescents and young women have been empowered through advocacy and engagement initiatives led by the UN. Participation in national summits and dialogues has facilitated discussions on SRHR, gender equality, and other critical issues, empowering young people to advocate for their rights and priorities.

## Output 4.7



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

Social protection systems have been strengthened and access for vulnerable populations has been enhanced in Sierra Leone. Through strategic partnerships and targeted interventions, progress has been made in expanding coverage, improving service delivery, and building resilience among affected communities.

- Projects such as the "Resilience Building for Disaster Affected Communities" have focused on fortifying vulnerable communities against disasters. Essential installations, including biogas energy systems and communal latrines, have been implemented to enhance resilience and improve living conditions.
- The national social protection strategies and legislation was developed and implemented with UN support. Service delivery was improved, and coverage was expanded, particularly for children and vulnerable households to strengthen coordination mechanisms and build capacity.
- The Government and partners for the purpose of strengthening social protection systems and enhance accountability were strengthened through technical support. Service delivery and governance within the sector was improved through capacity-building initiatives for monitoring and evaluation, grievance redress mechanisms, and program implementation.







## 2.3 Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda.

Innovative partnerships forged by UN Sierra Leone helped to advance the SDGs and leverage financing to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UNCT supported implementation of the country's Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) developed in 2020 to mobilise public and private resources to support realization of the MTNDP. The UN supported a range of initiatives, including Government's development of an SDG Investor Map with comprehensive market information, and intelligence in new areas of resilient food systems and renewable energy solutions to provide insights into the financial landscape and business opportunities for potential investors.

Going forward, the UNCT's efforts on collective partnerships and resource mobilization would be reinvigorated. Innovative funding streams and catalytic partnerships would also be explored, including South-South cooperation, green finance, diaspora finance, public-private-partnerships, and other non-financial partnerships, while also maximizing the impact of existing joint programmes under MPTFs such as the Human Security Fund and the PBF, as discussed in Section 2.5



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

### ➤ Operations Management Team (OMT)

The OMT focused on increasing operational efficiencies using LTAs for procurement of goods and services thereby reducing process time and cost and enhancing quality of products and services. This also ensured availability and steady supply of needed products for programme implementation. The OMT completed the annual review of the Business Operation Strategy for submission by 31 March and continues to monitor progress at monthly OMT meetings to ensure efficiency advances. Feasibility studies were carried out on the possibility of maintaining a strategic fuel reserve for UNCT, but this proposal could not be actualized due to high cost of storage. A review of the Daily Subsistence Allowance for UN personnel was initiated and is subject to review by full OMT. Also, OMT continued to review and assess administrative aspects of Joint UN Joint Medical Service operations to advise on budgeting and other matters.

Related to OMT is the Local Salary Survey Committee (LSSC). Training was organized for committee members and there was ad-hoc salary increment for national following a special survey. LSSC supported the Resident Coordinator in preparing a request for a special Local Staff Salary to be conducted in 2024.

### ➤ Human Rights

The UNCT, through the technical assistance of the Senior Human Rights Adviser, supported the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) to implement its mandate, including through strategic visioning and capacity building of the HRCSL. During the reporting year and recognizing that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC) is the lead Ministry on treaty body reporting and other regional and international human rights mechanisms, the UNCT supported the MFAIC to envision the framework for operationalising the National Reporting Mechanism (NRM) and ensure the preparation and regular submission of reports to all human rights mechanism, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). On the part of rights holders, UNCT enhanced the capacity of civil society organizations to monitor and report on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR), including the establishment and operationalization of the unprecedented ESCR Civil Society Network co-locating with the HRCSL. The UNCT also continued to mainstream human rights in the programmes and activities of UN Agencies/Funds/Programmes through the adoption and implementation of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) and the integration of human rights in the 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB) analysis and the Common Country Assessment (CCA).

### ➤ Gender Theme Group (GTG)

The GTG held regularly meetings to discuss relevant gender issues and how to implement activities together. The GTG spearheaded the coordination, planning and mobilization efforts of the UN system for both International Women's month; Commission on the Status of Women, International Day of the Girl Child as well as the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence providing technical support to the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, the UNCT and other development partners at the national and district level to plan and carry out relevant activities.

The GTG assessed 5 indicators in the UNCT SWAP Gender scorecard and produced the related report to upload onto relevant websites. Data on gender parity for staff across all UN agencies and categories was evaluated, to include collection of contract types and grades, and analysis of the information. Finally, GTG supported local CSO group to engage media on ending FGM/C and to encourage reporting of rights violations.

### ➤ Disability Inclusion Group (DIG)

DIG continued with the implementation of a UNPRPD-funded joint program, focusing on enhancing the capacity of national stakeholders to ensure disability-inclusive policies and systems and for the effective implementation of the CRPD and SDGs. The UN supported the training of 200 staff of the justice sector including the magistrates and the court-support staff, the SLP, the correctional services, the Legal Aid Board, the Human Rights Commission, and the Local Court system.

Work on a revised disability assessment system continued developing further details of the programme to pilot.

In addition, a workshop on the cost of social protection packages for persons with disabilities was held, allowing national stakeholders to begin costing potential benefit packages that would be available for those with a disability card. Activities to build the capacity of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities in areas such as advocacy gender mainstreaming in operations, inclusive partnership building, improved administrative functions, and support for SDG monitoring and accountability.

### ➤ Emergency Preparedness and Response Group (EPR)

The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) in Sierra Leone has received significant support from the United Nations in their efforts to reduce disaster risks, enhance preparedness, and respond effectively. The UN has been instrumental in providing technical assistance and capacity building to strengthen the country's ability to handle disasters. This support has been crucial in helping Sierra Leone develop and implement strategies to reduce disaster risks, improve preparedness at national and sub-national levels, and enhance coordination and response mechanisms.

During times of crisis, the UN has collaborated extensively with the government and NDMA to aid in different response efforts, such as registering impacted populations, delivering emergency assistance, and offering crucial services like protection and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) assistance to affected communities. The assistance provided by the UN has been instrumental in advancing Sierra Leone's recovery from disasters and in building resilience to future crises.

### ➤ Youth Thematic Team (YTT)

The UN Youth Advisory Group (UNYAG) in Sierra Leone comprising 12 youth (F:7; M:5) was onboarded to advise the UNCT on key youth issues and hold them accountable in line with the implementation of the Youth2030 Strategy. Focus areas for the UNYAG included, a) Agriculture and the use of natural resources, b) Climate change education, c) Health and wellbeing, and d) Upskilling and youth economic empowerment. The YTT and UNYAG jointly organized the International Youth Day 2023 under the theme "Green Skills for Youth: Towards a Sustainable World" which featured panel discussions with young people, government and partners, and a youth exhibition. Additionally, YTT and UNYAG engaged youth at the grassroots level through regional dialogues to gather priority areas and ideas to inform the next UNSDCF cycle.

YTT coordinated the participation of 12 young people (F:6; M:6) in YouthConnekt Africa Summit that was held in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2023. The Summit provided unique and inspiring experiences, chances to connect with investors, peers, industry leaders, entrepreneurs, mentors, institutions from other countries and potential collaborators, on a wide range of topics such as entrepreneurship, innovation, leadership, and technology. The UNDP-UNCDF joint programme was launched by the Minister of Youth Affairs and UN RC, to empower youth bike riders as agents of sustainable peace in the four regional headquarter towns in Sierra Leone.



## ► United Nations Network on Migration (UNNM)

In July 2023, the Network held a Youth and High-Level Event in observance of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons (TIP). The youth event was intended for young people to connect, engage and share in their communities varied and creative ways to mark their objection to human trafficking. For the high-level event, it was intended as an occasion to recommit A-TIP stakeholders to work together to advance our efforts to address trafficking in persons, with victims' voices leading the way. In 2023 the Government joined the GCM Champion Countries Initiative. The UNNM provided technical support to the government throughout the process. The Champion Country Initiative serves as a powerful voice to advocate and foster the implementation of the GCM. It would contribute to building a positive migration governance framework for the country.

In November 2023, 2 Government officials were supported through the UNNM to participate in the Informal Dialogue of GCM Peer Exchange Session in Accra, Ghana. The main objective of the session was to foster collaboration to effectively drive GCM implementation by exploring potential synergies on collective priorities and to bolster regional and inter-regional dialogues to promote cooperation on migration-related issues, including from a human rights perspective.

## ► M&E Group

M&E Group with support from RCO convened a series of meetings in 2023. Key discussion points in these included planning for the UNSDCF evaluations, and the planning for 2023 annual results reporting and agency level data collation. In 2023, UN M&E group supported with provision of technical inputs in the UNSDCF evaluation inception report. M&E group supported in the aspects agency level document gathering to inform the evaluation process. Other accomplishments of the UNM&E group are the support with the LNOB process and the CCA formulation.

## ► Joint HIV/AIDS Group

The Joint HIV/AIDS Group improved on joint planning and implementation for improved delivery of integrated, people-centred health services. The approach was to use innovative approaches, empower key and affected populations, and use evidence-based advocacy to reduce all forms of stigma and discrimination.

The country performance on the HIV treatment cascade has significantly improved. A partnership agreement letter was signed between the Judiciary of Sierra Leone and National HIV/AIDS Secretariat. This was aimed at addressing inequalities and social injustices through active engagement of the judiciary with key impacted populations (sex workers, drug users, and people/children living with HIV) with the view of removing structural barriers to enhance their access to HIV prevention and treatment services. Accelerated community-led responses ensured that communities of people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV, and key populations, were empowered, enabled, and resourced to lead HIV service delivery, advocate for, and enjoy their right to health through UN technical support and advocacy.

## ► Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Assault, and Harassment Group (PSEA)

The group developed the work plan for the next 2 years during the annual retreat of the PSEA focal points and reached a consensus on adapting a common PSEAH assessment tool for UN implementing partners. The work plan highlights the commitment of UNCT in Sierra Leone related to the prevention, reporting, and protection of survivors. Two special dedicated UNCT sessions on PSEAH were conducted.

During a UN Town Hall Meetings, a presentation was made on the sexual exploitation of sex workers and the WHO supported the provision and distribution of information materials (no excuse card and frequently asked questions and answers) on PSEAH to other UN agencies. WHO organized training and distributed PSEAH brochures to government counterparts, partners, and communities during the National Nutrition Fair held in Moyamba district in 2023.

During the year, the UNDP, UNFPA and the WFP trained their staff and partners on PSEAH, through webinars focused on PSEAH awareness raising, informing staff about the corporate reporting mechanisms, and through partner agreements included a clause on PSEAH. UNDP supported a project to conduct a PSEAH Risk Assessment and drew a mitigation plan while UNFPA undertook a PSEAH Assessment of all its Implementing Partners.

## ► United Nations Communication Group (UNCG)

The UNCG supported the promotion and gave visibility to international observances jointly celebrated by the UNCT, such as International Women's Day, Human Rights Day, International Youth Day, and UN Day. Partners and other stakeholders were mobilised through communication channels such as social media, traditional media, and public events, or awareness was raised to support UN Days' objectives. The UN website, Facebook page, and Twitter platforms were integral in Sierra Leone, with a steady rise in followers. Currently, its Twitter followership stands at 47,900 followers. Facebook has 28,000 followers. The UNCG also supported efforts to address misinformation and the use of social media, as well as developing a crisis communication plan during the election cycle. Staff members were provided with guidelines on how they can, or can not, communicate using social media to avoid the organisation's reputational risk.

Joint UN initiatives such as the Town Hall on Kush addiction (substance abuse) was widely promoted by official social media platforms of the respective agencies. IOM and UNFPA photographers supported coverage of events with UN agencies without such expertise in ensuring we delivered as one. The UNCG, led by its Chair, also met with the Minister of Information and Civic Education of the Government of Sierra Leone to explore joint initiatives and foster collaboration between the Ministry and the Group on civic education. Following that meeting, follow-up meetings were held between the Minister and the heads of agencies from some agencies.







# 2.5 Financial Overview and Resource Mobilisation

The UN Secretary General's PBF country portfolio includes six projects for a total budget of about USD 12,300,000, whose implementation started in 2022. The project on "Promote the creation of an enabling environment for the conduct of peaceful elections and the strengthening of social cohesion in Sierra Leone," complements a UNDP project on "Fostering Peaceful, Credible and Inclusive Elections in Sierra Leone 2022-2023", creating a catalytic effect of the PBF support in areas related with early warning/early response to conflicts, mitigation of misinformation/disinformation and hate speech in social media, among others.

2 projects "Youth in Politics and Peacebuilding", implemented by an international NGO working in Sierra Leone in partnership with local civil societies organizations, and "Empowering Youth Bike Riders as Sustainable Agents of Peace in Sierra Leone", implemented by UN Agencies, address the question of young people in the aspects of constructing capacities for peacebuilding and increasing opportunities for livelihoods creation.

The project on "Localization and Working-Together for Peace: Repositioning Women-focused CSOs for Sustainable Peace in Sierra Leone" promotes the Women, Peace and Security agenda by improving capacity of local women organizations to create networks and expand their messages beyond the confine of one single organization.

The cross-border project between Guinea and Sierra Leone "Building cross border peace and strengthening sustainable livelihoods of cattle herders and crop farmers in Sierra Leone

and Guinea" has introduced innovative approaches to the mitigation of the herders-farmers related conflicts and supported the promotion of climate-smart livelihoods. Likewise, the project on "Women for water for peace" has mitigated water-related conflicts, while creating livelihoods opportunity in an urban environment.

With a consistent annual investment and strategic support from the UN Peace and Development Adviser (PDA), PBF remains the most important Multi-donor Trust Fund for the work of the UNCT on peacebuilding.

The UNSDCF 2020-2024 is budgeted at USD 371.3 million, of which USD 103.8 million was available for of 2023. The cumulative amount of expenditure by year-end 2023 was USD 87 million reflecting a strong delivery rate of 84 percent.

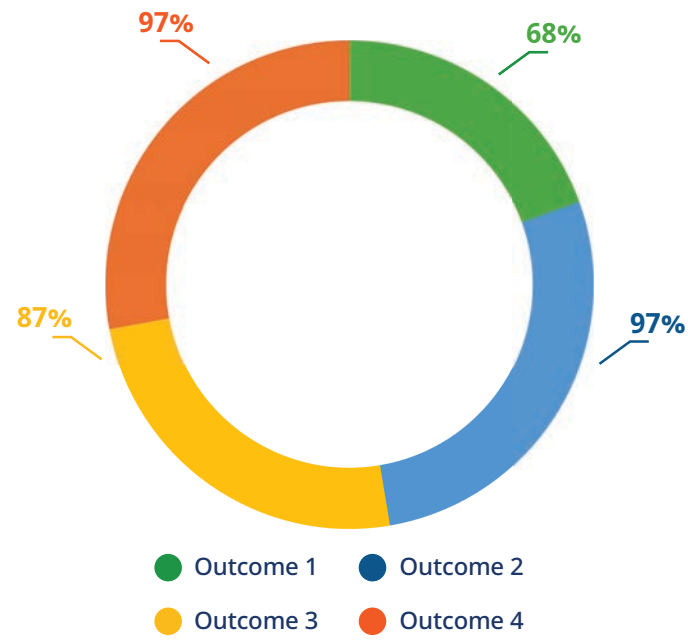
Guided by the UNSDCF Joint Financing and Resource Mobilization Strategy that was drafted and approved by UNCT in 2021, some previously awarded joint programmes continued in 2023, including a Joint SDG Fund programme on 'Domestic Resource Mobilization,' a programme on 'Improving Mining Sector Governance to Enhance Environmental Sustainability and Resilient Livelihoods' funded by UN Trust Fund for Human Security, and a joint programme on 'Disability Inclusion' funded by the UNPRPD MPTF. The UNCT also reached and advanced stage of discussion with partners on developing a joint programme to address violence against women and girls. This is expected to become active in 2024.

UNSDCF OUTCOME AREAS	TOTAL REQUIRED RESOURCES (\$)	AVAILABLE RESOURCES (\$)	EXPENDITURES (\$)	DELIVERY RATE (%) (EXPENDITURES VS. AVAILABLE RESOURCES)
Outcome 1: Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security, and Climate Resilience	25,223,916.00	30,374,917.00	20,847,229.00	68.6
Outcome 2: Transformational Governance	16,301,079.00	12,940,658.00	12,673,536.00	97.9
Outcome 3: Access to Basic Services	61,072,167.00	51,679,955.00	45,013,479.00	87.1
Outcome 4: Protection and Empowerment of the Most Vulnerable	10,371,255.00	8,950,551.00	8,792,397.00	98.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>112,968,417.00</b>	<b>103,946,081.00</b>	<b>87,326,641.00</b>	<b>84.0</b>

SOURCE OF FUNDS	AGENCIES / OTHER	PROGRAM TITLE	APPROXIMATE FUNDING
Peace Building Fund Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative	Christian Aid Ireland	'Uman, Land En Kol At' (Women's Land for Peace)- Women Lead Transformative Pathways to Peace Through Natural Resources Management.	\$1.9 million
Peace Building Fund Cross-border project Liberia-Sierra Leone	IOM/WFP Liberia and Sierra Leone	Strengthen social cohesion and border security between Liberia and Sierra Leone	\$4.0 million
Peace Building Fund Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative	UNDP / UNCDF	Empowering Youth Bike Riders as Sustainable Agents of Peace in Sierra Leone	\$1.9 million
Peace Building Fund Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative	UN WOMEN / UNDP / World Vision	Localization and Working-Together for Peace: Repositioning Women focused CSOs for Sustainable Peace in Sierra Leone	\$2 million
Peace Building Fund Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative	Catholic Relief Services	Youth in Politics and Peacebuilding	\$1.9 million
Peace Building Fund Country proposal 2022 (fast track process in support to the election)	UNDP / UNICEF	Promote the creation of an enabling environment for the conduct of peaceful elections and the strengthening of social cohesion in Sierra Leone	\$3 million
Peace Building Fund Cross-border project Guinea-Sierra Leone	WFP / IOM Sierra Leone and Guinea	Building cross border peace and strengthening sustainable livelihoods of cattle herders & crop farmers in Sierra Leone and Guinea.	\$4.55 million
Peace Building Fund Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative	UNCDF / ILO	Women4Water & Peace in Freetown	\$1.5 million
Peace Building Fund Peacebuilding Recovery Facility Country proposal 2020	FAO / UNDP / UNFPA	Empowering youth at risk as resources for sustaining peace and community resilience in Tonkolili & Kenema districts in Sierra Leone	\$ 3 million
UN Trust Fund for Human Security	UNDP / FAO / UNCDF	Improving Mining Sector Governance to Enhance Environmental Sustainability and Resilient Livelihoods	\$300,000



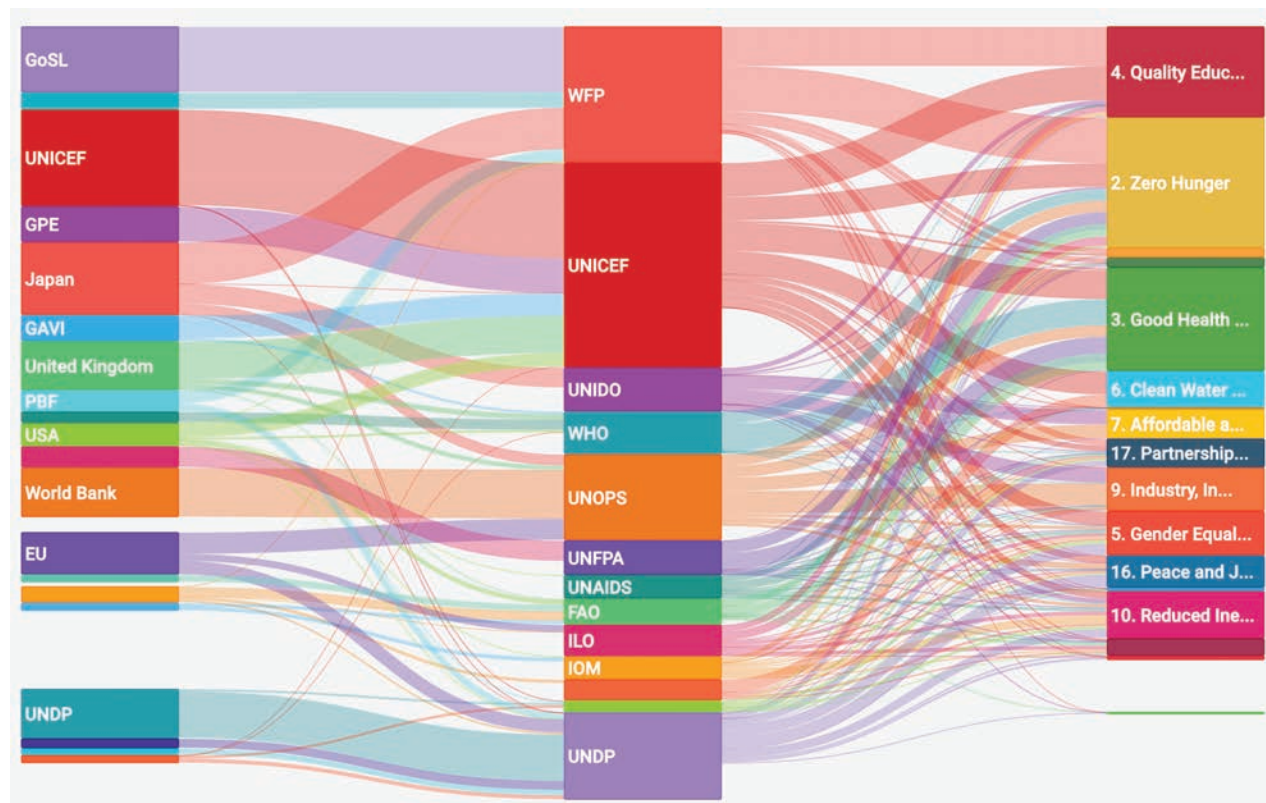
## RESOURCES USED PER OUTCOME



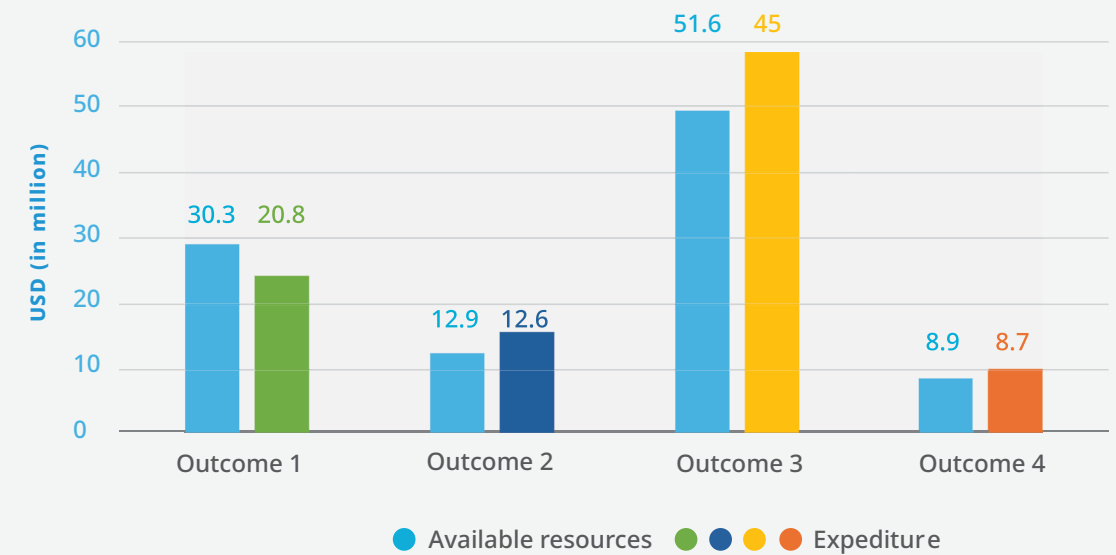
## AVAILABLE RESOURCES \$103.8 MILLION



## LEVERAGING UN INVESTMENTS TO ADVANCE THE SDGS

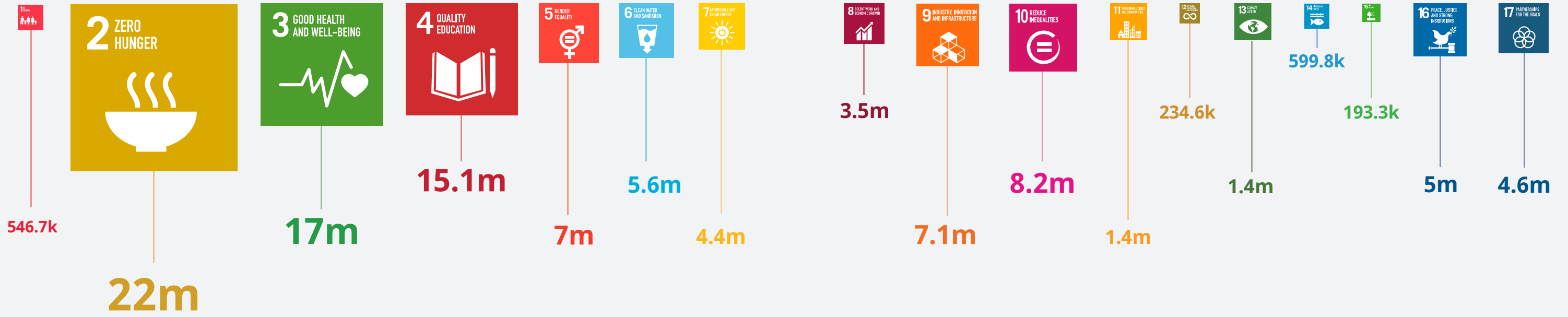


## 2023 UNSDCF FINANCIAL BY OUTCOME AREAS





2023 AVAILABLE RESOURCES: \$103.8 MILLION





# 3.0 UNCT Key Areas for 2024

In 2024, UNCT will focus primarily on the following priorities:

1. Supporting national SDG implementation, results tracking, and monitoring mechanisms.
2. Leaving No One Behind, furthering Human Rights and ensuring Gender Equality.
3. Advancing business innovation within the UNCT through the Business Operations Strategy.
4. Engaging key stakeholders on climate action and for implementation of national roadmaps for transforming food and education systems.
5. Preparing the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2025 - 2030), including stakeholder consultations and regular engagement with government.
6. Developing a strong results framework and impactful workplans to clearly articulate the priorities and implementation modalities of the new Cooperation Framework.
7. Supporting mechanisms to advance political unity established following the 2023 elections.



In designing the new Cooperation Framework, emphasis will be placed on moving the country towards achievement of the 6 SDG investment pathways: (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. Findings in the Leave No One Behind study prepared as part of the 2023 Common Country Analysis will also inform priorities and activities under the new Cooperation Framework. Gender equality and women's empowerment will continue to be proactively mainstreamed in UN programs and advocated at the national level, along with human rights and disability inclusion.

A Resource Mobilization Strategy and Communications Strategy will be prepared to accompany the new Cooperation Framework. Finally, the full Common Country Analysis prepared in 2023 to inform the new Cooperation Framework will be updated to reflect new developments.







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