

SIERRA LEONE'S MEDIUM-TERM NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2019–2023

EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

A New Direction for Improving
People's Lives through Education,
Inclusive Growth, and Building
a Resilient Economy

VOLUME I

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ACRONYMS

DFS	digital financial services
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
GDP	gross domestic product
GST	Goods and Services Tax
ICT	information and communications technology
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDAs	ministries, departments, and agencies
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoPED	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
MTNDP	Medium-term National Development Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
NSS	National Statistical System
PFM	public financial management
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PWDs	persons with disabilities
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations

FOREWORD

Message from the President

My Government has successfully concluded the preparation of Sierra Leone's Medium-term National Development Plan (2019–2023). We consulted at least two million people directly, both locally and internationally, over a period of seven months. We got unprecedented participation from our development partners, government institutions, local communities, the private sector, civil society, the community of persons with disabilities, local councils, members of my Government, the civil service, local councils, non-state actors, the international community, trade unions, all political parties, Parliament, academia, and many more constituencies. Respondents identified and discussed what they perceive as critical for the immediate and long-term development of the country. The plan therefore captures the aspirations of a broad spectrum of Sierra Leoneans at home and abroad.



This National Development Plan is a compilation of the various components of the development agenda we have mapped out as a nation for the immediate and long-term goals of our development aspirations. It outlines the vision of my Government. It underlies the promise I have made to the people of Sierra Leone and our determination and commitment to transform this country from a fragile state into a stable and prosperous democracy. My Government provided the funds for the development of this plan to underscore both national ownership and the importance we have attached to this process.

Human Capital Development is at the centre of our new Medium-term National Development Plan. It is the most fundamental pathway to achieving middle-income status and sustainable development for the country in the not too distant future. We recognize that this policy resonates with the renewed global focus on promoting Human Capital Development in least developed countries. At annual meetings held in Asia, the World Bank recently declared special investment support in Human Capital Development.

In addition to prioritizing Human Capital Development as the first policy cluster in the new plan, my Government has identified other critical results areas such as Economic Diversification, Governance and Accountability for Results, Infrastructure, and Economic Competitiveness. The policy clusters are predicated on a carefully articulated implementation strategy and a comprehensive Monitoring,

Evaluation, and Learning Framework. A robust learning and follow-up arrangement will enable us to understand how we will be progressing on delivering the plan, indicating important milestones achieved and mapping out lessons learned in the process.

Through the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, my Government has shifted from the traditional Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper model of orienting planning to people-centred, long-term development thinking in line with regional (African Union) and global (Sustainable Development Goals) planning perspectives. We have aligned our new Medium-term National Development Plan with these regional and global frameworks accordingly.

I wish to thank all those who have contributed to the preparation of this plan. This plan may not have been completed without their active participation. I expect the plan to serve as a communication and resource mobilization strategy guide for the socio-economic transformation of Sierra Leone. It will guide the operations of our development partners, non-state actors, and private sector investment, as well as the contributions of the public and general citizenry to nation building.

It is my fervent hope and expectation that this Medium-term National Development Plan will serve as an effective framework of engagement for all development actors around the common objective of promoting the transformation of Sierra Leone. The Medium-term Plan lays out a strong basis for the formulation of a focused Long-term National Development Plan for promoting sustainable development.

His Excellency Julius Maada Bio
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

PREFACE

Sierra Leone's development trajectory since independence in 1961 has not been straightforward. The country has experienced challenging periods of internal conflict, military interventions, disease outbreaks, and natural disasters. In all these challenging times, the people have demonstrated their incredible ability to recover from hard times and set their sights on a brighter future.



When our Government of the Sierra Leone People's Party took over the mantle of political leadership in April 2018, we were under no illusion about the magnitude of challenges that confronts us as a country. As a Government, we inherited a weak economy with rising inflation, a poor education system, a crippled health-care system, rising youth unemployment, struggling growth and real sectors, weak social protection systems, declining private sector growth, and pervasive corruption in the public sector, among other critical challenges. As a result, our Government is faced with the unprecedented challenge of resetting the socio-economic and political jigsaw of a stressed state.

Fully aware of the checkered past of our beloved country and the high expectations of our people to see a positive socio-economic transformation in a new direction, our Government has made a strong commitment to build an inclusive and resilient society that is anchored on democratic governance and the rule of law. Achieving this goal requires, among other things, the careful crafting of a national development agenda that reflects the views, aspirations, and vision of every Sierra Leonean.

The basic content of the new Medium-term National Development Plan, titled 'Education for Development', is derived from the development vision of the President, His Excellency Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, as evident in his maiden address to the Sierra Leone Parliament on 10 May 2018 and his party's New Direction Manifesto. We also consulted other political parties and incorporated their views. Another important source of information was the nationwide consultation exercise, which captured the various development needs and aspirations of ordinary Sierra Leoneans across the country. However, the content of the final document gained traction from the contributions made by the various ministries, departments, and agencies.

Through sectoral engagements, town hall meetings, media engagements, and social media, the plan preparation team at the NDP Secretariat, established within the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, succeeded in reaching over two million Sierra Leoneans who individually and collectively contributed significantly in setting the broad national development agenda, as well as identifying critical development priorities.

At the core of Sierra Leone's development aspiration is its people. Therefore, human capital development, especially the provision of free quality education for all, constitutes the main goal of our Government. This will be achieved in the context of a strong and diversified economy and with a population that is effectively managed to enhance the demographic dividend for growth and prosperity.

Good and accountable governance underpins our drive for infrastructural development and economic competitiveness. Furthermore, we recognize that cross-cutting issues, including those related to women, children, persons with disabilities, social protection, and climate change mitigation, must be addressed to achieve sustainable development. Therefore, these issues constitute the key clusters in the plan.

One unique feature of this National Development Plan that distinguishes it from previous plans is its emphasis on implementation and result tracking. An entire cluster is dedicated to financing, actor mapping, and defining roles and responsibilities in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of programmes outlined in the plan, among others. There is an accompanying results framework, which provides parameters for implementation and measuring progress.

Above all, these clusters are aligned to regional and international development agendas, including the Africa Union Agenda 2063, the g7+ Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Success in the implementation of this Medium-term National Development Plan 2019–2023 will depend primarily on the efforts and sacrifices of all of us, the citizens of Sierra Leone. As a Government, we are aware of our role of mobilizing funds and engendering public trust in the institutions that are responsible for implementing programmes in this plan. However, we want to challenge every Sierra Leonean to take this document as their own and make a conscious effort to contribute to its successful implementation.

The point has hitherto been made that the current needs of Sierra Leone are enormous, and it is expected that these development needs and the aspirations of our people will continue to rise even beyond 2039. As such, while we will not shy away from embracing our own responsibilities, donor support will remain necessary to successfully attain the goals outlined in this document. However, the fact that the Ministry of Finance provided over 95 percent of the funds needed for the preparation of this plan is a strong demonstration of the country's potential and willingness to champion its development course.

At this point, I would like to express my profound gratitude to our development partners, whose technical contribution to the process has been immense. I want to also express my appreciation to all those who contributed in one way or the other to the elaboration of this Medium-term National Development Plan 2019–2023, including officials from various ministries, leaders at all decentralized levels, the private sector, and civil society. The major challenge is to transform this blueprint into reality for the benefit of all Sierra Leoneans and the land that we love, our Sierra Leone.

Nabeela Farida Tunis (Mrs)
Minister for Planning and Economic Development

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Medium-term National Development Plan (2019–2023) has received tremendous inputs from numerous stakeholders and has benefited from the contribution of many people. Much appreciation goes to H. E. The President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, for providing the needed leadership, strategic direction, and guidance throughout the people-centred process.

Gratitude is owed to the Vice President, Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, for his unwavering support and interest in the process.

The untiring leadership and technical perspective into the drafting of the plan provided by the Minister of Planning and Economic Development, Mrs. Nabeela Farida Tunis, is deeply appreciated. Her focus, relentlessness, and tenacity were pivotal in getting things done. Her deputy, Dr. Robert Chakanda, and his efforts are also recognized.

Appreciation is extended to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Jacob Jusu Saffa, for providing the financial expertise and general ideas that were critical for logical consistency and the costing of the plan.

To cluster and sector members, non-state actors, other development partners, and all other persons who contributed technical inputs to the development of plan – the sustained engagement and critical review of the various drafts developed during the process was commendable.

The efforts of everyone who in diverse ways worked assiduously and contributed to the entire process by making their voices heard were notably helpful. From the government ministers and members of government entities, including embassies and high commissions, to representatives of civil society groups, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, development partners, women's groups, youth groups, trade unions, schools, academia, research institutions, persons with disabilities, all political parties, local councils, the communities, and the diaspora, the level of interest and participation was outstanding.

UNDP is appreciated for providing strategic and policy advisory services to the process as well as the financial support for the printing of the plan. The World Bank's technical assistance in drafting background papers on poverty and growth diagnostics of the country contributed immensely and was equally appreciated.

The commitment demonstrated by all staff of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development was laudable. Special thanks to Sheka Bangura, Prince Gaima, Momo Turay, and Kordzo Sedegah for their cooperation and dedication to the people's plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. General overview

The Government of Sierra Leone's new Medium-term National Development Plan (MTNDP) 2019–2023 has been founded on a strong political commitment to deliver development results that would improve the welfare of Sierra Leone's citizens.

The plan charts a clear path towards 2023 en route to the goal of achieving middle-income status by 2039 through inclusive growth that is sustainable and leaves no one behind. For the next five years, the **Free Quality School Education Programme** is the government's flagship programme to provide a solid base to enhance human capital development and to facilitate the transformation of the economy.

Four key national goals are identified – emerging from the consultative process and grounded in the developmental state model – for this plan period.

- **Goal 1:** A diversified, resilient green economy
- **Goal 2:** A nation with educated, empowered, and healthy citizens capable of realizing their fullest potential
- **Goal 3:** A society that is peaceful, cohesive, secure, and just
- **Goal 4:** A competitive economy with a well-developed infrastructure

B. Key lessons that inform the new plan

Prioritization of needs is critical to the effective management of development expenditure and the achievement of planned outcomes. Many projects in previous plans could not be achieved within the planned time frame because of changing and sometimes conflicting priorities. Many projects required longer time for consolidating solid foundations. The nationwide consultations for this new five-year development plan have consistently recommended a **long-term plan** for the country, from which future medium-term plans will be derived. The government therefore is proceeding to prepare a Long-term National Development Plan in tandem with the MTNDP.

Sector coordination was also weak in previous plans, leading to duplication of some functions and gaps in others. This was coupled with substantial off-plan and off-budget spending, along with weak monitoring and evaluation. Other lessons include the need to increase the alignment of the National Development Plan with global and regional frameworks such as the Mano River Union Strategy, the African Union Agenda 2063, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the New Deal Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals. All these frameworks are critical for strengthened development cooperation and financing for Sierra Leone's development.

C. Principles guiding the formulation and implementation of the new plan

The principles that guided the formulation of the new plan, and which will underpin its implementation, include the following: national inclusiveness and ownership of the process, involving participation of all political parties; sustained political commitment; women and youth mainstreaming; international development cooperation; strong sector coordination; domestic resource mobilization, combined with the prudent use of resources; and management for development results.

D. Plan preparation process

The plan was drafted with the most intensive and extensive consultations in the history of Sierra Leone's development planning. While setting priorities and validating the plan, the estimated outreach involved 2 million people. This included consultations through town hall meetings, focus group discussions, public engagements in learning institutions, and consultations with civil servants, local councillors, district and municipal administrators, civil society organizations, private institutions, trade unions, political parties, development partners, persons with disabilities, market women, the elderly, traditional authorities, religious leaders, those in detention centres, and those in the diaspora, among others. Radio, TV, and social media platforms such as Twitter, WhatsApp, and Facebook were utilized to reach a wide array of citizens.

E. Socio-economic indicators and the situation of the macroeconomy

While some laudable efforts were made in the past to promote development, some overwhelming challenges remain. Six-month sample data from the 2018 Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey reveals that income poverty is still high, especially in rural areas. The overall poverty headcount ratio of the country is 57 percent, while the population in extreme poverty is 10.8 percent. Freetown accounts for the lowest poverty rate (18.5 percent), while other urban areas are estimated at 41.2 percent. In the rural areas, poverty levels are 72.4 percent.

In 2017, the incidence of multidimensional poverty (the proportion of people identified as multidimensionally poor) was 64.8 percent. This means that almost two-thirds of the population in Sierra Leone is identified as multidimensionally poor.

The country's annual average population growth rate between 1985 and 2004 was 1.8 percent and increased sharply between 2004 and 2015 to 3.2 percent. This led to a 40 percent increase in total population, from about 5 million in 2004 to more than 7 million in 2018. At this rate, by 2026 the total population will be at least 10 million people. This calls for policies that take advantage of the growing population and address the challenges of the youth bulge.

A growth diagnostic confirms that the economy has remained broadly undiversified and susceptible to fluctuations. It has remained especially vulnerable to external shocks, as in the case of

the twin crises of the Ebola disease outbreak and the iron ore price decline of 2014–2015 (during which gross domestic product growth contracted to negative 20.5 percent in 2015 from a growth rate of 4.6 percent in 2014).

Agriculture has continued to make up the largest share of gross domestic product (GDP), estimated at 55.1 percent in 2017, followed by services at 36.6 percent, and industry at 9.3 percent. Aggregate spending of the economy mainly comes from private consumption and remains larger than what the whole economy produces. Economic growth has generally been driven by export-led capital-intensive mining over the last eight years. Sustainable growth will require de-concentration of productivity growth in capital-intensive industries such as mining, with its limited capacity to generate jobs, and will emphasize raising productivity in sectors where most of the labour force is found (e.g. agriculture).

Domestic revenue averaged around 12.5 percent in the last decade, well below the African average of 18 percent. Yet public expenditure has been increasing, driving up the fiscal deficit from 1.9 percent of GDP in 2013 to an average of 11.4 percent in 2016 and 2017 (including grants). Additionally, the external debt stock increased from US\$1.04 billion in 2013 to \$1.51 billion in 2017 and further to \$1.53 billion in June 2018.

F. Macroeconomic framework to guide plan implementation 2019–2023

The government is determined to maintain a stable macroeconomic environment, and to this end will pursue key macroeconomic targets

during the 2019 to 2023 period. These include the following:

- Maintaining single-digit inflation
- Reducing the budget deficit (including grants) to not more than 3 percent of GDP, with domestic revenue collection of at least 20 percent, while public expenditures are kept within budgetary limits of around 24 percent of GDP
- The wage bill not to exceed 6 percent
- Reducing the current account deficit (including official grants) to an average of around 11.5 percent
- Foreign exchange reserves built to a minimum of three months of import cover
- Public debt maintained at a sustainable threshold of not more than 70 percent in nominal terms and 55 percent in present-value terms, while external debt will not exceed 40 percent of GDP in present-value terms

Policies and actions to achieve these targets include pursuing stringent short- to medium-term revenue mobilization measures; expenditure management and control; measures to manage and control domestic capital expenditure; monetary and exchange rate policy management; financial sector policy advancement; and public debt management.

G. Policy clusters and actions

Against the above background, the new MTNDP (2019–2023) is organized around eight policy clusters and several sub-clusters (or broad result areas), which are presented below.

Policy Cluster 1 – Human capital development. Systemic country diagnostic studies suggest that Sierra Leone could only sustainably transform its economy and achieve middle-income status with optimal poverty reduction if the government adequately invests in the country's human capital. Beyond its natural resources, the nation's most substantial asset is its young and dynamic population, which, like natural resources, must be properly developed to deliver shared economic growth and meaningful poverty reduction and prosperity for all.

Under this cluster, the Government of Sierra Leone will focus on the following broad result areas: 1.1 Ensuring free quality basic and senior secondary education; 1.2 Strengthening tertiary and higher education; 1.3 Accelerating health-care delivery; 1.4 Enhancing environmental sanitation and hygiene; 1.5 Increasing social protection; and 1.6 Advancing housing and land management.

Policy Cluster 2 – Diversifying the economy and promoting growth. To effectively transform the economy, ensure increased domestic financing of programmes, and build resilience against external shocks, the government is committed to economic diversification. Promoting productivity and capturing more of the value chain of its products underscores the strategy in this cluster. A case in point is agriculture, which accounts for about 50 percent of GDP; however, productivity in the sector has been low. In the case of mining, while labour productivity is relatively high, the capacity to generate jobs and the sector's linkage to the rest of the economy has been limited.

Under this cluster, the government will focus on the following broad result areas: 2.1 Improving productivity and commercialization of the agricultural sector; 2.2 Improving productivity and sustainable management of fisheries and

the marine sector; 2.3 Revitalizing the tourism sector; 2.4 Revamping the manufacturing and services sector; 2.5 Improving the management of oil and gas exploration and production; 2.6 Improving the management of mineral resources; and 2.7 Promoting an inclusive rural economy.

Policy Cluster 3 – Infrastructure and economic competitiveness. Promoting infrastructure and economic competitiveness is another critical enabler of socio-economic development and transformation. Here the role of the private sector is crucial, hence the emphasis on private sector promotion.

Under this cluster, the government will focus on the following broad result areas: 3.1 Accelerating the provision of energy supplies; 3.2 Transforming the transportation systems; 3.3 Improving the water infrastructure systems; 3.4 Improving information and communication technologies; and 3.5 Fostering private sector growth.

Policy Cluster 4 – Governance and accountability for results. This cluster is a leading precondition for the effective and efficient delivery of the planned outcomes in the new MTNDP. That is, achieving the desired results for Sierra Leonean society can only be guaranteed if the state is able to secure the requisite political buy-in and commitment and apply fairly the appropriate legal and regulatory institutions and property rights as part of enforcing the rule of law. Success will require the active participation of grass-roots communities and the general public.

Under this cluster, the government will focus on the following broad result areas: 4.1 Advancing political development for national cohesion; 4.2 Fighting corruption and illicit financial flows; 4.3 Strengthening public financial

management; 4.4 Strengthening audit services; 4.5 Promoting inclusive and accountable justice institutions; 4.6 Building public trust in state institutions; 4.7 Strengthening public service delivery; 4.8 Strengthening decentralization, local governance, and rural development; 4.9 Strengthening security institutions; and 4.10 Strengthening external relations for integration.

Policy Cluster 5 – Empowering women, children, adolescents, and persons with disability. Pursuing special policies under this cluster recognizes the issue of gender and the role of vulnerable groups in guaranteeing inclusiveness and empowerment. This cannot be overemphasized, as women constitute more than 50 percent of the national population, while the need for adequate investment in children from pre-primary onward has become more crucial than ever, given the weak state of human capital development and fluctuating economic growth in the country. Low investment in the talents and capabilities of persons with disability can also lead to an inability to unleash the potential of the economy for inclusive development.

Under this cluster, the government will focus on the following broad result areas: 5.1 Empowering women; 5.2 Increasing investment in children and adolescents; and 5.3 Increasing investment in persons with disabilities.

Policy Cluster 6 – Youth employment, sports, and migration. Sierra Leone boasts of a youthful population (the population below 15 years of age is estimated at 42 percent), and providing adequate employment and other socio-economic opportunities has become ever more crucial. Livelihood difficulties and high rates of unemployment have resulted in increased migration from rural to urban areas, as well as from urban areas to other countries.

Sporting activities, which have been neglected for years, present opportunities for creating jobs, sustaining peace, and building social and national cohesion, hence curtailing migration.

Under this cluster, the government will focus on the following result areas: 6.1 Increasing youth employment and empowerment; 6.2 Revitalizing sporting activities across the country; and 6.3 Addressing migration challenges.

Policy Cluster 7 – Addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience. Sierra Leone experienced recurring environmental disasters and viral tragedies during the last five years, with telling macroeconomic and general development consequences. This suggests the need to rethink public policy regarding management of the environment and natural resources and strengthening disaster early warning and response systems for minimized vulnerabilities and increased national resilience.

Under this cluster, the government will focus on the following broad result areas: 7.1 Building national environmental resilience; 7.2 Strengthening forest management and wetland conservation; and 7.3 Improving disaster management governance.

Policy Cluster 8 – Means of implementation. This cluster presents the mechanisms set to deliver the results of the MTNDP. As an improvement on the implementation arrangement for previous plans, and drawing lessons from earlier plans, this new plan benchmarks the arrangements for delivering results in a comprehensive indicator-based results framework and policy matrix.

Three sets of issues are presented under this cluster: financing the plan; the governance

arrangements for supervising and monitoring plan implementation; and the projects and policy measures to be carried out. The specific actions and mechanisms are as follows: delivering robust governance structures for supervising plan implementation (including the establishment of a Ministerial Oversight Committee; sustaining government–donor dialogue; and revitalizing Sector Working Groups and District Working Groups); pursuing a sound resource mobilization strategy (including enhancing domestic resource mobilization; strengthening relationships with existing development partners and expanding the partner base; exploring public–private partnerships and dialogue; and pursuing assistance under the Millennium Challenge Corporation); mitigating risks; instituting a robust monitoring and evaluation and performance management system that is underpinned by a comprehensive indicator framework and policy/programme matrix aligned to the indicators and targets of the SDGs and the African Union Agenda 2063; and strengthening data, information, and statistical systems.

H. Cost of the plan

The total estimated cost of the new plan is US\$8.15 billion for a period of five years (2019–2023). This is distributed across the eight policy clusters and sub-clusters. Using the fiscal projections provided by the Ministry of Finance for the 2019 to 2023 period, including discretionary and non-discretionary expenditures and direct development (domestic and foreign) financing of US\$6.60 billion, there is a financing gap of US\$1.55 billion.

To boost domestic revenue, the following opportunities will be explored: introduce a lottery

system to encourage greater compliance by taxpayers; work with Tax Inspectors Without Borders to strengthen the auditing of large taxpayers; revise and update levies to cover costs and reflect international standards; put in place structures to issue and manage diaspora bonds; and evaluate the potential for investing pension fund assets in infrastructure.

I. Mitigating risks to plan implementation

The foreseen risks to the implementation of the plan include the following.

a) Susceptibility of the economy to shocks
– A continuous slump in the price of iron ore (the main export commodity of Sierra Leone) could delay the resumption of iron ore mining and hence the implementation of planned projects; a further rise in the international prices of petroleum products would have implications for domestic inflation, given the full pass-through into domestic pump prices; delays in the disbursement of budget support and other earmarked donor resources would have negative implications for financing priority programmes in the plan; continued exposure of the country to climate change–related environmental challenges and the rising urban population (with limited housing) would have economic effects; and the expanding youth population poses serious risks for social stability.

These risks can be mitigated through the following: establishing effective systems of alert; aggressively seeking other development partners; implementing planned macroeconomic policies; increasing capacity for domestic resource mobilization; and ensuring the effective delivery of planned development projects,

paying special attention to Policy Cluster 6 on youth empowerment, sports, and migration and Policy Cluster 7 on addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience.

b) Data and information availability – Data and information are fragmented across the various sectors, and it is often difficult to ascertain their credibility and relevance.

A mitigating strategy is to strengthen and capacitate Statistics Sierra Leone so that it can respond to the data and information needs of the country through a coordinated and concerted approach with the various stakeholders.

c) Inadequate capacity of ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) – The capacity within and across MDAs is weak and mostly underdeveloped, and therefore they are not performing to expected standards. This has huge implications on the time frame for the completion of tasks, as well as the quality of service delivery.

An ideal way to mitigate this is to build the capacity of the MDAs beyond the normal civil service system, which at the moment is restrictive. Recruitment needs to be open and flexible for bespoke positions, especially professional and evolving professional fields such as information and communications technology (ICT).

d) Governance architecture – The current government inherited a bloated governance system of parallel structures with overlapping functions. The legal instruments, especially the Acts that created the MDAs, are conflicting and cumbersome, and include gaps that often create rivalry and unhealthy competition, particularly in resource mobilization.

These risks can be mitigated through effective monitoring systems that combine continuous beneficiaries' assessments with technical evaluations, to enable timely corrective action at the policy level. Key factors that would ensure success are transparency, information dissemination, and full participation of all stakeholders.

PART 1: CONTEXT

1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the conflict in 2002, the Government of Sierra Leone has been producing National Development Plans (NDPs), otherwise referred to as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), beginning with an Interim PRSP for 2002–2003, followed by a National Recovery Strategy implemented in 2003–2004. The first fully fledged PRSP was the National Programme for Food Security, Job Creation and Good Governance 2005–2007, which was to set the stage for a stable society with a focus on peace consolidation. The Agenda for Change 2008–2012 was to improve the socio-economic condition of the people and lay the foundation for sustained growth. The third PRSP, Agenda for Prosperity 2013–2018, built on the successes of the Agenda for Change and was supposed to continue the transformation of the economy and accelerate growth towards a middle-income status while improving the lives of all citizens.

This Medium-term National Development Plan (2019–2023), the fourth in the series, is grounded on renewed optimism as the country's democracy matures and public participation in development processes attains new heights. This plan represents the first five years of a 20-year long-term national commitment to a vision for a middle-income country, with an appropriate governance framework that would be based on inclusivity, unity, and the rule of law, and with a diversified economy that is resilient, offering jobs to all, and taking account of the special needs of women, children, and

vulnerable groups. In essence, the MTNDP seeks to build a united, peaceful, progressive, dynamic, confident, enterprising, and happy nation where the people have access to jobs, food, education, and health services, and where there is equal justice and equal opportunity for all.

At the core of the plan is the vision of Sierra Leone as a middle-income country by 2039. The realization of this vision requires a long-term plan of 20 years, allowing for the application of coherent programmes within a framework of policies and legislation that are consistently enforced. The completion of such a long-term plan involves the projection of different scenarios based on in-depth studies and consultations, revisiting currently accepted assumptions of the country's growth trajectory and more robust methods for addressing regional issues. This must be done if the country is to emerge from what appears to be a low-level income trap, where signs of apparent progress are followed by dramatic reversals. The first year of this plan is therefore to be implemented in tandem with the formulation/finalization of the 20-year plan.

In this first five-year period, the current government's policies will guide the country towards the vision through a strategy with priorities and programmes that are consistent with regional and international development agendas such as the African Union Agenda 2063, the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development,

including the Sustainable Development Goals, and the New Deal Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals. Here special mention must be made of the Mano River Union, which provides the space within the Economic Community of West African States subregion for wider growth and development initiatives. It must be emphasized that the programmes and policies proposed in this MTNDP period will lay the foundation for longer-term goals in the 20-year plan period. Furthermore, the wide and extensive preparatory process for this plan has allowed the capture of the development aspirations of all political parties and sectors of Sierra Leone. This is to address one of the key constraints limiting progress in the past: coherence, continuity, and consistency in development strategy and programmes.

For the first five years, the Free Quality School Education Programme is the government's flagship programme to provide a solid base not only to enhance human capital development, but to facilitate the transformation of other sectors. Four key national goals are identified, emerging from the consultative process and grounded in the developmental state model, for this plan period. The goals are as follows:

Goal 1: A diversified, resilient green economy

Goal 2: A nation with educated, empowered, and healthy citizens capable of realizing their fullest potential

Goal 3: A society that is peaceful, cohesive, secure, and just

Goal 4: A competitive economy with a well-developed infrastructure

Seven policy clusters were generated from the extensive nationwide consultations, and they incorporate the priorities of government

as agreed during the ministerial round table organized by the government. An additional cluster on implementation is included. The clusters are as follows:

1. Human capital development
2. Diversifying the economy and promoting growth
3. Infrastructure and economic competitiveness
4. Governance and accountability for results
5. Empowering women, children, and persons with disabilities
6. Youth employment, sports, and migration
7. Addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience
8. Means of implementation

The strategy to achieve the goals of the MTNDP revolves around transforming the economy, promoting diversification, stimulating growth sectors, taking into account sub-regional opportunities, investing in critical infrastructure to facilitate private sector expansion, and providing disciplined, effective, efficient, and accountable leadership underpinned by respect for the supremacy of the rule of law. These focus areas together constitute the new development agenda pursued by the Government of Sierra Leone.

There are six guiding principles of the Medium-term National Development Plan:

1. Disciplined leadership
2. Efficient and prudent management of resources

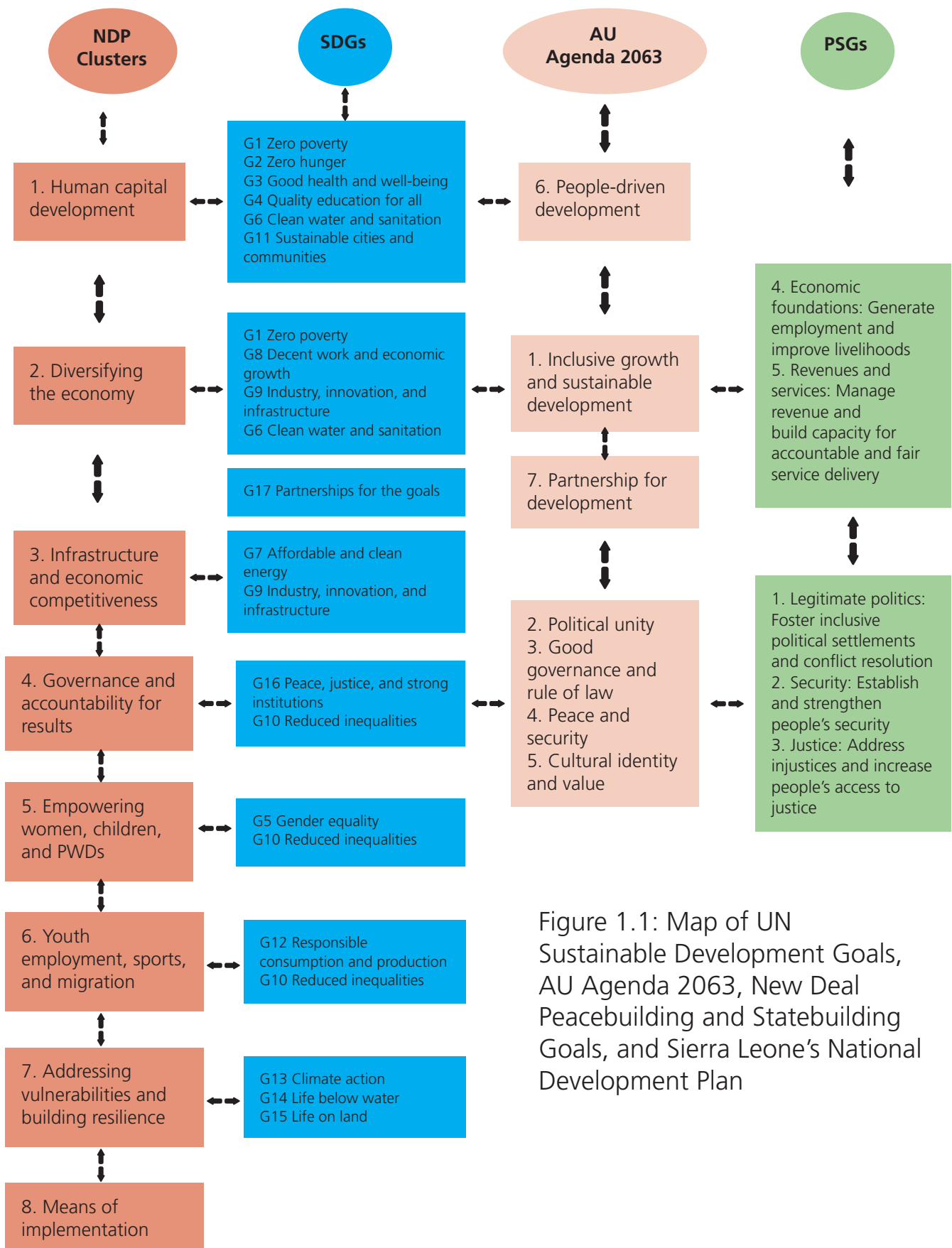


Figure 1.1: Map of UN Sustainable Development Goals, AU Agenda 2063, New Deal Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals, and Sierra Leone's National Development Plan

3. Participation and inclusiveness of all stakeholders in the development process
4. Local ownership and content, with the people of Sierra Leone at the centre of development
5. Coordination and partnerships for development among all actors in the economy
6. Results-oriented implementation of the plan to ensure accountability

The MTNDP is aligned to regional and international agendas, as diagrammatically represented in Figure 1.1.

The selection of these goals and the derived clusters, associated outcomes, strategies, and programmes collectively represent the government's agenda for development. The Theory of Change is illustrated in Figure 1.2.

The Theory of Change describes the pathways through which the outcomes achieved within each of the clusters will lead to the national goals that in turn will produce the vision.

The vision encompasses what the society desires to become over a period of time. In the next five years, the achievement of the four goals collectively will translate the vision into reality. It must be emphasized that the goals are interconnected and not isolated from each other. For example, the goal of a society with high levels of education and education-enabled development is not only a goal in its own right, but is a precondition for attaining full potential in each of the other goals.

At the outcome level, the cross-cutting nature of many policy actions is evident, but so is the danger of overlaps. To illustrate, the outcomes

in the cluster on governance and accountability for results permeate the entire National Development Plan; overlaps can easily occur, resulting in the inefficient use of resources or even contradictory effects.

To attain the four goals, policy actions and programmes are grouped into the eight clusters, each with several sub-clusters. The national outcomes in each cluster require policy actions that together will generate the outcomes listed. In these cases, some will have multiple impacts, some of which could be incoherent with others without effective coordination and regular consultation.

Continuous monitoring, evaluation, and coordination are essential for the success of the entire programme. Each of the outcomes in the clusters will therefore outline its Theory of Change to ensure effective implementation and facilitate the monitoring of progress. Only the most influential policy actions are shown in the results framework, while the full panoply of actions will be developed during the formulation phases of actions and programmes at the MDA level. In turn, this would require continuous training of MDAs on project formulation and management.

A number of risks are identified as having the potential to compromise success, and these are listed in Cluster 8 on implementation. Mitigating measures to counter such effects are also outlined. Experience from past plans indicate that insufficient attention is given to risks and ex ante preparation of risk-mitigating measures. This time around, reporting arrangements will make constant attention to risks and updating of mitigating measures obligatory.

Figure 1.2: Theory of Change



1.1 Plan preparatory process

The Medium-term National Development Plan was prepared after thorough research and extensive consultations within the country and globally. A poverty and macroeconomic diagnostic, including growth projections, was conducted, with support from development partners. The findings informed the design of clusters and the priorities.

The research undertaken to prepare the document was exhaustive, participatory, and inclusive, involving desk reviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and other relevant research techniques necessary for deriving the requisite data and information for such an exercise. Staff of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED), with support from the Ministry of Finance, other MDAs, and local professionals, and with technical assistance from development partners, participated fully in the development of this plan.

The manifestos of political parties in the current parliament were reviewed in the plan preparation process. Key policy statements of presidential candidates were also reviewed to inform the content of the plan. Moreover, extensive consultations within and outside the country were held with Sierra Leoneans of all shades of opinions.

MoPED arranged for the broad-based participation and inclusion of all stakeholders to ensure that the views of Sierra Leoneans from all walks of life were incorporated into the plan. In addition, a deeper multi-partisan approach to the consultations underscored the government's commitment to national cohesion and the sustainable development principle 'leave no one behind'. This approach will secure buy-in



Consulting secondary schools for planning national development.

and facilitate the smooth implementation and effective monitoring of the plan by the majority of Sierra Leoneans.

Gender and other cross-cutting issues are incorporated into the policy clusters, with the results framework capturing these issues in the indicators and targets.

1.1.1 Review of national documents on development

Desk reviews were conducted to understand the current state of the economy and the country context. The following sources were the primary focus of the document review:

- Functions of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, as gazetted in 2002 and 2008

Table 1.1: District priority ranking

Priority Area	Ave.	Kai	Ken	Kon	Bom	Fal	Koi	Ton	Kam	Kar	P/L	Bo	Bon	Moy	Puj	W/R	W/U
		East			North				North West			South			West		
Education	1.1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Health	2.9	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	2	2
Other (Roads)	3.4	2	2	3	9	1	1	7							2		
Agriculture	4.2	5	4	6	2	4	4	3	4	2	2	4	3	5	4	7	8
Energy	5.1	4	9	5	8	8	7	6	2	3	5	6	2	2	3	5	6
Water	5.3	6	7	4	5	5	5	5	5	7	4	5	7	4	6	6	3
Security	6.1	7	5	8	6	8	8	7	6	6	7	1	5	7	8	3	5
Corruption	6.1	8	8	7	4	7	6	4	7	5	6	6	6	6	9	4	4
Economy	7.6	9	5	8	7	6	8	9	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	8	7

- The New Direction manifesto
 - Other political party manifestos
 - Previous PRSPs, including the Agenda for Change and the Agenda for Prosperity
 - Review of national documents, including the Report on the Conference on Development and Transformation 2012, the Report of the Constitutional Review Committee 2017, and the Sierra Leone Fragility Report 2018
 - Global development plans, including the SDGs
 - Regional documents, including the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Economic Community of West African States and Mano River Union frameworks
 - Other literature relevant to Sierra Leone's development
- A number of key messages and lessons emerged from the desk review and consultations:
- A long-term perspective and plan are important to form the basis for, and continuity of, national plans.
 - Absence of inclusive consultation undermined previous planning processes.
 - Poor prioritization resulted in weak expenditure alignment with the previous plan.
 - Duplication and overlapping of functions of key actors coupled with insufficient and ineffective coordination led to poor implementation.
 - There is need to maintain consistency in pursuing development agendas.
 - A strong monitoring and evaluation component in the plan is essential for staying on course.
 - Alignment of the MTNDP to regional and global plans will provide options for benefitting from regional and global opportunities and limit the country's size constraints.
 - There is commonality in the development goals outlined in political party manifestos.
 - Cross-cutting issues such as gender, the environment, and disability have till now been largely lip service.

- Political and leadership commitment accelerates the delivery of public results.

1.1.2 Governance structure

Great significance and much attention has been placed on the development of an all-inclusive MTNDP. This necessitated setting up a framework to ensure that the preparation process was participatory, transparent, and all-encompassing. Strategic direction was provided by the Office of the President, and the exercise was led by MoPED in collaboration with various stakeholders, as shown in Table 1.2. The table also shows the governance structure, consisting of the Secretariat (comprised of technical staff of the ministry), which works with Cluster and Sub-cluster Working Groups that report to a Core Technical Committee, which in turn gets direction from a National Oversight Committee. The composition of the committees is shown below.

1.1.3 Nationwide consultation

Extensive nationwide consultations were conducted at various levels, including regional and district levels, and with government institutions. There was therefore a frank exchange of views on district-specific issues, as well as ideas on how to address national priorities. This participatory approach contributed to building national ownership of the plan. There was physical outreach to about 2 million people through town hall meetings, focus group discussions, public engagements in learning institutions, and other outreach mechanisms targeting the disabled, market women, the elderly, and those in detention centres, among others. Recognizing that it is impossible to reach out to everyone using this approach, radio, TV, and social media platforms such as Twitter,

WhatsApp, and Facebook were utilized. A special effort to reach out to Sierra Leoneans in the diaspora was also undertaken for the first time in the planning process through the country's missions abroad. Information collected from these sources was processed and stored for ease of reference.

At the institutional level, members of the National Oversight Committee, the Core Technical Committee, the Cluster Working Groups, and the Secretariat met with MDAs, development partners, academia and research institutions, private sector representatives, community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, youth groups, trade unions, market women, women's groups, the disabled and the elderly, political parties, universities, secondary schools, inmates of correctional centres, the judiciary, paramount chiefs, councillors, and members of parliament. This inclusive approach ensured that the views of the majority of Sierra Leoneans are captured in the final document.

District consultations

In planning the district consultations, the following stakeholders were consulted:

1. MDA representatives in health, education, agriculture, gender, social welfare, and youth; the police; correctional centres; the military; and the anti-corruption commission, among others
2. District council representatives, including chairpersons, chief administrators, councillors, and planning/monitoring, evaluation, and finance officers
3. Paramount chiefs; traditional and religious leaders; and civil society groups operating in the districts

Table 1.2: Governance structure

LEVEL	COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE	FUNCTIONS OF COMMITTEE
<i>National Oversight Committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minister MoPED Minister MoF The Development Secretary The Financial Secretary Representative from Office of the Chief Minister Representatives from private sector and civil society UN Resident Coordinator Plan Preparation Secretary (MoPED and MoF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure government-led and government-owned process Strategic guidance to the plan preparation process Ensure new plan meets the government's broad policy Ensure plan is produced within the agreed time frame Ensure finances and technical support are available Provide periodic update to HE the President Ensure regular committee meetings Ensure the governance layer meets regularly
<i>Core Technical Committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-chairs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Secretary Financial Secretary Representatives from MoPED Directorate Representative from Chief Economist's Office, MoF Representatives from Statistics Sierra Leone Representatives from Bank of Sierra Leone Representatives from the university Representatives from research institutions Representatives from UNDP, World Bank, IMF, AfDB, EU, DfID 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate the plan formulation process Ensure SDGs/African Union Agenda 2063 integrated into the plan Facilitate national/regional consultations Ensure sector papers coherent with government policy objectives Ensure regular meetings Provide regular briefings to the National Oversight Committee Provide technical assistance and guidance to Cluster Working Groups Ensure the timely production of the final MTNDP
<i>Cluster Working Group</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairperson: MDA representative and/or from NGOs/civil society/ research institutions Other members of the Core Technical Committee Members of the relevant Sub-cluster/ Sector Working Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss/review progress on sector policy papers Collate all relevant sub-cluster/ sector policy papers Ensure that the writing template is followed in the preparation of sub-cluster/sector policy papers
<i>Sub-cluster Working Groups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairs: Relevant MDA professionals Chairpersons of the relevant Cluster Working Groups Relevant representatives from MDAs, development partners, civil society/ NGOS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect all relevant sector data Write and submit sector policy papers to the Plan Preparation Secretariat
<i>Secretariat</i>	Technical staff from MoPED and MoF	Provide general technical backstopping for the process

The consultation methodology consisted of a presentation of the government's key issues, in order to facilitate the discussions and to keep them in context. However, the districts were at liberty to rank the main issues as well as raise additional development issues that were not presented. Table 1.1 outlines the priority development areas (sectors) for each district.

These rankings are not necessarily a reflection of the hierarchical levels of the key drivers therein. Under the general social contract between the government and the people of Sierra Leone, the government places equal importance on all the issues mentioned in the table. As a result, despite some priority initiatives, equal attention has been given to the issues raised at the district level.

Three observations from the district rankings emerged:

1. The respective district rankings, which were done independently, significantly mirrored government priorities, with an emphasis on quality education for all.
2. Participants believed the construction and rehabilitation of feeder roads, trunk roads, and bridges should be included as a priority in the plan.
3. At the district level, other issues presented for ranking were also influential drivers of the economy.

1.1.4 Regional consultations and validation

Regional consultations to validate what emerged from the district consultations were conducted in the five administrative regions of

Sierra Leone: Northern region, North-western region, Southern region, Eastern region, and Western region. This was done immediately after the first draft of the plan was developed to ensure that inputs from the district consultations were fully incorporated into the document. The results mirrored the district consultations. Table 1.3 presents the rankings from the regions.

1.2 Organization of the document

The rest of the document is organized as follows. Chapter 2 in Part I contains a social and economic analysis of the country, while Part II opens a discussion on the clusters, starting with human capital development (Cluster 1). Cluster 2 is on economic diversification and promoting the growth of the economy, and Cluster 3 is on the development of infrastructure and promoting the competitiveness of the country. Good governance is under Cluster 4, while issues related to women, children, and persons with disability are addressed in Cluster 5. Cluster 6 examines the issues surrounding youth empowerment, sports, and migration. Cluster 7 discusses environmental resilience, forestry management, and disaster management, and the last section, Cluster 8, deliberates on the means of plan implementation.

Table 1.3: Regional ranking of development issues by sector

No.	Sector	Ave.	Northern	North West	Eastern	Southern	Western
1	Education	1.8	2	4	1	1	1
2	Health	3.0	3	6	2	2	2
3	Roads	3.0	1	1	3	5	5
4	Agriculture	4.2	4	3	4	4	6
5	Water	4.8	6	2	6	7	3
6	Energy	5.6	7	5	9	3	4
7	Security	6.2	5	7	5	6	8
8	Corruption	7.8	9	8	7	8	7
9	Macroeconomy	8.6	8	9	8	9	9

FIRST PERSON

'The commitment demonstrated by the planning team in ensuring that our next development agenda is formulated through a painstaking bottom-top approach can only lead to a National Development Plan that the people of Sierra Leone will derive practical benefits from. My expectation, therefore, is that we shall pursue the logical next step by maintaining a similar spirit of open consultations as we progress through the subsequent implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning stages of the plan.'

—Joseph Sherman-Kamara (PhD), Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Njala Campus

'The approach for the development of the new National Development Plan was inclusive and considerate. The final document is expected to be progressive and fruitful for sustainable national development.'

—Kaiinnamu ANZ Kumabeh II, National Education Office, Motor Drivers and General Transport Workers Union

2. SOCIAL AND MACROECONOMIC CONTEXT OF SIERRA LEONE

This chapter profiles the following: the poverty status based on the first six months of data from the Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey in 2018; multidimensional poverty using Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2017 data; economic growth; demographics; and the medium-term macroeconomic policy of the government.

2.1 Current poverty profile

This part presents the prevalence of income and multidimensional poverty and discusses food and nutrition security in order to illustrate the current welfare of households and individuals.

2.1.1 Income poverty

The overall poverty rate in Sierra Leone is 57 percent, with 10.8 percent of the population living in extreme poverty (Table 2.1). It is highest in the rural areas (a poverty incidence of 72.4 percent) and lowest in Freetown (18.5 percent), thereby indicating that poverty in Sierra Leone remains a rural issue. In terms of absolute poverty by region, the North is the poorest, followed by the South and the East. Western Area has the lowest poverty rate (18 percent).

Extreme poverty is predominant in the East, with 18.1 percent of the people unable to meet their food needs. This is followed by the North (12.1 percent) and the South (8.4 percent). The

West (1.7 percent) has the lowest proportion of people who cannot meet their food needs. On average, the poor people of Sierra Leone can only meet 69.8 percent of their basic needs and 89.2 percent of their food needs. Those in Western Area, especially Freetown, can meet 77.5 percent of their basic needs, while those in the rural areas can meet 67.3 percent of their basic needs (South 72 percent; North 68.2 percent; East 65.7 percent).

Socio-economically, poverty decreased significantly with increased educational levels. Households with heads who completed secondary school are less likely to be poor than those whose heads completed primary school only. About 68 percent of households whose head had no education are poor, compared to only 5.6 percent for household heads with a university education. Those without post-secondary education (technical/vocational education) are slightly poorer than those with post-secondary education.

By occupation, the poorest households are those whose head is engaged in farming, with a poverty incidence of 72 percent. The second most common occupation is trading; these households are significantly less poor (42 percent), but still have a higher poverty rate than most of the other occupational groups. In terms of households with diversified sources of income, households who additionally engage in some kind of entrepreneurship/trading are only slightly less poor than those who rely on farming alone. Likewise, household heads who rely solely on business activities are almost

Table 2.1: Absolute poverty and extreme poverty, Sierra Leone (January–June 2018)

	Absolute poverty			Extreme Poverty		
	Incidence	Gap	Severity	Incidence	Gap	Severity
Sierra Leone	57.0	31.2	12.9	10.8	19.0	5.6
Freetown	18.5	22.5	8.2	1.7	24.9	9.3
Other urban	41.2	25.8	9.1	4.1	14.5	3.6
Rural	72.4	32.7	13.9	15.3	19.2	5.7
East	60.9	35.3	16.2	18.1	21.4	6.7
North	67.3	31.8	13.2	12.1	18.5	5.4
South	66.8	28.0	10.2	8.4	13.9	3.3
West	18.0	22.5	8.2	1.7	24.9	9.3

Source: Calculations based on SLIHS 2018 (Jan-June).

at par with households in which at least one member is in gainful employment.

The statistical picture is one of widespread income poverty. By inference, there is also significant income inequality, given the low share of wealth enjoyed by the vast majority of the population.

Food security disaggregated by urban/rural area and by region follows much the same pattern, with urban areas doing better than rural areas, and Western Area significantly better off than the other regions. Among the regions, the North is both the poorest in monetary terms and the least food secure, followed by the South then the East. Richer households are the most food secure, although the differences are not as large as might be expected. Over half of households, even in the richest group, had to use a food-related coping strategy in the

previous seven days. Over half of the poorest group of households can achieve acceptable dietary diversity.

Analysing food security by demographic and socio-economic characteristics revealed similar patterns to those of income poverty. Larger households are generally more likely to be food insecure. Female-headed households do somewhat better than those with male heads.

In terms of education, higher education results in higher food security, although the differences are less pronounced than for income poverty. It is worth noting that households in which the head is engaged in farming are either the most food insecure or the second-most food insecure, depending on the measure; the same effect is seen when looking at economic diversification of the household as a whole. It is not the case that farming households produce

abundant food and only face difficulties in translating that food production into financial resources to meet other needs. There might be other underlying challenges, such as having larger households or lacking access to markets for their products.

2.1.2 Multidimensional poverty

The Multidimensional Poverty Index of Sierra Leone has five dimensions (health, education, living standards, housing, and energy) and 14 indicators. In 2017, the incidence of multidimensional poverty (the proportion of people identified as multidimensionally poor) was 64.8 percent. This means that almost two-thirds of the population in Sierra Leone is identified as multidimensionally poor. In turn, the average intensity of poverty, which reflects the share of deprivations each poor person experiences on average, is 57.9 percent. That is, each poor person on average is deprived in almost 60 percent of the dimensions included in the Multidimensional Poverty Index. The National Multidimensional Poverty Index, which is the product of the incidence and intensity of poverty, has a value of 0.375. This means that multidimensionally poor people in Sierra Leone experience 37.5 percent of the total deprivations that would be experienced if everyone was deprived in all indicators.

There is more deprivation in rural areas than in urban settings. Therefore, the rural incidence or rural poverty headcount ratio is more than double that of urban areas – 86.3 percent and 37.6 percent, respectively.

Estimates for the National Multidimensional Poverty Index, incidence of poverty, and intensity of poverty by region show that the South and North have the highest levels of all three.

The poverty incidence is 67.6 percent in the East; 75.8 percent in the North; 76 percent in the South; and 36.2 percent in the West.

At the district level, the results reveal that Pujehun is the poorest district in Sierra Leone, with an incidence of poverty of 87.2 percent. The second-poorest district in the country is Koinadugu, with 86.5 percent of its population living in multidimensional poverty. In turn, the Western Area Urban District has the lowest levels of poverty, at 28.5 percent.

When the levels of multidimensional poverty are analysed by age group, children younger than 18 years have the highest levels of multidimensional poverty (69.6 percent) compared to any other age group. The group with the lowest levels of poverty is working-age individuals (18 to 40 years old).

2.1.3 Malnutrition

Childhood malnutrition can have long-lasting effects on the growth and educational achievements of the child. Malnutrition is therefore an important indicator of the future health and well-being of the population. It is measured by estimating the percentage of children under five who are classified as stunted, wasted, or underweight.

Malnutrition by various demographic characteristics obtained from the MICS data indicate that it is higher in girls than boys. The exact age at which malnutrition peaks is different by indicator, but it is in the age range between when solid foods are introduced around six months and when the child is eating the usual diet of the household by age two. Children in households with significantly older heads do seem more likely to be malnourished. The most

Table 2.2: Income poverty by selected household characteristics, Sierra Leone (January–June 2018)

	Poverty Incidence	Extreme Poverty Incidence	Percent of Population
Household size			
1 to 3	18.0	0.9	7.2
4 or 5	38.1	3.9	21.8
6 or 7	59.3	9.0	28.3
8 or more	71.7	17.1	42.7
Sex of household head			
Male	57.6	11.6	77.9
Female	55.0	7.9	22.1
Age of household head			
18 to 25	47.5	8.0	3.8
26 to 35	46.2	6.7	18.3
36 to 45	58.5	10.3	27.7
46 to 55	58.9	10.0	23.0
56 to 65	62.1	14.7	13.3
65 and over	62.9	15.4	14.0
Education of household head			
None	68.0	13.9	59.2
Primary incomplete	58.1	13.1	8.3
Primary complete	55.8	6.2	3.7
Secondary incomplete	40.1	5.9	16.4
Secondary complete	21.2	0.0	2.1
Post-secondary technical / vocational	34.3	2.6	8.0
University	5.6	0.0	2.4
Occupation of household head			
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	72.3	16.4	58.0
Mining and quarrying	65.9	12.9	4.0
Manufacturing	40.0	3.3	4.0
Construction	37.2	2.5	4.5
Wholesale and retail trade	41.7	3.8	15.0
Transportation and storage	25.5	4.9	3.8
Education	39.0	1.2	3.3
Other	22.7	0.0	7.4
Economic diversification			
Primary production (farming, fishing, forestry) only	74.1	18.6	37.1
Primary production and non-farm business only	71.1	12.1	20.7
Non-farm business only	39.3	4.2	18.7
Wage employment (at least one household member)	35.3	3.6	23.5

Table 2.3: Multidimensional poverty by national level, location, region, district, and age group

Area	Population Share	Incidence (Headcount, %)	Intensity (A, %)	MPI
National				
		64.8%	57.9%	0.375
Location				
Rural	55.7%	86.3%	60.3%	0.520
Urban	44.3%	37.6%	50.9%	0.191
Region				
East Region	23.2%	67.6%	57.0%	0.385
North Region	33.7%	75.8%	59.6%	0.452
South Region	20.0%	76.0%	60.0%	0.456
West Region	23.1%	36.2%	50.2%	0.182
District				
Bo		64.9%	56.6%	0.367
Bombali		65.9%	58.6%	0.386
Bonthe		82.5%	61.9%	0.511
Kailahun		77.6%	56.8%	0.441
Kambia		77.3%	57.9%	0.447
Kenema		62.4%	56.8%	0.354
Koinadugu		86.5%	60.3%	0.521
Moyamba		83.7%	61.8%	0.517
Kono		65.9%	57.4%	0.378
Port Loko		70.9%	59.1%	0.419
Pujehun		87.2%	62.4%	0.544
Tonkolili		85.4%	61.9%	0.528
Western Rural Area		53.0%	51.8%	0.275
Western Urban Area		28.5%	48.9%	0.14
Age group				
Younger than 18	48.4%	69.6%	58.7%	0.409
18-40 years	31.8%	56.6%	57.0%	0.322
40+	19.8%	66.0%	56.9%	0.376

important factor here is the education level of the mother; children with better educated mothers are less likely to be malnourished.

2.2 Population trends

The country's annual average population growth rate increased sharply from 1.8 percent between 1985 and 2004 to 3.2 percent between

2004 and 2015, increasing the size of the population by about 40 percent from about 5 million in 2004 to more than 7 million to date. If this growth rate continues, at least 3 million people will be added to the current population by 2026, increasing the size to at least 10 million people. This landscape prompts a number of policy questions, including how to manage the growing population most effectively. Most crucial is the growing youth population.

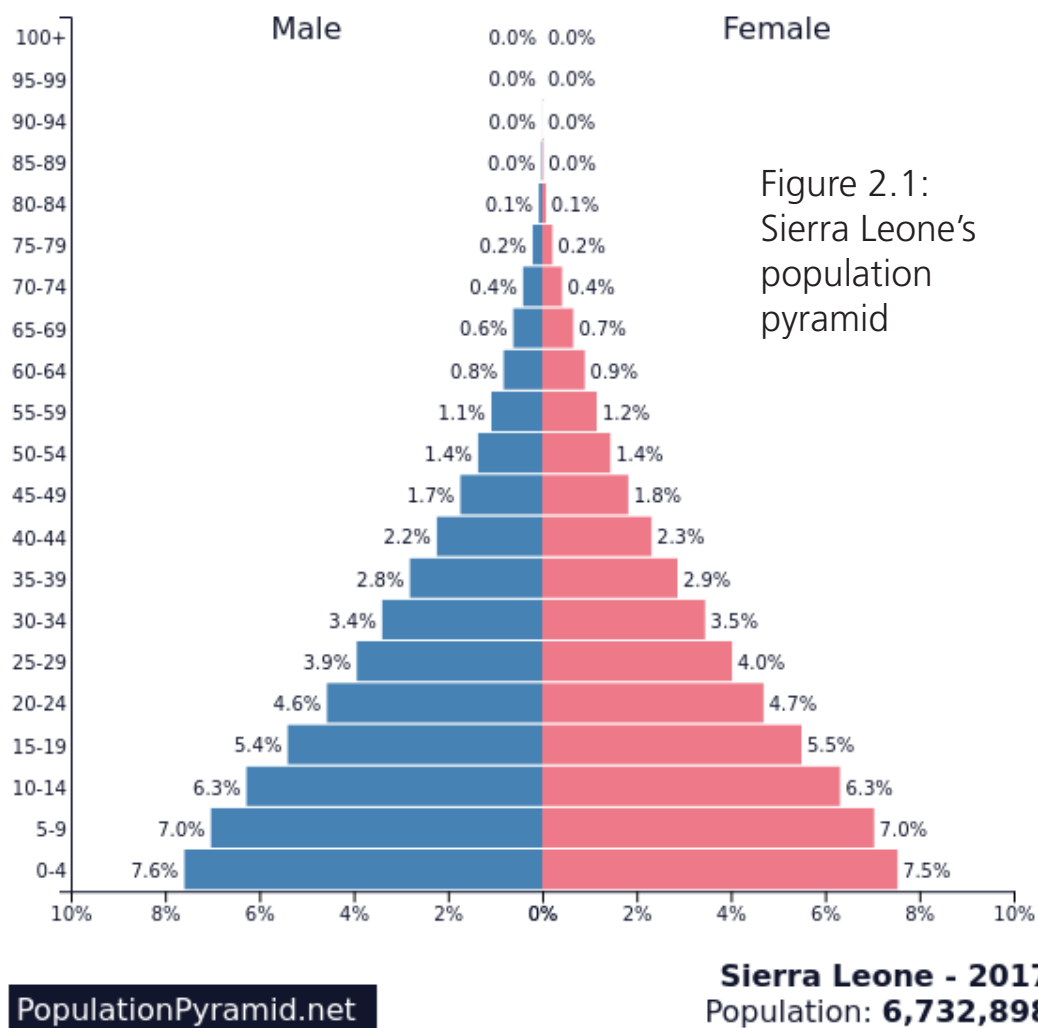


Figure 2.1:
Sierra Leone's
population
pyramid

As the population pyramid in Figure 2.1 shows, those between 0 and 34 years account for close to 80 percent of the total population. The under-five population accounts for 13 percent; those between 5 and 14 years are 28 percent; those between 15 and 24 years are 22 percent; and those between 25 and 34 years account for 15 percent. The size of this cohort of young people certainly constitutes both an asset and a blessing, representing a readily available pool of labour for economic transformation. However, it could equally represent a threat and a recipe for disaster in diverse ways, in the absence of the requisite investment in social and economic services.

2.3 Structure of the economy and growth diagnostic

Sierra Leone's economy is small and undiversified. GDP growth in Sierra Leone has been conspicuously inconsistent. This instability could be associated with the uneven economic growth across sectors, and largely driven by the export-led mining sector. The post-war economic recovery was first driven by agriculture, and from 2010 onwards propelled by the mining industry. Without steady growth, it is hard to attract investments that can strengthen the economic sectors to foster job creation. Gross capital formation, which reflects the prospect of future stability in Sierra Leone, rose from 1 percent of GDP in 2000, fluctuated between 9.8 and 11.8 percent throughout the rest of the decade, and attained its highest point at 42 percent in 2011. However, this investment bump was short-lived, as capital investment declined by 15 percent of aggregate output by 2012.

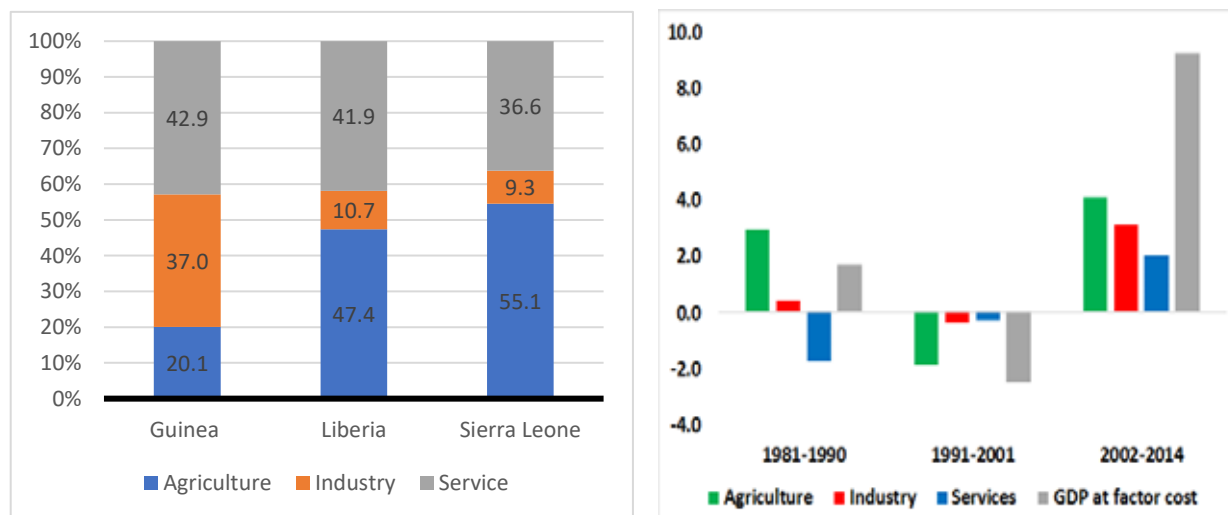
The 2017 GDP growth rate (3.7 percent)

was dismal in comparison with the 2016 rate (6.1 percent) after a recovery from an abysmal performance in 2015 (-20.6 percent), with agriculture contributing 55.1 percent of GDP, services 36.6 percent, and manufacturing 9.3 percent. Growth patterns within the service sector may be described as consistent with sub-regional economies such as Guinea and Liberia, which recorded 42.9 percent and 41.9 percent of GDP respectively. The gap in output for agriculture and industry was over 45 percentage points in Sierra Leone, whereas it was about 16 percentage points in Guinea and 36 percentage points in Liberia (see Figure 2.2).

Labour productivity remains the lowest in agriculture. Value added per worker in agriculture increased in real terms from US\$455 in 2002 to \$1,105 in 2015. However, in 2014 labour productivity in agriculture was about one-third lower than the average national labour productivity, 20 percent lower than labour productivity in services, and 12 percent of labour productivity in industry. Labour productivity in the mining sector was driven by a sharp increase in capital per worker and a large influx of foreign direct investment between 2009 and 2013. However, the increase in value added per worker did not translate into an equivalent improvement in the welfare of miners.

The undiversified nature of the economy and its disproportionate distribution of employment and productivity across all sectors is a major impediment to sustained inclusive growth and poverty reduction. Current trends indicate that productivity growth is largely driven by capital-intensive industries that have limited capacity to generate jobs. Continuing this trajectory entails grave risks for social stability. The current state of the economy (see Box 2.1) – with employment and productivity highly concentrated in a few sectors – makes it

Figure 2.2: Contribution to GDP growth by sector



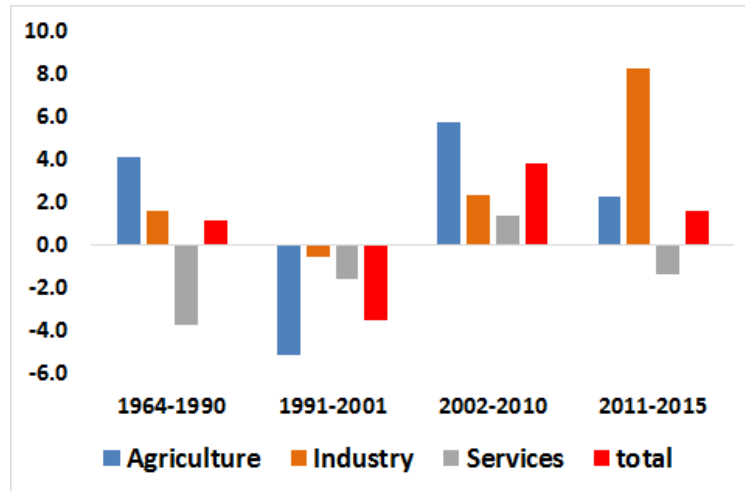
Source: World Bank Group WDI (2017).

BOX 2.1: Employment and productivity across sectors, 2003–2014

- On one side, the agriculture sector makes up around 50 percent of real GDP. It also comprises more than 60 percent of the country's labour force. Productivity in this sector is the lowest compared to the other two groups of economic activity.
- On the other side, the industry contributed 51 percent of the overall increase in productivity in the economy from 2003 to 2014, but only added 8 percent of the jobs created in the same period.
- The services sector is in between. It holds 36 percent of the labour force, and it generated 44 percent of the jobs created in the period. Its labour productivity has not increased, although it is still higher than in the agriculture sector.

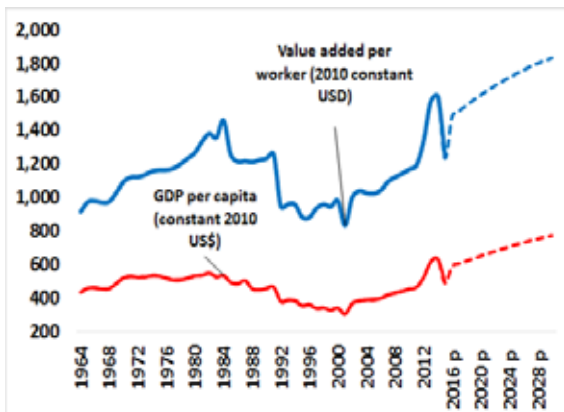
Source: World Bank Group, *Jobs Diagnostic – Sierra Leone, 2018*

Figure 2.3: Labour productivity (value added per worker)



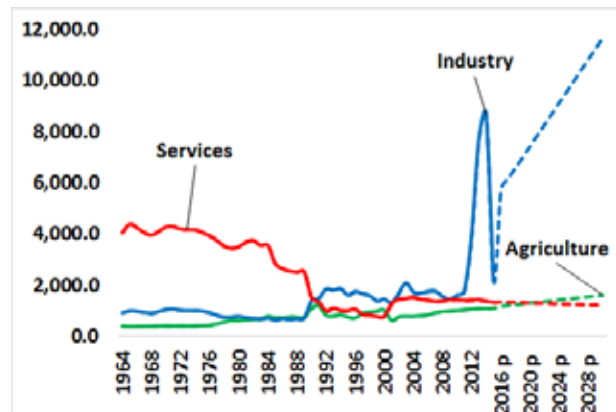
Source: World Bank Group WDI (2016)

Figure 2.4: GDP per capita and value added per worker (projection 2016–2030)



Source: World Bank Group WDI (2016) and staff projection.

Figure 2.5: Value added per worker by sector (projection 2016–2030)



Source: World Bank Group WDI (2016) and staff projection.

hard for economic performance to experience broad-based growth that is sustainable.

At the sectoral level, realignment of labour is not yet fully efficient. The recent shift of employment from agriculture to services resulted in declining relative productivity in the latter (see Figure 2.3). Continuing this path without finding drivers for productivity growth within sectors will lead to further reduction of overall productivity. Furthermore, productivity in the services sector is not much higher than that of agriculture, suggesting that while workers moved to relatively better jobs, they are not accessing the highly productive jobs. Understanding where to focus to make growth more robust is imperative in the context of the opportunities offered by a rising population. This is one of the areas for further study to inform the 20-year plan.

2.4 Challenges to economic diversification, inclusive growth, and macroeconomic development

Sierra Leone's economy will accelerate to a significant level of growth when the application and implementation of the envisaged policy changes comes into force. If the current trends in labour productivity are not reinforced in the next fifteen years, total value added would increase by 5 percent on average per year for the period 2016–2030, down from 5.3 percent on average per year between 2002 and 2015. This reflects slower growth in agriculture and services, which will offset the effects of the higher growth in industry, driven by the extractive sector. Under these hypotheses, value added

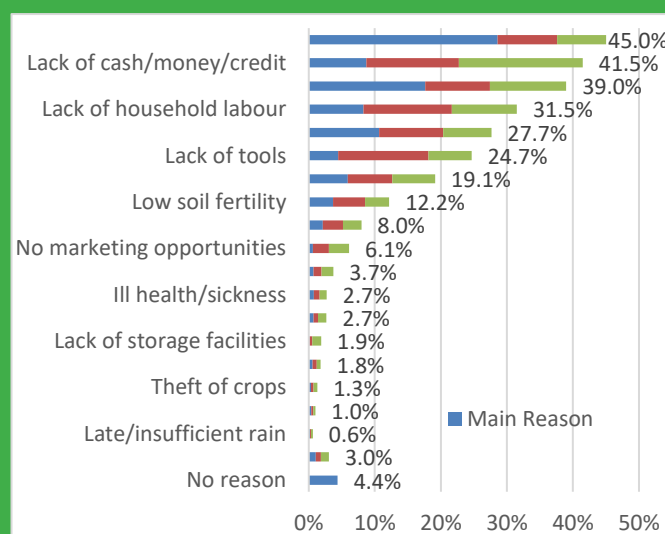
per worker increases by 2.6 percent on average per year to reach US\$1,830 in real terms (constant 2010 US\$) by 2030, up from \$1,235 in 2015. Considering the declining share of the non-working-age population, GDP per capita would increase 3.1 percent on average per year in the period, to reach US\$770 in real terms by 2030. This will be well below expectations if the country is to achieve middle-income status by 2035.

The expected growth in value added per worker and GDP per capita may however not translate into faster poverty reduction if labour productivity growth is driven mainly by the mining sector, as was the case in 2011–2014. The sector does not create enough jobs for direct access to and wider sharing of the generated prosperity. In addition, without meaningful change in land and agricultural policy, labour productivity will continue to grow at a slow pace, keeping most of the population in poverty. Also, without significant improvement in the business environment, labour productivity in the non-resource sectors (industries excluding mining and services) will continue to stagnate or decline. Recent demographic trends suggest that rural-to-urban migration will continue in the new decade, and it is very likely that the majority of urban dwellers will only find jobs in the informal sector. The percentage of the population living in urban areas increased from 35 percent in 2001 to almost 40 percent in 2015, with a high concentration in the capital, Freetown, which hosts 15 percent of the total population in only 0.02 percent of the total area of the country.

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood in Sierra Leone, particularly for the poor, and therefore improving agricultural productivity for food security and rural income generation is critical for poverty alleviation. Agriculture

Box 2.2: Constraints to agricultural productivity

According to data collected in the 2015 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment, the most commonly cited constraint by farmers was the lack of access to improved seeds. Overall, when asked to identify the top three constraints to increasing agricultural production, 45 percent of farmers cited the unavailability of improved seeds, 41.5 percent cited lack of access to credit, 39 percent cited the Ebola outbreak, 31.5 percent cited insufficient household labour, 27.7 percent cited pests or crop disease, 24.7 percent cited a lack of tools, and 19.1 percent cited the unavailability of fertilizers.



Source: World Bank, *Systematic Country Diagnostic (2018)* and *Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (2015)*

employs more than half of the country's formal and informal workforce and accounts for about half of GDP. According to the 2014 Labour Force Survey, nearly 60 percent of employed individuals aged 15 to 64 work in agricultural self-employment. Despite its potential, the agriculture sector is constrained by compounding failures in both the input and output markets. Yields are lower due to limited access to improved varieties of seeds, modern production techniques, fertilizers, and mechanization, among others. The overall cost of production is high and reduces farmers' profit margins. Access

to credit is also minimal, insurance markets are non-existent, and the cumbersome land tenure system further impedes long-term investment. Furthermore, low prices constrain the sales of agricultural products. Poor infrastructure and an absence of modern processing and storage facilities also increase post-harvest losses.

Sierra Leone must create poverty-alleviating non-farm jobs outside the mineral sector by diversifying its economy. According to the World Bank, more than 100,000 people move from rural to urban areas each year in search

of employment and better living conditions (World Bank, Systematic Country Diagnostic, 2018). Formal well-paid manufacturing and services jobs are virtually non-existent, leaving almost nine in ten Sierra Leoneans in the highly vulnerable informal sector. Employment growth in the formal sector is affected by a myriad of constraints, including low access to electricity, high transportation and communication costs, high competition from imports and state-owned enterprises, lack of access to credit, and an unfavourable regulatory environment. Low productivity in the informal sector meanwhile limits income generation. In particular, three key categories of constraints affect growth and employment generation in manufacturing and services: (a) macroeconomic instability and the general external environment of the firm; (b) limited access to infrastructure (roads, energy, and ICT), labour, and credit; and (c) limited trust in public officials.

Private enterprises' decisions are influenced by several macroeconomic variables, including the aggregate demand, the inflation rate, the exchange rate, tax rates, and interest rates. In Sierra Leone, there is high volatility of the aggregate demand and the exchange rate, with sharp deviations from the long-run average (8 percent depreciation over a ten-year period), which makes it difficult for the local firms to compete with imports and to plan investments. In addition, the effectiveness of the monetary policy in curbing inflation is very limited (credit to the private sector is below 5 percent of GDP, with only 15 percent of the adult population having an account with a formal institution, against 24 percent on average for sub-Saharan Africa).

Similarly, public expenditures constitute a significant single component of the aggregate demand. However, because of the uncertain

contribution of the mining sector to government revenue, public expenditures traditionally have been volatile, making market projections and investment planning at the level of the firm very difficult. According to the last Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Report (2017), the aggregate government expenditure outturn has exceeded the budget each year, mainly due to the lack of commitment control (i.e. politically directed spending on unplanned projects and contracts). Recent experience shows also that bank financing of the fiscal deficit exceeds 2 percent of GDP, raising interest rates and squeezing the credit available to finance the private sector.

Sierra Leone's infrastructure deficit in energy, transport, and ICT impedes private sector investment by increasing production and marketing costs and thereby preventing links between internal and external markets. According to the African Development Bank, the country's infrastructure compares poorly to the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, and it was ranked 46 out of 54 countries on the bank's Africa Infrastructure Development Index¹ in 2016. The country's financial system faces substantial challenges. Access to capital appears to be a binding constraint for the entry of new entrepreneurs, as well as for existing businesses. According to the 2014 Labour Force Survey, over half (56 percent) of the unemployed who were not searching for work wanted to start their own businesses, but lacked the capital or resources to do so. Similarly, nearly half (47 percent) of household enterprises reported that they were unable to borrow the necessary capital for their businesses.

¹ The African Development Bank's Africa Infrastructure Development Index is based on four major components: (a) Transport, (b) Electricity, (c) ICT, and (d) Water and Sanitation. These components are disaggregated into nine indicators that have a direct or indirect impact on productivity and economic growth. The methodology is presented in the index of May 2013.

The extension of financial services to the rural population (about 60 percent) is inherently limited by the concentration of financial institutions in urban areas. Additionally, only 1 percent of individuals are covered by the Bank of Sierra Leone's credit registry, which means that banks are unable to properly check individuals' credit histories, which increases the risk of lending. Outreach of the microfinance and community banking sectors is also limited by poor governance and communication technology. Sierra Leone lacks adequate and relevant labour policy and legislation, and there are no comprehensive regulations for labour market operations in the country.² Many of the important laws (e.g. the Employers and Employed Ordinance and the Trade Unions Ordinance) regulating the labour market in Sierra Leone date back to 1960, one year before independence.

The country suffers from a poor private sector business environment, which is constraining both domestic and foreign investment. Sierra Leone is experiencing stagnation and deterioration in its business environment and is struggling to regain and sustain reform momentum. In the World Bank's *Doing Business Report 2018*, Sierra Leone ranked 160 out of 190 countries. This is a significant decline from the 2017 ranking, in which Sierra Leone was 148. Besides poor infrastructure and limited access to finance, investors also face several regulatory and administrative barriers. The key issues cited by businesses include corruption, high tax rates, and a mismatch between demand for and supply of labour.

² Even though the country is a signatory to all eight fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization regarding freedom of association, elimination of compulsory labour, elimination of discrimination, and abolition of child labour.

A further constraint to accelerated growth and poverty reduction is the continued overwhelming overlap of government bureaucracies and the absence of a clear pathway for operations. The large role of state-owned enterprises is a legacy of post-independence history and so are their inefficiencies, which are reflected in weak management and frequent political interference in their operations. The most critical inputs to the production and commercialization process (electricity, water, transportation, loans, credit, etc.) are currently provided by state-owned enterprises that are characterized by low productivity and poor financial performance. Efforts to liberalize state-owned enterprises have been hampered by the political and economic environment.

To create the conditions for economic growth and poverty reduction, Sierra Leone must invest in its people, particularly the poor. The country's public service delivery is currently insufficient for meeting the population's basic needs and developing human capital. It is therefore critical that Sierra Leone improves its human capital to take advantage of new opportunities in an increasingly information-based and digital global economy. Sierra Leone is one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa and globally, with a GDP per capita of US\$499 in 2017. It ranked 184 out of 188 countries on the United Nations 2018 Human Development Index, below the average for countries with similar GDP per capita.

The quality of education in Sierra Leone is generally poor. Recent studies show that 87 percent of pupils in second grade were unable to read any part of a short passage given to them in the Early Grade Reading Assessment, compared to 40 percent, 30 percent, and 53 percent in Gambia, Liberia, and Uganda respectively.

Furthermore, by the end of third grade, more than 50 percent of children could not write their name. Poor learning outcomes persist throughout the school lifecycle. The country's uneducated workforce prevents the economy from evolving into areas requiring higher skills, thereby depressing demand and any incentives for individuals to seek training opportunities. Key constraints to skills acquisition include an outdated curriculum that is not aligned with labour market needs; insufficient capacity (financial, organizational, and infrastructural) of providers in technical vocational education and training and higher education; limited links with industry; poor quality of instruction and instructors; and limited responsiveness to training and skills development needs in the informal sector. The vast majority of the 120,000 new entrants to the labour force each year face few good prospects and often become absorbed into rural agriculture or self-employment in the urban informal sector.

Similarly, poor health affects economic growth and the ability of households to increase their incomes. In agrarian areas, labour lost to poor health lowers farm productivity, and the World Food Programme identified poor access to health services as one of the major underlying reasons for the high prevalence of food and nutrition insecurity in Sierra Leone. Health shocks also limit households' ability to save and invest in income-generating assets. Beyond the microeconomic consequences of poor health for household income, the disease environment and the ability to combat disease outbreaks are critical to overall economic growth. In Sierra Leone, economic growth dropped sharply in 2014, partially because of the Ebola outbreak, which was estimated to have caused a 3.3 percentage point loss of GDP (World Bank, 2014).

As a small open economy, Sierra Leone is highly dependent on the international price of its major commodity exports, particularly iron ore, for revenue and foreign exchange. Iron ore exports account for over 50 percent of total exports. At the same time, the country does not have any control over the price of its major imported goods, such as rice and fuel, which account for over 50 percent of total import value. Therefore, a drop in the international price of iron ore and or rise in the price of rice/fuel (adverse terms of trade) will adversely affect the macroeconomy. Consequently, lower levels of exports reduce the supply of foreign exchange and trigger inflationary pressures, which in turn increase the cost of goods and services purchased by government and reduce real household income.

Lower iron ore prices would have a cumulative negative impact on domestic revenue collection, as royalty payments, personal income tax, and corporate tax from mining contractors would drop. This scenario was evident from 2015 to 2017 and into 2018, when a drop in iron ore prices resulted in slow GDP growth.

Recently a flexible exchange rate regime has been adopted. As a result, the value of Sierra Leone's currency (the leone) reflects the strength of the domestic economy and is influenced by international developments, over which it has no control. In recent years, the exchange rate of the leone to the US dollar and other international currencies depreciated continuously due to the volatility of mineral exports and the unpredictable disbursement of external budget amid increasing demand for imports. The depreciation of the exchange rate led to an increase in the prices of essential imported goods such as rice and fuel, with huge economic, political, and social implications.

Consumer prices have remained high since mid-2016.

In addition, Sierra Leone's external debt is high relative to the size of the economy. The depreciation of the exchange rate also increased external debt service payments (interest payment and debt amortization) and, consequently, budget deficit.

Domestic revenue collection is a serious economic and fiscal management challenge in Sierra Leone. It is less than 12 percent of GDP, which is lower than the average in sub-Saharan Africa (18 percent). In the midst of high domestic expenditure, averaging 20 percent of GDP, this situation often leads to higher budget deficits, which have been financed largely by borrowing from the domestic banking system, with adverse macroeconomic consequences, including high inflation, a depreciating exchange rate, and low bank credit to the private sector.

The low revenue collection is attributable to weak tax administration, including weak capacity, excessive tax relief and exemptions, wide ranging off-budget revenues, and a narrow tax base. The result has been a wider fiscal deficit, financed largely by borrowing from the domestic banking system and the accumulation of arrears to suppliers and contractors. This in turn has increased the level of domestic debt, estimated at 5 trillion leones, and associated debt service payments. Total arrears were estimated at 1.5 trillion leones in March 2018. The high debt service payments undermined priority development expenditures by the government.

In 2017, Sierra Leone's public debt was estimated at US\$2 billion, of which external debt is \$1.5 billion and domestic debt is \$.5 billion.

A recent Debt Sustainability Analysis conducted by the Ministry of Finance reveals that Sierra Leone's debt situation is categorized as high-risk debt distress due to the fall in exports, low revenue generation, and slow economic growth. The high domestic debt service payments increase government expenditure and weaken fiscal stability.

Sierra Leone also has a substantial stock of domestic debt in the form of marketable and non-marketable securities. In June 2018, the interest rate on the 365-day treasury bills, which account for over 80 percent of the marketable treasury securities, has remained high, at 28 percent. The government's inability to repay the debt, due to other pressing expenditure priorities, explains the high lending rates of commercial banks.

The instability of the tax policy environment is caused by the yearly review of tax laws and regulations (passed as the Finance Act), often without fully evaluating the previous provisions. This has been the modus operandi of financial management for decades. This proliferation of tax laws creates uncertainty in the tax system, which affects investment decisions.

Sierra Leone's economy is vulnerable to shocks because it is not diversified, as demonstrated in 2014 when the crash in commodity prices impacted negatively on economic growth. The accumulation of all of the above factors explains the weak performance of the economy over the last ten years, notwithstanding the short bursts of high growth rates. At the same time, these factors justify the need for prioritizing diversification, policy choices that promote inclusive growth, and special attention to maintaining a stable macroeconomic and fiscal policy.

Box 2.3: Key macroeconomic objectives and targets for 2019–2023

The key macroeconomic objectives of the Government of Sierra Leone in the medium term (2019 to 2023) are to:

1. Attain and maintain single-digit inflation.
2. Reduce the budget deficit, including grants, to not more than 3 percent of GDP, through increasing domestic revenue collection to 20 percent of GDP by 2023 and keeping government expenditures within budgetary limits of around 24 percent of GDP. In particular, the government wage bill will be kept at the sustainable threshold of 6 percent of GDP.
3. Reduce the current account deficit, including official grants, from 14 percent of GDP in 2018 to an average of 11.5 percent of GDP from 2019 to 2023 through export promotion and diversification.
4. Build foreign exchange reserves to a minimum of three months of import cover.
5. Maintain the public debt at the sustainable threshold of not more than 70 percent of GDP in nominal terms and 55 percent of GDP in present value terms. External debt will remain at not more than 40 percent of GDP in present value terms.

2.5 Medium-term macroeconomic policy framework for delivering the Medium-term National Development Plan

This section defines the fiscal and general macroeconomic policy parameters within which the government is expected to be able to finance sector projects and programmes in the MTNDP. Setting these parameters from the outset is crucial to guiding the selection and prioritization of the sectoral policy actions discussed in the following chapters and the attendant projects for financing in the next five years. Box 2.3 highlights key fiscal and macroeconomic targets the government

hopes to achieve by 2023, and the rest of the section deals with specific policies that would be undertaken in order to achieve these targets and hence ensure optimal financing of the sector policy actions discussed in the subsequent chapters.

2.5.1 Fiscal policy medium-term measures

Fiscal policy will focus on restoring macroeconomic stability through fiscal consolidation, which involves intensifying domestic revenue collection and expenditure rationalization. Going forward, the government will pursue short- and medium-term revenue measures and general expenditure controls. These are highlighted below.

2.5.1.1 Short-term revenue mobilization measures

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive, accurate, up-to-date, and reliable taxpayer database. This will be done through cleaning and broadening the coverage of Tax Identification Numbers and Goods and Services Tax (GST) registers and harmonizing the two databases to improve compliance with business registration and tax payments.
2. Explore the property tax potential to mobilize domestic revenues. To this end, among others, a Rental Income Tax Unit has been re-established at the National Revenue Authority to enhance the rental property database and implement an enforcement programme for collecting rental income tax.
3. Gather third-party data for data-matching purposes. Expand the taxpayer base through the systematic use of third-party information to detect unregistered taxpayers.
4. Introduce electronic cash registers to improve Sierra Leone's GST 'c-efficiency'. This will increase the percentage of GST-registered businesses and those filing GST returns through enhanced automated GST administration in the country.
5. Enhance collection of income tax from professionals, including lawyers, doctors, accountants, and engineers. This is critical, given the evidence that there is notable noncompliance across a range of revenue instruments by these categories of professionals.
6. Enhance customs valuation. While awaiting the installation of Automated System for Customs Data World, the current Automated System for Customs Data programme is being interfaced with a price reference database to improve the valuation of imports. Third party sources with original commercial invoices are also being used to address under-declared import values.
7. Review and standardize the processing and clearance of transit goods. This is aimed at addressing any adverse revenue implications for the economy in light of the increase in transit goods going through Sierra Leone.
8. Enhance the National Revenue Authority integrity mechanisms. Staff integrity is crucial to reducing revenue leakages.
9. Other measures include:
 - Enhancing cooperation and collaborative strategies with all stakeholders
 - Implementing post-clearance audit monitoring systems to improve compliance in customs declaration
 - Implementing an automated payment gateway and reconciliation system, as well as integrating with all banking and Government of Sierra Leone systems
 - Collaborating with the Ministry of Finance to examine abuse of tax incentives to ensure that the incentives are not overgenerous to the extent that the government loses much-needed revenues for public service delivery
 - Improving voluntary compliance through aggressive taxpayer education and sensitization, which is to be done through the implementation of a nationwide tax education programme by the National Revenue Authority

- Recovering tax arrears from companies in tax liability
- Stepping up the auditing of GST-registered businesses, including medium-sized and large enterprises

2.5.1.2 Medium-term revenue mobilization strategies

1. Automating tax collection processes and procedures. This is geared towards implementing an Integrated Tax Administration System for domestic taxes, focusing on:
 - Automating domestic tax processes
 - Introducing an electronic single-window customs system at the Queen Elizabeth II Quay to improve efficiency in the clearance of goods at the quay
2. Enforcing tax compliance. This will be done through:
 - Implementing a taxpayer compliance management programme
 - Developing a strategy for the enforcement of existing tax legislation
 - Strengthening tax investigation and prosecutorial processes
 - Establishing a tax court under the Commercial Court of Sierra Leone
 - Strengthening field audits of large taxpayers, especially in sectors with distinctive accounts that require specialized technical knowledge to ensure the proper assessment of tax liabilities
 - Developing and enforcing transfer pricing provisions

- Implementing revenue stamps through the enforcement of relevant provisions of the Finance Act 2009
- Revising fees/rates levied by MDAs

3. Other medium-term revenue measures:

- Rationalizing tax and duty waivers
- Expanding the tax base
- Combating cross-border smuggling
- Undertaking comprehensive tax reform as part of the 20-year plan

2.5.1.3 Expenditure management and control measures

A range of measures will be undertaken to control the government wage bill:

1. No new employee records will be created without valid National Social Security and Insurance Trust numbers and Basic Bank Account Numbers.
2. National Civil Registration Numbers will be utilized as unique identifiers for public sector employees.
3. The government will ensure that the National Social Security and Insurance Trust discontinues contributions for public sector employees above 60 years (above 55 years for police and army).
4. Rationalizing the current Personal Identification Number (PIN code) system by considering the feasibility of moving towards having employees maintain the same PIN code as they move from one category of the payroll to another.

5. Minimizing the payment of salaries through manual vouchers and addressing multiple pensions.
6. Aligning the manpower planning process with the budget preparation process and harmonizing salaries and allowances across all public sector payroll categories.
7. Assigning public sector employees to their correct budget programmes.
8. Decentralizing data input for payroll changes and employee input at the MDA level, through devolving the Integrated Financial Management Information System human resources/payroll system to MDAs so that they will have direct access to the system to input payroll changes in a timely manner.
9. Establishing a Wages and Salaries Commission to further improve on and sustain payroll management.

2.5.1.4 Measures to manage and control non-salary, non-interest recurrent expenditures

1. The government will step up efforts to improve the public procurement process in order to reduce expenditure and ensure value for money, ensuring that all public procurement above the legal threshold should be done through open competitive bidding, with single-source procurement only allowed in exceptional circumstances.
2. The government will review and amend the relevant sections in the Public Procurement Act (2016) and the Public Financial Management Act (2016) to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the National Public Procurement Authority and the Procurement Directorate of the Ministry of Finance, as well as to strengthen compliance with the Public Procurement Law.
3. The government will enforce and monitor the preparation and implementation of procurement plans in the context of the Medium-term Expenditure Framework, consistent with the Public Financial Management Act (2016).
4. The government will migrate from the current manual procurement processes to an electronic procurement (e-procurement) system to improve transparency and accountability to ensure value for money.
5. Expenditure commitment control systems will be strengthened to avoid accumulation of arrears, through rolling out the automated Public Expenditure Tracking Survey Form I to MDAs, and upgrading the Integrated Financial Management Information System to Version 7 to help enhance the expenditure commitment control system, ensuring that the MDAs are unable to enter into any commitment above the budgetary allocation issued by the Ministry of Finance.
6. Efforts will be made to discourage extrabudgetary expenditures by improving the budget planning process and ensuring strict adherence to the provisions in the Public Financial Management Act (2016) relating to the control of extrabudgetary expenditures.
7. The Ministry of Finance will automate expenditure management, including the enterprise resource system, to track in real time the stages of expenditure in the system.

2.5.1.5 Measures to manage and control domestic capital expenditure

To improve the efficiency of public investment, there is an urgent need to conclude and adopt the National Public Investment Policy and the National Public Investment Manual, which have been developed in conformity with the Public Financial Management Act of 2016 and its accompanying regulations. More specifically, the following measures will be undertaken:

1. Projects wholly funded by the government should be negotiated in domestic currency, with provision for domestic currency depreciation.
2. Such projects should be included in the public investment programme only after a thorough project appraisal demonstrates that they are economically and financially viable and funding sources have been identified.
3. There will be a comprehensive review with regard to compensation for these projects, except those involving the resettlement of persons, as compensation payments do not only add to the cost of the project, but usually cause delays in project implementation.
4. Hiring external consultants for wholly government-funded projects will be minimized to the extent possible, noting that some contracting authorities, such as the Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority, the Electricity Distribution and Supply Agency, and the Electricity Generation and Transmission Company, are presumed to have the required expertise to provide effective supervision of projects.
5. There is a need for ex-post evaluation of major projects for lessons going forward regarding future public investment decisions.
6. For donor-funded projects, appraisal will be done in line with the provisions of the Public Financial Management Act 2016, the Public Debt Act 2013, and the National Public Investment Policy.
7. The government will encourage the public sector to adequately budget for the government counterpart funding required by most donor-funded projects, in the form of compensation for project-affected persons and sometimes resettlement needs, as well as payment for quarries and campsites and other project-related costs.
8. Government counterpart funding should be paid in the local currency.
9. In order to evaluate the strength of our public investment practices, the Government of Sierra Leone, with assistance from the International Monetary Fund Fiscal Affairs Department, will embark on a Public Investment Management Assessment.

2.5.2 Monetary policy measures

The main monetary policy objective for the Bank of Sierra Leone would be to lower inflation, re-anchor inflation expectations, and ensure progressive convergence to medium-term single-digit inflation. To this end, the following measures will be undertaken:

1. Monetary policy will continue to be driven by the need to align monetary growth with levels consistent with medium-term inflation and GDP growth objectives.
2. The central bank will continue primarily to use its monetary policy rate to signal its monetary policy stance.

3. It will continue to enhance the effectiveness of monetary policy operations as well as liquidity management through more active participation in the money market by the use of market-based instruments.
 4. It will seek to further develop and deepen the interbank market to enable market participants to effectively and appropriately respond to monetary policy signals.
 5. It will improve monetary policy communication to key stakeholders and the public at large.
 6. It will focus on the development of appropriate monetary instruments and tools to make liquidity management more effective.
 7. In collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, the Bank of Sierra Leone will implement reform measures geared towards improving the efficiency of the government securities market, as the government considers the prospect of issuing a long-term bond in domestic currency to support the financing of infrastructure projects.
1. There will be a focus on developing a vibrant, well-established foreign exchange market that can facilitate well-referenced exchange rate determination.
 2. The established electronic trading platform will be enhanced to accommodate all significant foreign exchange transactions to help in determining the reference exchange rate for the market.
 3. The government will strengthen the cooperation of all authorized dealer banks and traders in meeting reporting requirements in a timely manner to ensure that the foreign exchange market is deepened and well anchored.
 4. The government will accelerate the economic diversification programme in the medium term to stabilize currency exchange through encouraging exports and discouraging imports, especially of basic consumption commodities.

2.5.2.1 Exchange rate policy measures

The exchange rate will continue to be determined by the market within the framework of a flexible exchange rate regime to allow the economy to adjust to external shocks and maintain its competitiveness to support export-oriented growth. The Bank of Sierra Leone's interventions in the foreign exchange market will be limited to smoothing excessive volatility in the exchange rate and will not be designed to resist market-driven trends in the exchange rate. In the medium term, therefore, the following specific measures will be undertaken:

2.5.2.2 Financial sector policy measures

The key objectives of the government's financial sector policy implemented by the Bank of Sierra Leone are two-fold:

- To deepen financial intermediation and financial inclusion to foster higher, broader, and more inclusive growth.
- To safeguard financial stability through the strengthening of the regulatory and supervisory framework and to appropriately assess risks within the banking system and other financial institutions.

Specific measures to achieve these objectives are as follows:

Promoting financial inclusion

1. The Bank of Sierra Leone, in collaboration with the World Bank, will continue to work on procuring a National Financial Switch for Sierra Leone as part of a larger project within the second phase of the Financial Sector Development Programme for increased financial inclusion. The government will promote digital financial services (DFS). With 14 DFS providers licensed by the Bank of Sierra Leone and an average of over 5.6 million transactions per month, DFS (using financial technology) is well positioned to close the remaining gaps in financial inclusion by offering affordable and convenient ways for individuals, households, and businesses to save, make payments, access credit, and obtain insurance.
2. As a member of the Alliance for Financial Inclusion and the Better Than Cash Alliance, Sierra Leone will continue to leverage digital financial services to create transformative impact in the economic and social well-being of all citizens, and actively participate in regional and global peer-learning exchanges.
3. The government will continue to strengthen the functioning of the Digital Financial Services Working Group, led by the Bank of Sierra Leone and including the Ministry of Finance, the National Telecommunications Commission, the Financial Intelligence Unit, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the private sector.
4. The government will strengthen the sub-committee of the national DFS Working Group/DFS Task Force for Smallholder Farmers to mainstream digital financial services into the operations of smallholder farmers.
5. The Bank of Sierra Leone will review and revamp the mobile money guidelines to keep pace with the evolution of DFS globally.
6. In order to ensure predictability in DFS, the government will consider the establishment of a legal and regulatory framework that is risk-based and fair; that allows for new entrants and is technology-neutral; and whose operations do not impose excessive, non-risk-based compliance costs.
7. The government will ensure that women, youth, and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises have improved access to transformative digital financial services; that DFS regulators have strengthened institutional capacity to formulate and implement a financial technology regulatory framework; and that DFS can be leveraged by the government to improve and monitor domestic revenue collection and resource mobilization.
8. Furthermore, development partners such as the World Bank and the UN Capital Development Fund are working closely with the government to promote the DFS sector in the aforementioned areas, towards building capacity and strengthening coordination among DFS regulators, developing the consumer protection framework for DFS, and implementing the digital credit bureau initiative through linking digital financial identity to digital transactions.

Supervision and regulation of the financial system

A range of measures will be undertaken by government in this regard, including the following:

- Promoting financial sector legislative reforms
- Improving the performance of the two state-owned banks through increased supervisory oversight by the Bank of Sierra Leone

2.5.2.3 Public debt policy measures

In its continued commitment to remain proactive in debt management within its overall economic policy management framework, the government will undertake the following between 2019 and 2023 to inform the implementation of projects/programmes in the Medium-term National Development Plan:

1. Reform the institutional and legal framework for accessing external and domestic debts for the central government, local governments, and state-owned enterprises.
2. Debt ceilings will be explicitly set in the medium- to long-term in the context of implementing government development plans, informed by sound medium-term debt strategy and debt sustainability analysis aimed at reducing the risk of debt distress.
3. The government will carefully monitor the build-up of domestic debt to ensure it is within sustainable and affordable limits.
4. It will issue medium- to long-term bonds to finance capital and infrastructure projects within available programme borrowing

limits to avoid mismatch in utilizing short-term borrowing to finance infrastructure projects.

5. The government will prioritize grant and concessional external financing to ease the burden on domestic financing and the pressure on the domestic interest rate.
6. It will limit external financing of social services predominantly to grants, while direct loan resources will go to productive sectors and infrastructural development with high economic returns.
7. The government will limit the accumulation of domestic arrears and ways and means advances from the central bank to not more than 5 percent of domestic revenue, supported by improved budget execution and control.
8. The government will embark on the verification of claims and adopt various strategies to clear arrears, including explicit provision in the annual budget arrears settlement.
9. The government will discount or apply a haircut (a reduction applied to the value of an asset) on verified claims based on certain characteristics; it will ensure upfront cash payments and issuance of special bonds to securitize arrears.
10. The government will utilize budget support and revenue windfalls to clear some categories of the verified claims, which is all aimed at zero accumulation of external debt arrears.
11. It will assiduously work towards avoiding future build-up of arrears by improving public financial management (PFM) practices, looking forward to the joint technical

assistance request from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in this direction; this is while noting the huge stock of domestic arrears and pipeline commitments estimated at 10.6 trillion leones (US\$1.4 billion) or 39 percent of GDP at the end of May 2018, which included non-payment for goods and services already delivered or works completed.

Additionally, a domestic arrears clearance strategy will be implemented as follows:

- Maintaining a comprehensive and credible database on arrears and payables across all sectors.
- Subjecting the database to verification or audit to ascertain the accuracy and validity of claims, ascertaining whether transactions were conducted within the law, including following correct procurement processes.
- Ensuring verification of arrears by category (salaries and wages, social security, recurrent goods and services, and so on), and prioritizing liquidation or treatment accordingly in the annual budget.
- In liquidating, the government will consider negotiating a haircut on certain categories of claims and would mobilize a down payment to pay off the discounted amount for those creditors willing to participate.
- The government will transform arrears to explicit obligations by borrowing to finance the liquidation of the claim, prioritizing cheaper sources of financing to settle verified claims.
- It will consider grant resources and revenue windfall towards clearing verified claims.
- It will consider ring-fencing pre-determined grants for disbursement towards addressing specific categories of claims in the short term.
- For large claims, in the roads and energy sectors in particular and in construction contracts in general, it will consider a securitization approach, allowing for delaying financing until such time that the fiscal situation of the government has improved with specific and predictable payment timelines; holders of securities or claimants could use these as guarantees to access financing elsewhere.

FIRST PERSON

'There is a need to continue the participatory approach for the National Development Plan.'

—Parliamentarian representative

'There is a need for a long-term plan that will set out a clear vision and path to development. Such a long-term plan needs to be legislated for stability in the development trajectory of the country.'

—NGC Political Party Representative

'The National Development Plan should be developed in "Blueprint Form", i.e. the document should serve for a long period of time and should not be changed from one government to another.'

—President, Labour Union

PART 2: POLICY CLUSTERS

Policies and programmes to implement the National Development Plan have been organized into eight broad policy clusters. These clusters also contain the eight leading strategic priorities of government. **Cluster 1:** Human capital development; **Cluster 2:** Diversifying the economy and promoting growth; **Cluster 3:** Infrastructure and economic competitiveness; **Cluster 4:** Governance and accountability for results; **Cluster 5:** Empowering women, children, adolescents, and persons with disabilities; **Cluster 6:** Youth employment, sports, and migration; **Cluster 7:** Addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience; and **Cluster 8:** Means of implementation. All these clusters are gender and environmentally mainstreamed.

CLUSTER ONE: HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Beyond its natural resources, Sierra Leone's most substantial asset is its human resources, largely made up of a young and dynamic population. Like natural resources, this resource must be properly developed to be an asset for economic growth and development. However, as outlined earlier, levels of literacy are low, performance in primary and secondary education is weak, and what is produced for the labour market is inadequate to meet needs. The difference between a potentially detrimental youth bulge and a beneficial, dynamic young workforce is the level of a country's human capital, particularly as it relates to health and education. Improving human capital to promote growth and development will require a dramatic increase in the quality of public services.

In the short term, better public service provision (especially free quality education) will free up household resources previously used to purchase similar services in the private sector, allowing for increased consumption

or for productive investments. This alone can improve outcomes, as lack of funding or capital was identified as the main reason for not sending children, particularly girls, to school and a key reason for not starting or expanding businesses and farming activities (2014 Labour Force Survey). In the medium term, an increase in human capital resources at the national level will improve the business climate, boosting the output of private sector activities and the attractiveness of Sierra Leone for future investment. Improved health also reduces days lost to illness, increasing the supply of labour for agriculture or informal nonfarm enterprises. Quality education meanwhile has been shown to improve the uptake of modern farming practices and allow fishermen and fish traders to move up the value chain.

This offers two channels for poverty reduction. First, it directly increases the income of the poor, as agriculture and fishing are key sectors of employment for this group. Second,



Joyous primary children ready for free quality education.

higher production of rice (a staple grain) and fish (a major protein source) would reduce their prices and increase consumption, thereby improving food security and nutrition for poor households. Better services in rural areas can also reduce migration to urban areas, which are already under pressure to provide basic services and jobs. In the long term, healthy and educated people living in stable conditions will constitute a ready workforce for new foreign direct investment in the manufacturing and service industries or increased domestic entrepreneurial activities.

Building human and physical capital for growth and poverty reduction would also require more efficient public spending. Bottlenecks in public financial management and procurement lead to inefficient public spending in priority sectors. Greater efficiencies and higher value for money can be achieved through improvements

in budgeting (enhanced allocative efficiency), procurement, and financial management, including reporting and oversight. Sierra Leone has built a fairly solid legal and regulatory framework that serves as the foundation for public financial management and a sound implementation framework.

Moreover, increased investment in human capital will guarantee sustained reduction of poverty, including improved conditions of vulnerable persons, as well as sustainable management of land and housing in the country.

Education is the bedrock of long-term sustainable growth and the transformation of the economy of Sierra Leone. It is at the heart of the socio-economic development of the country, helping to lift people out of poverty and create vast new opportunities to reduce unfair income distribution and increase choices. Education is

the key to individual, community, and national development. As noted in the 2018–2020 Education Sector Plan of Sierra Leone, investing in the quality of education is the most fundamental requirement for accelerating the future growth and development of the country.

This policy cluster, human capital development, therefore aims at generating a critical mass of highly educated, trained, and skilled Sierra Leoneans with the capacity to undertake research and development, pursue innovation and learning, start productive businesses and run sound industries, and deliver better leadership and services in the public sector. It is indeed not surprising that the Government of Sierra Leone has portrayed 'education for development' as the overarching guiding principle for the new National Development Plan.

The plan has categorized specific educational targets and strategies under two broad sub-policy areas: free quality basic and senior secondary education; and tertiary and higher education. And it has returned the country's education system to the 6-3-3-4 system that was instituted in 1993¹ from the 6-3-4-4 system used for the last seven years. Additionally, to heighten the focus on education as the flagship programme of the country, in tandem with related sectors, for the period 2019 to 2023, the government is pursuing a special Human Capital Development Project.

¹ In 1993, the country's system of education established that pupils will spend six years in primary school; three years in junior secondary school; three years in senior secondary school; and four years in university, with those not proceeding directly to high school and/or university made to pursue vocational and polytechnic training. In the 2010/2011 academic year, pupils were made to spend more (four instead of three) years in junior secondary, moving from 6-3-3-4 to 6-3-4-4.

1.1 Free quality basic and senior secondary education

Education is the bedrock of every society. Development of education as a cutting-edge catalyst is at the heart of the development agenda of the government. As the government seeks to develop human capital and improve academic performance, access to quality free education has become the flagship programme for the government. The aim is to further ensure that education is modernized and made relevant to the development needs of Sierra Leonean society.

Access and equity

The Free Quality School Education Programme will increase demand for school. It is anticipated that school enrolment will increase. Currently enrolment rates are rising across all levels of schooling, as shown in Table 1.1. There has been an increase in access: between the 2010/2011 school year and 2017, overall enrolment at all levels of schooling increased by 474, 612 (i.e. by approximately 30 percent). The percentage change in enrolment over the same period is greatest for the pre-primary level, at 115 percent, followed by the senior secondary level, at 66 percent. The percentage change is least for the primary level, at 24 percent. This should inform the allocation of resources moving forward, but at the same time it should be noted that enrolment at the primary level will remain higher than that of all other levels for the foreseeable future.

Female enrolment grew at a faster rate than that for males at the pre-primary, primary, and

Table 1.1: School enrolment from 2003 to 2017

Pre-primary								
	2003/04	2004/05	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2015	2016	2017
Male	9,906	10,794	18,247	23,639	25,748	28,480	38,162	38,103
Female	9,162	9,838	19,104	25,367	28,292	31,585	42,761	42,016
Both Sexes	19,068	20,632	37,351	49,006	54,040	60,065	80,923	80,119
Primary								
Male	618,982	698,387	611,604	628,329	648,303	665,103	702,178	736,275
Female	515,833	582,466	582,899	624,025	650,605	673,107	710,346	750,664
Both Sexes	1,134,815	1,280,853	1,194,503	1,252,354	1,298,908	1,338,210	1,412,524	1,486,939
Junior Secondary								
Male	80,963	93,822	134,096	144,174	143,132	146,661	161,964	156,394
Female	52,438	61,230	110,393	131,741	133,461	139,796	154,438	156,525
Both Sexes	133,401	155,052	244,489	275,915	276,593	286,457	316,402	312,919
Senior Secondary								
Male	26,292	28,541	67,283	71,236	78,812	86,769	91,675	94,187
Female	12,032	16,383	40,960	53,649	60,835	69,751	79,749	85,034
Both Sexes	38,324	44,924	108,243	124,885	139,647	156,520	171,424	179,221



Pupils' attention is important for quality learning.

junior secondary levels. Already the Gender Parity Index values based on the gross enrolment ratio indicate that gender equity is close to being attained at the basic level of schooling, standing at or better than 1. This trend is expected to continue, especially with the introduction of the Free Quality School Education Programme, and could result in more girls than boys being in senior secondary school in the next five years. It is therefore critical to ensure that girls do not only enrol in school, but continue with and complete their education. The programme is a strategy to ensure that this materializes.

The phased approach in the implementation of the Free Quality School Education Programme means that pupils benefitting in the first phase will be only those attending government and government-assisted schools. This is expected to result in a significant increase in enrolment in these two categories of schools.

The increase in enrolment over the years has not only been at the national level, but also at regional and district levels. Even though enrolment varies from district to district, largely because of population differences, it is worth noting that in every instance the enrolment rates have been improving.

In order to ensure that children with disabilities are not excluded or prevented from enrolling, provisions are being made to make schools more accommodating of persons with disability by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education. This includes providing ramps, making toilets more easily usable by pupils with disabilities, and making teachers more aware of the needs of students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. Data from the annual school census indicates, however, that

the number of students with disabilities in schools decreased a little from 25,339 in 2015 to 25,022 in 2017, even though overall enrolment increased. Full implementation of the recently developed Inclusive Education Policy will help to get more children with disabilities into schools.

Quality: learning, relevance, completion, integrity

While starting school is important, completing and advancing to the next level of education is equally important, if not more crucial in terms of national development. Late school entry impacts negatively on school completion, especially for girls. Generally, school completion rates have been moderate in Sierra Leone. These rates increased fairly consistently until 2017, when the increase in the estimated population of school-age children was not matched by the increase in enrolment at the primary level. Unsurprisingly, there was slippage in the gross completion rate at the primary level, from approximately 74 percent in 2016 to 67 percent in 2017. This also happened at junior secondary level, from approximately 61 percent in 2016 to 49 percent in 2017.

Ideally, all pupils completing primary school are expected to advance to junior secondary school, but the challenge has been acquiring the required aggregate pass score in the National Primary School Examination. Between 2016 and 2017, data from the Annual School Census revealed a reduction in the primary-to-junior secondary transition rate, from 88 percent in 2016 to 78 percent in 2017. Encouragingly, however, in 2017 the female primary-to-junior secondary transition rate was higher than that for males.

Entries for the Basic Education Certificate Examination increased up until 2017, when a decrease was recorded. Table 1.2 shows the numbers that entered, sat, and passed this examination from 2013 through 2017, which were not very encouraging, especially in 2013 and 2014. However, the trend shows a continued increase in the rate of passes each year.

The numbers entering, sitting, and passing the West African Senior School Certificate Examination fluctuated between 2012 and 2018 and registered dismal performance rates, ranging from 7 to 20 percent, as shown in Table 1.3. While boys are outperforming girls in the West African Examinations Council private school examinations, it is worth noting that girls are almost at par with boys in the public National Primary School Examination and West African Senior School Certificate Examination.

Teacher numbers have been increasing over the years as enrolment (at all levels) increased along with the number of schools constructed. In 2016, the total number of teachers in all schools was 63,535, of which 17,147 were females. By 2017, the total number had increased to 63,736, while that of female teachers decreased to 17,006 (a .8 percent decrease). It is only at the pre-primary level that there have been more female teachers than male teachers.

About 34 percent of teachers had no formal training as educators in 2016; in 2017, this dropped to 33 percent. Given the relatively small percentage of teachers who are appropriately qualified for the level they teach, it is not surprising that the pupil-to-qualified teacher ratio for 2017 is generally above ideal levels (Table 1.5), remaining higher in the provinces compared to Western Area.

In order to enable the Teaching Service Commission to effectively play its designated management and deployment role, policies, standards, guides, and related frameworks have been developed. Management of teacher records, transfers, deployment, assessment, promotions, and related responsibilities have now been moved from the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education to the Teaching Service Commission for improved governance.

The MTNDP addresses the numerous abovementioned challenges in the basic and senior secondary education sector. The fiscal constraints inherited from the implementation of the Agenda for Prosperity (2013–2018) resulted in a drastic shortfall in the financing requirements for the sector. This was exacerbated by the devastating Ebola virus disease outbreak (2013–2016) and the simultaneous crash in the country's leading export commodity, iron ore. During the 2013–2016 period, at the height of the Ebola epidemic, schools were shut down for almost a whole year. With GDP growth plunging from 20.7 percent in 2013 to 4.6 percent in 2014, and then contracting to negative 20.7 percent in 2015, and with spending on Ebola control diverting resources from other sectors, few resources were available for the education sector. All this was in addition to existing required improvements in overall service delivery in the sector.

Quality of education remains a concern across school levels. For instance, many Class 4 (primary) pupils cannot read a grade- and age-appropriate text fluently and with comprehension. Many pupils in Class 2 and Class 4 do not know the letter sounds and cannot decode words. At higher levels, the latest assessment on mathematics revealed that only 7 percent of Junior Secondary School 2 and 12 percent

Figure 1.1: Trends in National Primary School Examination performance 2013–2018

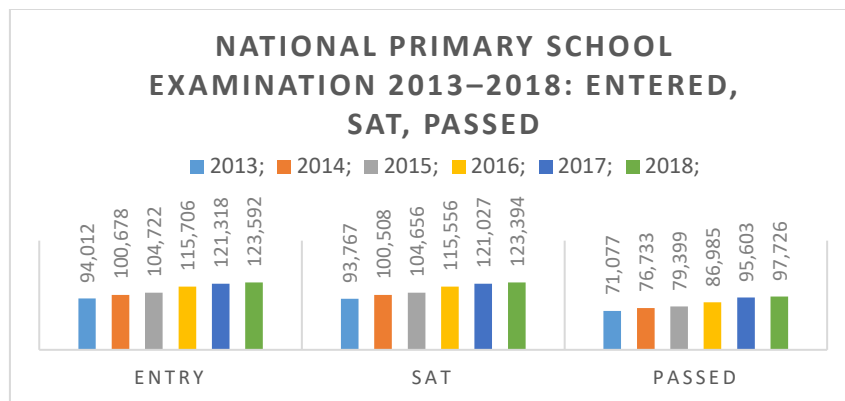


Table 1.2: Pupil performance in Basic Education Certificate Examination

Year	Entry	Sat	Passed	Pass Rate
2013	76,057	75,357	35,747	47 percent
2014	90,788	90,616	43,911	48 percent
2015	92,881	92,418	56,451	61 percent
2016	101,734	101,425	66,188	65 percent
2017	94,407	94,111	68,053	72 percent

Table 1.3: Pupil performance in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination

2012	58,195	56,893	4,177	7 percent
2014	27,370	26,782	1,889	7 percent
2015	24,300	23,587	3,445	15 percent
2016	36,696	35,938	6,095	17 percent
2017	29,922	29,222	5,728	20 percent
2018	33,396	32,232	5,797	18 percent

Table 1.4: Performance of male (M) and female (F) school candidates in the 2014–2018 West African Senior School Certificate Examination

Year	M Sat	F Sat	M Pass	F Pass	M Pass Rate	F Pass Rate
2014	16,066	10,716	1,221	668	8 percent	6 percent
2015	13,714	9,873	1,994	1,451	15 percent	15 percent
2016	20,489	15,449	3,663	2,432	18 percent	16 percent
2017	16,617	12,605	3,336	2,392	20 percent	19 percent
2018	16,987	15,245	2,989	2,808	18 percent	18 percent

of Senior Secondary School 2 pupils typically demonstrate math skills linked to the highest performance band; a vast majority of pupils in both grades fall within the lower performance bands, with about 37 percent of Junior Secondary School 2 and 25 percent of Senior Secondary School 2 pupils demonstrating skills linked to the lowest performance band. Across both grades, boys perform significantly better than girls, and the gap in their performance appears to widen as they move from the junior level to the senior level.

Additionally, based on the performance of pupils in public tests and examinations, the teaching force in Sierra Leone is of poor quality. Results for the Early Grade Reading Assessment, the Early Grade Mathematics Assessment, the National Primary School Examination, the Basic Education Certificate Examination, and the West African Senior School Certificate Examination are poor and not getting better. An average of 34 percent of all teachers are classified as unqualified/untrained. The problem is most serious at the primary level, where 42 percent of teachers are unqualified, compared to junior secondary and senior secondary levels, where 27 percent and 12 percent respectively of teachers are unqualified. But there is a positive trend, with the percentage of unqualified teachers declining from 45 percent in 2010 to 34 percent in 2016.

The school completion rate remains a serious challenge. Too many girls are still not completing basic education, and many who complete do not move on to senior secondary school. High repetition rates, especially at the primary level, have been a major factor in limiting school completion. The low levels of teacher competence and motivation are additional factors.

Equity issues exist in education. Pre-primary schooling is not equitably provided. A vast number of pre-primary school-age children do not have access to pre-primary school. Where this is provided, the quality of service has been uneven. There is still inequity in the provision of general schooling and in enrolment across geographical areas. Many children are still starting primary school late, above the official age. In addition, many children with disabilities are out of school.

In the governance and management of the school system, there has been unnecessary over-centralization, and no system of financing that encourages and rewards good performance and improvement.

Among the main **opportunities** and **strengths** for basic and senior secondary education are the increased focus on learning in schools and efforts to minimize the cost of schooling. The

Table 1.5: Pupil-to-qualified teacher ratio

<i>Region</i>	<i>Preschool</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>JSS</i>	<i>SSS</i>	<i>All</i>
East	62	71	64	75	70
North	38	65	38	73	58
South	41	73	47	35	63
West	29	39	29	50	37
National	37	61	40	55	55

commencement of the Free Quality School Education Programme provides an immense opportunity for Sierra Leoneans to have access to quality schooling at minimal cost. Under the programme, interventions that would improve the quality of schooling are being rapidly implemented. Additionally, increased attention has been given to decentralization in the management and supervision of education. Among other things, this would allow greater local ownership at the community level.

Greater importance has been given to early childhood education, putting the necessary policies and structures in place, including strategies to improve and enhance inclusive education. Standards and teacher guides have also been developed for early childhood education, and plans are in place to make available the necessary accompanying provisions. Another opportunity is the increasing school enrolment, which will serve as a catalyst for the government to accelerate the delivery of the compulsory Free Quality School Education Programme, especially given the encouraging enrolment numbers for girls over the years, including higher participation rates in public school examinations: the National Primary School Examination, Basic Education Certificate Examination, and West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination.

Furthermore, development partners have shown strong willingness to support the Free Quality School Education Programme and ensure that it succeeds. A trust fund has been established for partner participation, in addition to funds available from the budget. A stronger relationship between the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and the Ministry of Finance has been established,

including an understanding to guarantee a 20 percent minimum recurrent state budget for education.

There are greater schooling opportunities now, with more schools meeting the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education minimum criteria. New sustainable policies are underway. We are also seeing greater involvement of civil society in the monitoring of education, and more collaboration between the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and other MDAs.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to significantly improve and increase access to quality basic and senior secondary education in both formal and non-formal settings, providing modern, free basic and secondary education services that are safe, inclusive, equitable, corruption free, and relevant to needs in order to impact productive economic activity.

Key targets

1. By 2023, implement free quality basic and secondary school education.
2. By 2023, increase access, equity, and completion rates at all levels of schooling (formal and non-formal) above the 2018 rates.
3. By 2023, improve the basic and senior secondary learning environment at all levels above the 2018 rates.
4. By 2023, review and strengthen educational systems and governance architecture for improved quality education.

Key policy actions

1. Prioritize the provision of universal free quality education programmes by increasing the national budgetary allocation to education.
2. Decentralize basic and senior secondary school education.
3. Revert from the 6-3-4-4 system of education to the 6-3-3-4 system, as recommended in education sector reviews.
4. Provide specialized facilities and structures that meet the needs of vulnerable pupils, especially girls and children with disabilities, in primary and secondary schools.
5. Establish a functioning Non-formal Accelerated Learning Centre in every district.
6. Establish a Multi-partner Education Basket Fund for development with an effective governance and oversight mechanism.
7. Increase teacher–pupil contact hours by eliminating the two-shift system and building additional classrooms.
8. Reduce the pupil–teacher ratio by recruiting additional trained and qualified teachers.
9. Develop a policy and legal framework to enhance public–private partnerships in the education sector.
10. Improve the capacity of the ministry, the School Inspectorate, School Management Committees, etc.
11. Establish a national database with effective monitoring systems for all education programmes.
12. Establish one primary school per administration section; one junior secondary school per electoral ward; and one senior secondary school per electoral constituency.
13. Expand the school feeding programmes in all government and government-assisted schools.
14. Strengthen and expand the school bus system on a cost recovery basis through private participation.
15. Review the current Education Sector Plan to align it with national priorities and other international benchmarks on education.
16. Review the curriculum of the current education system to make it relevant to the modern job market and entrepreneurship opportunities.
17. Eliminate examination malpractice and unethical and corrupt practices in education through an effective national education security and governance strategy.

1.2 Strengthening tertiary and higher education

As noted earlier, the strategic objectives of the flagship education programme of the Government of Sierra Leone include increased access to quality technical and higher education to enable graduates to engage in meaningful productive economic activity. The government's commitment to achieving this objective was reflected in the President's State Opening of Parliament policy pronouncement in May 2018, aimed at increasing and sustaining budgetary allocation to education to a minimum of 20 percent of the national budget.

As the state pursues upstream free basic and senior secondary education in building its human resource base, it is very much aware that the ultimate objective of generating a critical mass of capable Sierra Leoneans for socio-economic competitiveness and achievement of middle-income status and beyond equally requires massive attention towards technical and higher education. All over the world, science and technology are the bedrock for the development of any modern economy.

Therefore, while the challenges ahead are enormous in the country's pursuit of better university and higher education, the new National Development Plan will build on existing opportunities, including renewed state commitment to overcome these challenges and achieve the desired development objectives. The national population is growing fast, with consequent growth in the number of education-ready children and young people. The rising enrolment over the years (expected to quadruple with the introduction of the Free Quality School Education Programme) is testimony to the need to provide commensurate support to technical and higher education.

Table 1.6 presents the projected school-going population landscape for pre-primary (3- to 5-year-olds); primary (6- to 11-year-olds); junior secondary (12- to 14-year-olds); and senior secondary (15- to 17-year-olds) to shed light on the enormous need for the development of higher and university education. The projections for 2025, based on a 2015 baseline, suggest an increase in total population for these four school levels, from 2.89 million in 2015 to 3.38 million in 2020, 3.72 million in 2023, 3.96 million in 2025, and 4.63 million in 2030.

Upward pressure on the demand for post-basic education services will increase along with enrolment and leavers in pre-primary, primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary (due to the rising school-age population), but the government's determination has increased at the same time to render free quality basic and senior education.

The above provides clear signals of the expected increases in demand for tertiary education, with the accompanying increase in resource requirements, thereby justifying the government's general attention paid to education and its decision to separate the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education and the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education.

A total of 48 higher and tertiary institutions were registered with the Tertiary Education Commission in 2013:

1. Five universities (3 public, 2 private)
2. Three polytechnics (all public)
3. Four theological colleges (all private)
4. Four health service institutions (1 private, 3 public)
5. Four technical colleges (3 public, 1 private)
6. Twenty-eight other colleges (all private)

Table 1.7 shows the types and size of enrolment across ten public higher education institutions in Sierra Leone for the 2011/2012 academic year. The total enrolment at the time was 31,103 students. It is logical to extrapolate that the current size of student enrolment will be above this number, given the growing demand for education at the basic level, a trend expected

Table 1.6: School-age population projection 2013 estimate for 2015–2030

	2015		2020		2023		2025		2030	
	No.		No.		No.		No.		No.	
National Population	7,092,113	-	8,301,836	-	9,124,587	-	9,717,904	-	11,375,516	-
3- to 5-year-olds	694,514	24	812,979	24	893,549	24	951,652	24	1,113,978	24
6- to 11-year-olds	1,237,564	43	1,448,659	43	1,592,228	43	1,695,761	43	1,985,012	43
12- to 14-year-olds	473,881	16	554,712	16	609,687	16	649,331	16	760,090	16
15- to 17-year-olds	483,295	17	565,732	17	621,799	17	662,231	17	775,189	17
Total population 3-17	2,889,254	41	3,382,083	41	3,717,263	41	3,958,974	41	4,634,268	41

Table 1.7: Types and size of enrolment in the public higher education institutions in Sierra Leone 2011/2012 academic year

Tertiary education institution	Regional location	Male	Female	Total
University of Sierra Leone: Fourah Bay College College of Medicine and Allied Health Science Institute of Public Administration and Management	West	6,123	3,285	9,408
		3,341	1,143	4,484
		635	821	1,456
		2,147	1,321	3,468
Njala University	South	4,022	2,132	6,154
Milton Margai College of Education and Technology	West	2,842	1,487	4,329
Eastern Polytechnic	East	2,286	1,268	3,554
Northern Polytechnic	North	1,734	1,200	2,934
Bonthe Technical Training College	South	54	28	82
Port Loko Teachers College	North	834	580	1,414
Freetown Teachers College	West	2,115	1,113	3,228
TOTAL enrolment		20,010	11,093	31,103

Source: Tertiary Education Commission

to drastically increase with the introduction of free quality education and accelerated support to higher education.

The government's commitment to scaling up support for higher education is also rooted in its increased determination to diversify the economy, detailed in Cluster 3 on transforming the economy. This is evidenced in President Bio's State Opening of Parliament policy pronouncement aimed at developing skills in tourism in the next five years through conducting a comprehensive skills audit of the tourism sector; preparing a Labour Force Development Plan for the tourism sector; upgrading the existing training school for hotel management; supporting private colleges pursuing tourism-related disciplines in terms of materials, equipment, and staffing; and introducing higher education programmes for tourism training, believing that higher education is the foundation for enhancing the country's competitiveness.

The government is mindful of the wide range of challenges existent in the technical and higher education sector as it forges ahead with the Medium-term National Development Plan. These challenges include poor facilities and infrastructure; low-quality teacher training and technical and vocational institutions; corruption; and limited financial resources for the oversight ministry and the institutions of higher learning. Conditions in higher learning institutions are deplorable: they lack basic modern facilities for scientific research, innovation, and technological development, and are poorly financed. Additionally, the quality of output of teacher training institutions does not meet the needs of the educational system, and the curricula of tertiary, technical, and vocational institutions are not properly tailored to

FIRST PERSON

'We feel good today that the government is here in our school. No one can better articulate our needs and what we suffer from except us. We believe that our views will help government to improve the educational sector, especially for girls.'

—Dellanie L.B.R. Buck, SSS3 Science 1, Annie Walsh Memorial Secondary School, Freetown

'Education is key for achieving the other development targets.'

—NGC representative

'Government should focus only on programmes and projects outlined in the NDP.'

—Chairperson, Bo District Council

meet the growing demands of the Sierra Leone economy, thus compounding the problem of unemployment and underemployment.

The government's commitment to driving higher education is demonstrated in the establishment of a separate Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to focus solely on the improvement of higher education. The government is determined to strengthen the university system's independence, including selecting its own leadership (chancellors and vice-chancellors), as a way of reducing political interference. It is hoped that this will restore the system's international clout and increase funding for research and networking opportunities. A Directorate for Science, Technology, and Innovation has been established in the Office of the President to work closely with the

Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to help provide an initial impetus and develop a framework for scientific research.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to increase equitable access to quality higher education that promotes research, innovation, and entrepreneurship for growth, stability, and national development.

Key targets

1. By 2023, increase access to quality higher education.
2. By 2023, increase access to functional adult literacy education.
3. By 2023, implement a universal civic education programme.
4. By 2023, improve the quality of research and academic excellence at tertiary levels.

Key policy actions

1. Improve support to the teaching of science, technology, and innovation at universities and polytechnics through the provision of special resources (equipment, motivation packages, etc.).
2. Review and reinvigorate the Teaching Service Commission through improvement in personnel capacity and other requisite resources.
3. Establish the Directorate for Science, Technology, and Innovation, initially anchored within the Office of the President.

4. Upgrade and expand the curriculum of universities and the research output.
5. Introduce a special motivation scheme for teachers in rural communities and special needs educational institutions through a special package (housing, medical services, scholarships, etc.).
6. Introduce a BEST Teacher Award Scheme by providing free university education for three children of every schoolteacher with at least ten years teaching experience.
7. Extend teacher training institutions to all districts by supporting established institutions with the requisite resources and adequate capacity.
8. Review and expand on students' grants-in-aid and introduce a Student Loan Scheme for deserving students across the country.
9. Establish functional Adult Literacy Centres in all districts.
10. Review and standardize the curriculum and certification for technical and vocational education and training.
11. Develop a National Apprenticeship Scheme through the engagement of public-private partnerships in technical and vocational education and training.
12. Establish additional universities and improve university infrastructure – energy, water, ICT, and student dormitories.
13. Complete the review of policies and acts covering operations of higher learning institutions.
14. Strengthen accountability mechanisms in higher education and improve university governance and administration to engender greater autonomy in the management

of universities through the independent selection of chancellors and vice chancellors.

15. Improve and expand partnerships with regional and international education institutions through coordinated research, exchange learning, and the establishment of regional centres of excellence and inter-university scientific cooperation.

1.3 Health care improvement

A healthy population is among the most crucial prerequisites for the advancement of a nation. Along with education, health is a leading dimension of the human capital formation required for sustained GDP growth and the structural transformation of an economy. There has been some progress over the years to improve access to affordable health care, both at policy and operational levels. Building on the post-conflict policy reforms, the Free Health Care Initiative launched in 2010 was a major initiative undertaken to improve health outcomes in Sierra Leone, and the government remains committed to sustaining the implementation of this initiative.

Table 1.8 provides some trends in health-care service outcomes between 2008 and 2017. The infant mortality rate dropped from 89 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2008 to 56 deaths in 2017, and the under-five mortality rate dropped from 140 to 94 deaths during the same period. There was fluctuation, with infant mortality recording a slight increase (92/1,000 live births) in 2013 and under-five mortality going up to 156/1,000 live births in 2013. Similarly, the maternal mortality ratio increased from 857/100,000 live births in 2008

to 1,165/100,000 in 2013, thus giving Sierra Leone one of the highest maternal mortality ratios in the world.

In Sierra Leone, preventable non-communicable diseases, malnutrition, pregnancy, and newborn complications have been reported to account for nine in ten under-five deaths, with malaria taking the lead, followed by acute lower respiratory tract infections and other non-communicable, perinatal, and nutritional conditions (Figure 1.2). For maternal mortality, the deaths are largely preventable, with the main cause being postpartum haemorrhage, which accounted for 33 percent of all deaths and 10 percent of unsafe abortions among adolescents. Teenagers account for almost half of all maternal deaths, which is not surprising, given the high adolescent birth rate of 125 per 1,000 live births.

Unfortunately, out-of-pocket health expenditure is very high in Sierra Leone compared to other countries in the region and the sub-Saharan African average (Figure 1.2), and this limits the affordability of health care in the country, particularly for the poorest.

The pattern of access to the nearest health clinic is uneven, with a high proportion of households in the northern and southern regions living beyond a walking distance of 60 minutes to a health clinic.

The health sector is faced with myriad challenges, including, but not limited to, poor infrastructure; poor conditions of service for health workers; poor governance and management of delivery systems; a weak human resource base; low per capita expenditure on health (the health allocation is below 15 percent of the national budget, which is the 2001 Abuja Declaration minimum); inadequate disease prevention; a

Table 1.8: Selection of Demographic and Health Survey and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey indicators – changes over time

Indicators	DHS 2008	DHS 2013	MICS 2017
IMPACT INDICATORS			
Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	36/1,000	39/1,000	20/1,000
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	89 /1,000	92/1,000	56/1,000
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	140 /1,000	156 / 1,000	94/1,000
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	857 /100.000	1,165 /100,000	-
Prevalence of HIV (percent of pop. aged 15–49)	1.5 percent	1.5 percent	-
Adolescent birth rate		125/1,000	101/1000
Total fertility rate	5.1	4.9	4.1
OUTCOME / OUTPUT INDICATORS: Reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health			
Percent births attended by skilled staff (public and private)	42 percent	54 percent ¹ maternal and child health aide 14 percent, nurse 44 percent	81,6
Percent pregnant women making 4 antenatal visits	> 50	76	77.5
Contraceptive prevalence rate (percent of women 15–49)	14 percent	16 percent	22.5
Unmet need among married women for family planning	28 percent	25 percent	26.3 percent
Percent children < 1 year fully vaccinated	40	58	62.7
OUTCOME / OUTPUT INDICATORS: Nutrition			
Prevalence of underweight (wt/age) among children 6–59 months (2SD)	21 percent	16 percent	11.7 percent
Prevalence of stunting (ht/age) among children 6–59 months (2SD)	36 percent	38 percent	26.4 percent
Prevalence of Wasting (ht/wt) among children 6–59 months (2SD)	10 percent	9 percent	5.1 percent
OUTCOME / OUTPUT INDICATORS: Communicable diseases			
No. health facilities with voluntary counselling and testing / prevention of mother-to-child transmission / antiretroviral drugs	398/351/111	708/691/136	
Percent children sleeping under long-lasting insecticide-treated net the night before	26 percent	49 percent	

Source: Ministry of Health and Sanitation Directorate of Policy Planning and Information, National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2017–2021 and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2017



Quality care for children under five in hospitals.

poor control and surveillance programme; poor quality data; and limited access to sexual and reproductive health services.

The Government of Sierra Leone is determined to use its strong leadership and political will to increase health-care spending to 15 percent of the national budget, enhancing the implementation of the Free Health Care Initiative. Crucially, Sierra Leone is among the countries that may benefit from the World Bank's Human Capital Development Project, which is under formulation. This is expected to positively impact on health outcomes, as the health sector is one of the major sub-components for support, alongside education and social protection.

There is an opportunity for Sierra Leone to benefit from a demographic dividend in the coming years, and reducing the fertility rate by increasing access to family planning will be key.

Studies have shown that women who are able to choose family planning are healthier and face a lower risk of dying during pregnancy and childbirth. Children born to women who space their pregnancies tend to be healthier and face reduced risk of death in their first five years. Furthermore, women with choices and greater reproductive health are better empowered to seek and keep jobs and contribute more to their families, their nations, and global prosperity.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to transform the health sector from an under-resourced, ill-equipped, and inadequate delivery system into a well-resourced and functioning national health-care delivery system that is affordable for everyone and accessible to all.

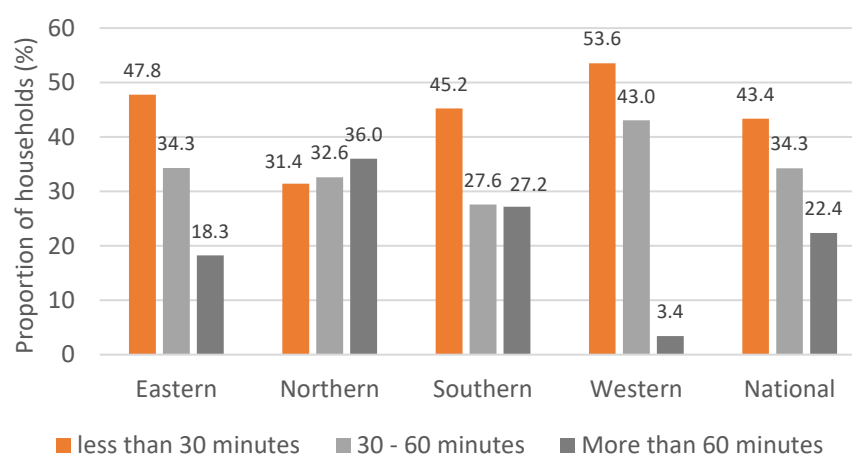
Key targets

1. By 2023, expand and improve on the management of free health care.
2. Continuously improve disease prevention, control, and surveillance.
3. By 2023, improve health governance and human resource management.
4. By 2023, increase modern diagnostic and specialist treatment within the country and improve on secondary health delivery systems.
5. Strengthen the Health Management and Information System through the digitalization of health-care systems and processes.
6. Recruit specialists through the introduction of attractive schemes for Sierra Leonean specialists in the diaspora and partnerships with international agencies.
7. Encourage public-private partnership involvement by developing a policy and legal framework to secure modern diagnostic facilities and provide laboratory equipment and facilities in all districts.
8. Strengthen the capacity of medical regulatory bodies through the review of a legal and policy regulatory framework in line with regional and international benchmarks.

Key policy actions

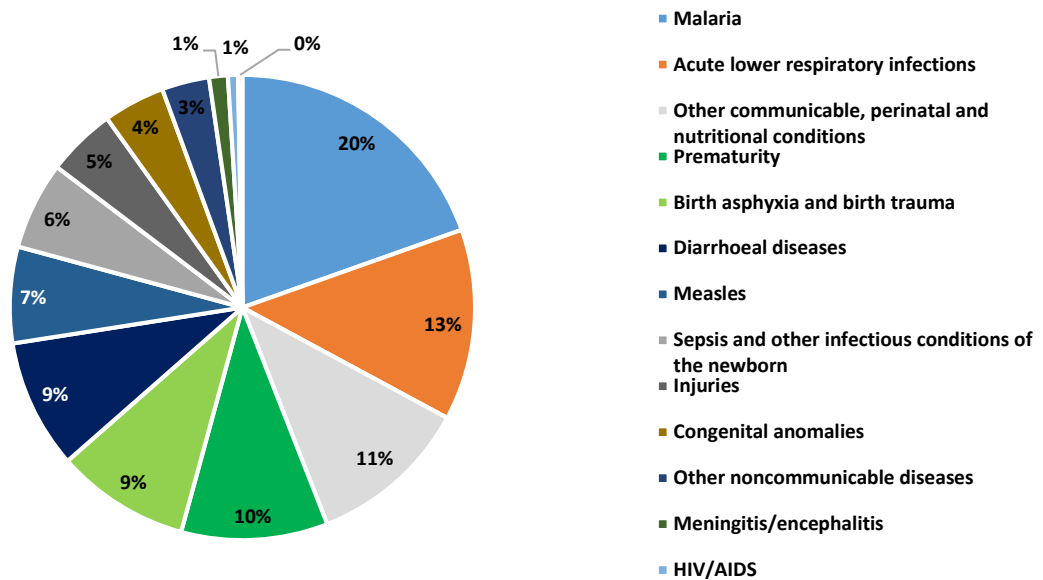
1. Increase the national health-care budget allocation to 15 percent.
2. Establish a National Ambulance Service in all districts.
3. Promote efficient health-care delivery through constructive dialogue among stakeholders within the sector.
4. Implement the Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Scheme.

Figure 1.2: Access to health facilities in Sierra Leone



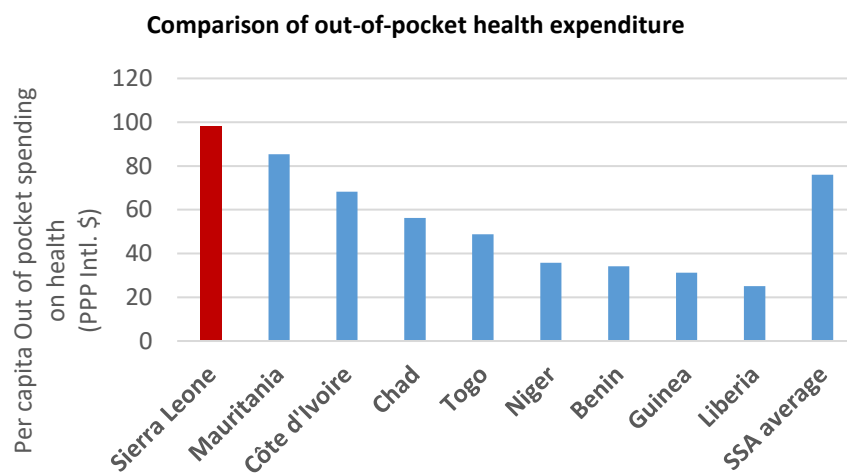
Source: Government of Sierra Leone Human Capital Development Project Report

Figure 1.3: Distribution of under-five deaths by disease in Sierra Leone



Source: Government of Sierra Leone Human Capital Development Project Report

Figure 1.4: Out-of-pocket expenditure in Sierra Leone compared with peers in sub-Saharan Africa



Source: Government of Sierra Leone Human Capital Development Project Report



President Bio visits a children's ward to ensure adequate care is provided.

9. Strengthen the management and coordination of all resources allocated to the health sector and track donor resources through a regularly updated national health database system.
10. Strengthen and capacitate the Health Service Commission to develop a Human Development Plan to guide the absorption of trained health workers into the public service and advocate for conditions of service of health workers through restructuring and providing the requisite resources.
11. Strengthen national, district, and community-based monitoring of the free health-care drugs and services through capacity building, adequate resources, and the introduction of innovative approaches for tracking.
12. Strengthen the National Programme on Sexual and Reproductive Health for adolescents in order to reduce teenage pregnancy through a systems review and innovative SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely) mechanisms.

1.4 Environmental sanitation and hygiene

Many of the major causes of death and disability in Sierra Leone can be traced to challenges with environmental health and sanitation.

Table 1.9: Sanitation indicators for Sierra Leone

Indicator	Prevalence (MICS, 2008)	Prevalence (MICS, 2017)
Use of improved sanitation facilities, total population	13 percent	16 percent
Use of improved sanitation facilities, urban	26 percent	27 percent
Use of improved sanitation facilities, rural	6 percent	7.9 percent
Diarrhoea disease prevalence, 6 to 11 years	18 percent (DHS, 2008)	18.6 percent (DHS, 2013)
Diarrhoea disease prevalence <6 years	13 percent (DHS, 2008)	11 percent (DHS, 2013)

Source: MICS, 2017; Demographic and Health Survey 2008, 2013

Examples include diarrhoea, respiratory tract infections, and the high prevalence of stunting and wasting in children under the age of five. Furthermore, environmental health and sanitation interventions are highly cost-effective and have immense health and socio-economic benefits across the life course. In general, access to clean water and sanitation is regarded as a fundamental human right.

The current situation on sanitation is of great concern. Use of improved sanitation facilities has had a mixed performance, rising from a low base of 13 percent (MICS, 2008) to 16 percent (MICS, 2017). Urban dwellers are much more likely to have improved sanitation facilities than rural households (27 percent and 7.9 percent, respectively). The most common toilet facility is the latrine with slab (33.1 percent), which is much more likely to be used in rural areas (44.7 percent) than in urban areas (23.7 percent). About 27.7 percent of the rural population practices open defecation. Sanitation is far below the reasonable SDG target of 66 percent for the country, and the budget allocation for the sector is less than 0.02 percent of GDP.

Poor environmental quality directly accounts for between 25 and 33 percent of all preventable ill-health in the world today, with diseases such as pneumonia and parasitic malaria heading the list (Black et al., 2011). In Sierra Leone, poor sanitation and hygiene and use of unsafe water cause ill-health and contribute to about half of the preventable diseases. The leading diseases are malaria, diarrhoeal diseases (including cholera and typhoid), worm infestation, and respiratory tract infections. Poor disposal of human excreta and garbage also increases the spread of cholera and typhoid, resulting in many deaths.

The environmental sanitation and hygiene sector has many problems to solve. Many Sierra Leoneans are still not aware of the benefits of good hygiene and sanitation, in part due to cultural beliefs and practices. Lack of awareness also is caused by lack of information and technical knowledge, and inadequate and inappropriate technological solutions, especially for urban sanitation.

The sector has in the past been given a low priority in the national development agenda,



Indiscriminately dumped garbage and poor drainage systems.

with the effect that the resources allocated are inadequate to meet the needs of all. However, the government made a commitment to accord sanitation high priority at the Sanitation and Water for All high-level meetings in Liberia and Washington, D.C. For a better environment, sanitation, and hygiene sector that will address these challenges, the country needs to build on the ongoing programmes, including the following: a) the Integrated Waste Management Programme; b) the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Programme; c) the Housing Sanitation Programme; d) the Food Safety and Quality Control Programme; e) the Integrated Vector Management Programme; f) the Occupational Health and Safety Programme; and g) the Port Health Services Programme.

These programmes are organized and implemented around four principal operational strategies of the Directorate of Environmental Health and Sanitation: a) Enabling Environment and Capacity-building Strategy; b) Integrated Waste Management Strategy; c) Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Strategy; and d) Safety Strategy.

The environmental health and hygiene subsector is fraught with many challenges. The system lacks an integrated, comprehensive policy, strategies, standard operating procedures, and sectoral coordination, which might be due to inadequate technical/human and financial capacity and limited research capability in the Directorate of Environmental Health and Sanitation. Again, there are low levels of

sanitation coverage in both rural and urban areas, as well as in health facilities, schools, and other public institutions.

Waste disposal and management is in a deplorable situation. Mining companies and other industrial operations have high-volume discharges that are not well treated. In addition, wastewater and sewage treatment and disposal systems are weak in communities. Solid waste management in all cities, towns, and villages is also weak.

The monitoring and supervision of sanitation services is weak even in cities and towns with relatively good transportation systems. Rural communities with poor transport systems are hard to reach, and this limits the provision of services in those communities.

Climate change-related effects, including frequent floods and the risk of rising sea levels, have further aggravated the sanitation challenges of communities.

However, there are growing opportunities for improving sanitation to the desired levels in the country under the new National Development Plan. The government has stepped up its commitment, according sanitation the priority it deserves in public policy. The strong political will and existence of good legislation, plans, and programmes for the sector suggest that there is a good chance for drastic improvement in water, sanitation, and hygiene services. These efforts are coupled with the coordinated approach to country assistance that is seen among international bodies. Building on the lessons learned about community response and



President Bio participates in cleaning the city for a healthy environment.

participation during the Ebola outbreak could help in achieving the sector objectives in the new plan.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to provide, with minimal impact on the environment, acceptable, affordable, and sustainable sanitation services for urban and rural households and institutions, through inter-sectoral coordination, integrated development, and community-based management.

Key targets

1. By 2023, increase on-site sanitary construction incentives and test and implement output-based aid schemes at the district level.
2. By 2023, reduce deaths and property loss from natural and human-made disasters and extreme climate events by 30 percent.
3. By 2023, reduce disease outbreaks in vulnerable communities by half.

Key policy actions

1. Review and update Integrated Vector Management and Integrated Waste Management policies and strategies.
2. Establish a monthly National Cleaning Day.
3. Replace the 1960 Public Health Ordinance Act with a new Public Health Act.

4. Establish and operationalize a National Environmental Health and Sanitation Coordination Group.
5. Develop and implement guidelines for Housing Sanitation Programmes.
6. Implement guidelines for the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Programme and increase communication and dissemination of information on water, sanitation, and hygiene.
7. Develop a framework with guidelines for district environmental health and sanitation strategies.
8. Revise laws, regulations, norms, and standards for environmental health and sanitation to include a Sanitary Court.
9. Use a sector-wide approach in financial resource allocation.
10. Improve sanitary service delivery at district and chiefdom levels through a local sanitary task force.
11. Facilitate the establishment of sanitation businesses in villages and districts.

1.5 Social protection

Supporting the poor and vulnerable is a fundamental requirement of implementing the 'leave no one behind' principle in the fragile context of Sierra Leone. More than half (57 percent) of inhabitants live below the poverty line, nearly 1 million (10.8 percent) of whom are extremely poor. Food insecurity plagues almost half (49.8 percent) of households across the country. The



Making provision for vulnerable groups.

population faces a low life expectancy of 42 years, and only about 37 percent of the population is literate (25 percent for women). In the last 15 years, Sierra Leone has experienced major floods, and most recently a landslide that affected over 220,000 people, causing the loss of lives and severe economic damage. Global economic shocks, such as the global financial crisis and falling commodity prices, also severely affect households' economic conditions. Yet many of the existing social programmes suffer from low coverage, high leakages, and inefficient coordination.

Social protection is defined as: all actions, public and private, taken in response to levels of vulnerability, risks, and deprivation deemed by the state to be socially and economically unacceptable. These include a multisectoral and

multidisciplinary strategy for poverty reduction that targets the poorest, those with disabilities, and the aged. On 30 March 2011, the cabinet approved the National Social Protection Policy, which defined specific outcomes and prioritized interventions for the sector. In 2011, the Government of Sierra Leone, with the support of the World Bank, launched a Social Protection Assessment to guide the development of an improved social protection system and to inform the implementation of the National Social Protection Policy. The assessment, which concluded in June 2013, recommended that the government focus its efforts on three major programmes selected from areas covered in the policy, including: (i) a cash transfer to very poor households with children; (ii) a social pension targeted at war victims and the elderly; and (iii) a permanent labour-intensive public works



Teenage mother struggling to make a living.

programme that seeks to help the unemployed and those rural and urban households that are seasonally exposed to food insecurity.

From these recent efforts, a number of lessons have emerged: (i) social protection systems to reduce inequality and social exclusion for long-term sustainable and inclusive growth are critical; (ii) social protection projects are often fragmented across many actors, thus collaboration and oversight is required; (iii) social transfers in emergencies help to cushion shocks while establishing key building blocks for resilience; and (iv) targeting women as household representatives yields better outcomes. Implementing these lessons will be imperative to overcome the challenges of establishing a

social safety net system that can support poor and food insecure households to achieve basic consumption, mitigate shocks, and over the long run, increase human capital.

Some of the challenges facing the poor and vulnerable are exacerbated by population growth and rising inequality. A major challenge is the heavy dependence on external financing, with about 85 percent of the social assistance coming from development partners. This undermines sustainability because the development partners may not support such programmes indefinitely.

There is a coverage gap issue. The expenditure and coverage information indicates that major programme gaps include: (i) the elderly,

persons with disabilities, and war victims who are unable to work and have no means of sustenance; (ii) the working poor and the seasonally or long-term unemployed; and (iii) very poor families with children. These coverage gaps are compounded by the fact that the major social assistance programmes are not generous. The planned social pension transfer under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security's National Social Safety Net Programme would cover only 8.3 percent of the food requirements of the poorest families, compared to a median of 27 percent in a sample of similar programmes in other developing countries.

The targeting of beneficiaries lacks efficiency. There is substantial room to increase the targeting accuracy of social assistance programmes through an improved mechanism for selecting beneficiaries. In addition, the cost-effectiveness of the programmes is low due to fragmentation and duplication among many different programmes. Poor coordination (especially between MDAs and non-state actors) of social protection interventions can cause such duplication. This critically constrains the efficient use of resources and undermines the impact of social protection interventions on the lives of the poor and vulnerable.

Monitoring and evaluation is very weak within the social protection management system. Any further development of a culture of evidence-based policymaking and management by results will require continued commitment and effort from the government, as well as greater investment in information gathering.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to provide a stronger relationship between the state and citizens with enhanced human capital development by effectively managing risks and vulnerability and empowering livelihood development for sustained social cohesion and nation-building for the people of Sierra Leone.

Key targets

1. By 2023, establish an integrated national identity card system.
2. By 2023, establish a social safety net fund for emergency response.
3. By 2023, all persons working in the formal sector have social security.
4. By 2023, provide social protection to at least 30 percent of vulnerable populations (including persons with disabilities, older persons, and children).
5. By 2023, establish an integrated birth registration system.

Key policy actions

1. Develop a national biometric ID card system for identification and data management of beneficiaries.
2. Strengthen the National Commission for Social Action to coordinate all national social protection programmes through the requisite legislative and policy frameworks.
3. Develop resilience to natural disasters by establishing a social safety net fund for emergency response.

4. Create targeted employment schemes (i.e. cash-for-work and food-for-work programmes) for youth, women, and others, especially the most vulnerable of these groups, through public–private partnerships and development partners.
5. Support informal schemes such as *osusu* and other community savings and insurance schemes with welfare provision elements.
6. Identify and train 3,000 Community Identification Committees.
7. Design and implement a national programme that promotes and enhances smallholder food production and productivity to meet national institutional demand (i.e. school feeding and food for the armed forces).
8. Establish a universal birth registration system.

1.6 Lands and housing

Lands and housing are two critical sectors for Sierra Leone’s socio-economic and spatial development. Managing the country’s valuable land resources and scarce housing stock is imperative for achieving sustainable development and social inclusion.

The land space in Sierra Leone is rich in minerals, including iron ore, diamonds, rutile, bauxite, and gold, and is fertile for agricultural production. Economic growth is driven heavily by agriculture and mineral production, both of which are highly dependent on access to land. Nearly 95 percent of the land territory on which agricultural and mining activities take place is administered under customary law (leasehold

system). Recent efforts have actively promoted large-scale land acquisition to support agriculture and mining, with no unified inventory of concessions or consolidated information on the leasing arrangements. It is estimated that a total of 773,999 hectares are under contract by foreign investors, equating 1.43 percent of the total arable land in the country. Most of the concluded acquisitions are leaseholds that run between 5 and 50 years.

In Western Area, land tenure is administered under general law (freehold system) and is plagued by inadequate land survey data, which results in the cadastre being outdated and inaccurate. This current cadastre and registry have contributed to an environment in which land conflicts are common, collection of taxes remains difficult, land markets are distorted, and urban planning and the associated disaster risk management is undermined. Successive governments have attempted to address land ownership and management issues, which most recently culminated in the development of a National Land Policy in 2015.

Lack of awareness and recognition of the importance of effective land management and spatial planning in the implementation of development projects and programmes has resulted in reduced internal rates of return on urban investment and the creation of agglomeration diseconomies and negative externalities, which impede economic growth and prosperity. Furthermore, urban growth and expansion has occurred in Sierra Leone without proper strategic and detailed land-use plans, public service infrastructure, and community services. Therefore, a spatial strategy for Sierra Leone is required to transform towns, cities, and districts to generate linkages in other associated sectors, such as transportation, agriculture, tourism, and telecommunication. Enhanced spatial

planning will facilitate the mobility of people, goods, and services, and, crucially, access to markets and resources.

The right to housing is a fundamental human right, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The housing situation in Sierra Leone is appalling. This is seen, in part, in overcrowding: the average household size is 8.8 persons per dwelling. This situation is compounded by the lack of adequate water and sanitation facilities, leading to health issues such as diarrhoea, malaria, and cholera, and even the recent Ebola virus disease outbreak. There is an overdependence on imported building materials, which keeps the cost of housing construction out of reach for most Sierra Leoneans. There is, therefore, a need to promote the use of local materials, which are environmentally friendly, and to adopt low-cost construction technologies.

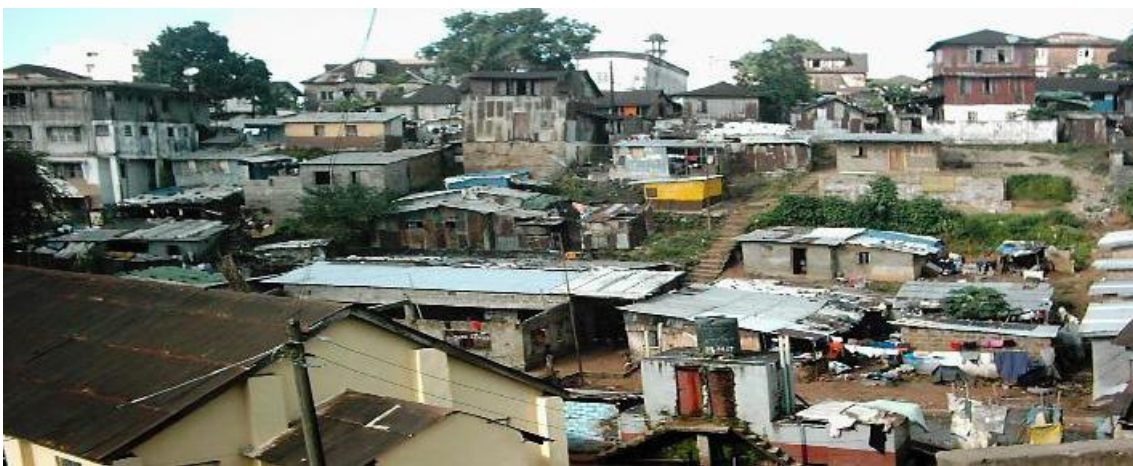
Over the years, successive governments have used programmes through the Sierra Leone Housing Corporation, the Home Finance Company, and the National Social Security and Insurance Trust to increase access to affordable

housing for Sierra Leoneans, especially those occupying informal settlements.

Over the last ten years, the rapid rate of urbanization, which is currently at 3 percent, along with limited housing development and relatively high poverty levels, has led to an increased number of slums and informal settlements, particularly in the capital city, Freetown, where 15 percent of the country's population resides. At present, over 72 slums and informal settlements have been identified.² Improving the quality of life for those living in informal settlements must be complementary to efforts to enhance the land management system.

The path towards sustainable land management and spatial development still faces serious challenges. The dual land tenure system (freehold and leasehold) creates confusion and difficulties for large-scale investments in agriculture and mining and other sectors. Also, illegal structures are regularly erected, and land disputes are frequent.

² The Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor and Centre for Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty Alleviation (2015).



Unplanned settlements in Sierra Leone.



Planned housing for urban development.

The lack of adequate physical planning, enforcement of development control, and an effective spatial planning system have exacerbated the already weak system, making it complex to manage land use. This has further been worsened by overlapping and conflicting mandates, coupled with weak collaboration and coordination among agencies involved in land use planning and land management.

In ensuring access to safe and affordable housing and upgrading informal settlements/slums, several challenges must be overcome. There is inadequate land for housing delivery, especially in Freetown. There are also insufficient housing financial instruments and deficient institutional and legal frameworks to encourage housing developments. Exacerbating the situation, slum dwellers in the capital city of Freetown are faced with inadequate access to drinking water, poor sanitation, and poor-quality house construction.

There is a lack of large-scale housing developers serving middle- and low-income earners. House costs are very high due to the high dependence on imported building materials. This has been further worsened by inadequate access to information on economical construction technologies and improved modern methods of construction. Limited development of small-scale building material production enterprises also constrains the housing sector.

However, some opportunities exist to remedy the situation. A strong mandate for the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Environment exists to address urban development issues, with the transfer of the Division of Housing under its purview. A new National Land Reform Programme based on the National Land Policy 2015 provides a unique opportunity and the necessary goodwill to address the numerous challenges in the dual land tenure system.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to ensure effective land management and administration that is environmentally sound and sustainable for equitable access to and control over land, including providing affordable housing for low- and middle-income groups to alleviate poverty and promote economic growth.

Key targets

1. By 2023, there is a 50 percent reduction in the number of land-related cases in courts, and ultimately the number of land conflicts, disaggregated by region.
2. By 2023, establish a National Land Commission with a corporate strategy, business plan, charter, and migration strategy.
3. By 2022, draft the Freetown Structure Plan and ensure urban structure plans for other cities are validated and approved.

Key policy actions

Land management and spatial development

1. Create land banks to ensure availability and affordability.
2. Establish a unified land title registration system and introduce title registration to enhance the delivery of registration services, archiving processes, and security of land tenure, as stipulated in the National Land Policy 2015.

3. Develop a National Cadastral Records Management System and Strategy for mapping and digitization of all plots, streets, and roads in the country.
4. Establish an autonomous and functional National Land Commission with a corporate strategy, business plan, charter, and migration strategy.
5. Develop a National Spatial Development Plan and Strategy that will facilitate the establishment of an integrated network for human settlements that are socially inclusive, environmentally resilient, and economically sustainable.

Housing and informal settlements

1. Design and implement a national programme for housing.
2. Encourage large-scale local production of building materials.
3. Develop and enact a comprehensive National Housing Policy and a National Building Code.
4. Set up and enforce standards for building materials, encourage large-scale local production of building materials, and improve access to and distribution of imported and locally produced building materials.
5. Develop an investment policy guideline to encourage direct private sector investment and public–private partnerships in the provision of affordable housing, with favourable investment conditions.

CLUSTER TWO: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY AND PROMOTING GROWTH

Sierra Leone's economy is dominated by the agricultural sector, which contributed about 55.1 percent of GDP. Services contribute 36.6 percent, while industry makes up 9.3 percent of GDP. The country also depends on primary commodities for exports. The structure of production is dominated by raw material production from abundant natural resources.

The undiversified nature of the economy renders it vulnerable to external shocks, as occurred during the iron ore price slump of 2014. For growth to be sustained and people's livelihoods improved generally, greater diversity in the economy must be promoted through the adoption of policies to encourage the development of other sectors and to increase processing and manufacturing. It is therefore imperative to identify new drivers of growth through diversifying into other sectors such as tourism and fisheries; strengthening productivity in agriculture; changing the structure of the economy towards manufacturing and services; and promoting the export of non-primary products.

2.1 Improving the productivity and commercialization of the agricultural sector

Agriculture remains the backbone of the economy of Sierra Leone and is comprised of subsectors that have the potential to be key drivers of the country's economic development.

The sector directly contributes to the national economy through enhancing food security, income generation, employment, wealth creation, and poverty reduction, and has the potential for industrial development and ensuring equitable distribution of resources. Its share of GDP averages between 40 to 50 percent, and it provides employment to approximately two-thirds of the population. It further accounts for about 10 percent of the country's total exports.

From 2013 to 2018, the sector accounted for 61.1 percent of rural employment. With support from development partners, contributions were made to food security, as more than 52 agricultural business centres were transformed into functional cooperatives along several crops' value chains.

Progress was also made in improving access to rural financial services. The Apex Bank was established in 2016, with a network of 51 financial services associations and 17 community banks, to help farmers access financing for agricultural activities (see the *Project Supervision Mission Report 2016* and Table 2.2 for a summarized status of key financial indicators, including the number of active borrowers from community banks, disaggregated into women and youth, and the number of active savings accounts).

On the whole, the performance of the sector leaves considerable room for improvement. Despite the large acreage of arable land, and the gains described above, Sierra Leone continues to be a net importer of rice. The value of rice imports in 2016 alone, for example,

amounted to US\$95.9 million. According to the 2015 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis study conducted by the World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organization, 49.8 percent of households were food insecure in 2015, compared to 45 percent in 2010. That is, they consumed limited or insufficient food to maintain a healthy and active life. The Global Hunger Index 2017 ranked Sierra Leone as the third hungriest country in the world, with the percentage of the population that is undernourished estimated at 38.5 percent, compared to 28.6 percent in Guinea and 16.2 percent in Ghana.

Major factors affecting the productivity, profitability, and competitiveness of the agricultural

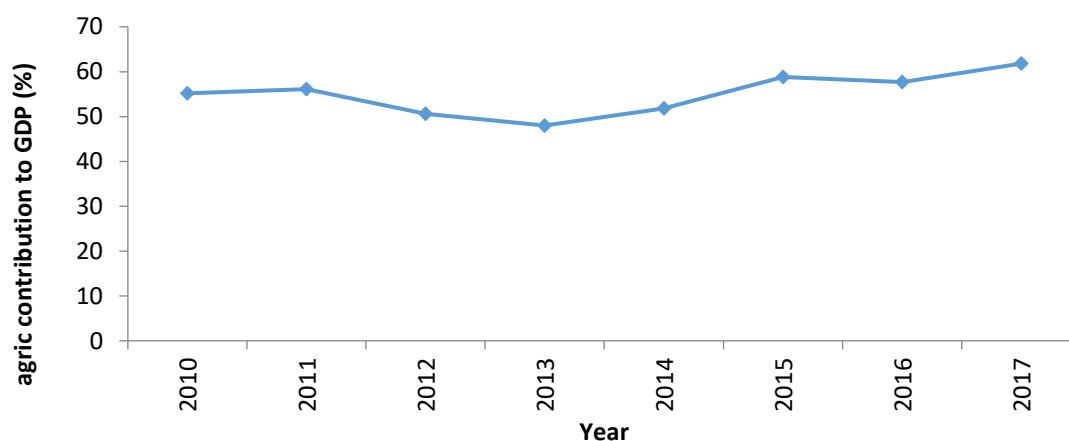
sector include the inadequate access to effective agricultural input supply systems, resulting in the low use of necessary inputs such as fertilizers and improved seeds of optimal varieties. Apart from low human capacity and weak capacity-building programmes for the sector, the heavy reliance on rain-fed agriculture has severely limited large-scale irrigation and mechanized farms.

The entire value chain for agricultural products is weak and vulnerable as a result of low levels of agro-processing and limited downstream integration due to limited access to electricity and water utilities (and their high cost). There is also poor access to markets due to inadequate market information and the poor condition of feeder roads linking smallholder farmers and



Diverse agricultural production for food security.

Figure 2.1: Contribution of agriculture to GDP (%) 2010–2017



Source: Statistics Sierra Leone

Table 2.1: Production of key agricultural crops (metric tons)

CROP	2014	2015	2016	2017
Paddy rice	832,774	853,677	875,104	897,069
Cassava	2,298,649	2,356,345	2,415,490	2,476,118
Groundnut	18,686	19,155	19,636	20,129
Sweet potato	138,207	145,778	149,438	153,188
Maize	20,812	21,334	21,869	22,418
Sorghum	41,414	42,435	43,500	47,959
Sesame	5,250	5,500	5,638	5,779
Cocoa	27,111	46,537	47,705	48,903
Coffee	60,303	89,892	92,149	92,149
Cashew	317	1,422	1,458	1,494
Palm oil	646,988	668,477	685,256	702,456

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security – Planning, Evaluation, Monitoring and Statistics Division, national yield study data (2017)



Supporting local farmers for sustainable production.

agribusiness activities. In addition, limited access to affordable agricultural finance (high interest rates and short grace periods) for the purchase of inputs such as fertilizers, machinery, and extension services impedes value chain development.

Improving agricultural productivity is challenging, partly because of limited research and the absence of credible data. The result is that available policy options have been limited. Extension agricultural services to enhance the effective use of inputs and post-harvest technology applications have had low coverage. These challenges have resulted in limited improvement in agricultural productivity and a dependence on the importation of rice, along with low production volumes of food and cash crops and insufficient livestock management.

Strategic objectives

The strategic objective is to improve performance in the sector as a basis for moving up the value chain into industrial agriculture activities. This requires enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of the agriculture sector, facilitating the capture of the entire value chains of key crops, ensuring food security, and contributing to stabilizing the macroeconomic environment for sustainable, inclusive economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction.

Key targets

1. By 2023, achieve 90 percent food self-sufficiency.

Table 2.2: Aggregated financial indicators of 17 community banks

	2014	2015	2016
Gross outstanding portfolio (leone '000)	11,728,393	18,772,903	23,627,774
No. of active borrowers	10,982	14,966	15,594
Percentage of women	39.5 percent	41.6 percent	38.8 percent
Percentage of youths	34.0 percent	40.5 percent	40.5 percent
No. of active savings accounts	35,753	43,534	46,827

2. By 2023, increase youth and women's participation in integrated agricultural value chains by at least 30 percent.
3. By 2023, develop the value chain for at least two agricultural products.

Key policy actions

1. Improve on animal health for production of healthy livestock products, and revive livestock research stations.
2. Provide better market facilities and access to agricultural inputs (i.e. agro-chemicals, including fertilizers, herbicides, and bio-based insecticides and preservatives; investment in feeder roads and information technology, etc.).
3. Design and implement credit facilities and guarantees that will not impose a burden on either the farmers or the commercial/agricultural banks for lending to agricultural investors.
4. Develop value chains for some key agricultural products.
5. Promote sustainable investment in mechanized commercial agriculture (i.e. tractors, power tillers, irrigation facilities, etc.) and introduce private sector management of the hiring and lease of machinery at the district level to increase the acreage of land under cultivation.
6. Promote agricultural research through the establishment and strengthening of research institutions.
7. Strengthen seed production and improve both the formal and informal seed sectors operating in the country.
8. Strengthen cooperative farming (i.e. farmer-based organizations) and build the capacity of Agricultural Business Centres to promote integration into agricultural value chains.
9. Promote organic farming to minimize biodiversity loss.
10. Develop a robust policy framework and action plan to guide the development of the sector.
11. Promote schemes that would encourage the public to engage and invest in agriculture.



Supporting women entrepreneurs in the fisheries sector.

2.2 Improving the productivity and sustainable management of fisheries and the marine sector

The fisheries subsector continues to play a significant role in the national economy and food security of the country. It contributes about 12 percent of GDP, and it is the most important economic activity along the coastline of Sierra Leone. Fish is the largest source of animal protein for the majority of Sierra Leoneans, supplying about 80 percent of total animal protein consumption. Over 500,000 people are directly or indirectly employed in the fisheries sector.

Gains made over the years are important achievements to build upon to address

remaining and emerging challenges for better delivery of results in the sector. Some of the milestones achieved include the following:

- A steady increase in sectoral revenue generation, mainly from fines, licences, and royalties, from 30.4 billion leones in 2014 to 71.3 billion leones in 2017. As of 22 August 2018, the sector had generated a total of 63.5 billion leones, and is expected to exceed the amount generated in 2017.
- In collaboration with the Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography, the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources has established a new database system, and data entry is ongoing to ascertain the fish stocks in Sierra Leone's Exclusive Economic Zone. Under the European Union-funded Institutional Support for Fisheries Management Project, an

assessment of major fish stocks was carried out in Sierra Leonean waters from 2008 to 2010 and registered an estimated fish biomass of 450,000 metric tons and a shrimp biomass of around 2,000 metric tons.

- The procurement process for an international firm to build the capacity of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources and the Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography to conduct another fish stock assessment has been completed, and the fish stock assessment is ongoing, with capacities being built in the ministry and the University of Sierra Leone.
- A proposal for the construction of a fish harbour complex, under a public-private

partnership, has been developed. The proposed fish harbour complex will have a transshipment quay capable of berthing over 14 vessels at a time, as well as a reefer quay. The complex will provide cold storage facilities, bonded stores for fish export, and ice sales to fishing vessels and fish processing plants. It will also undertake the purchase and processing of fish and fishery products for export and the construction and maintenance of fishing and patrol crafts.

- With support from the Embassy of the United States of America in Freetown, a radar system has been installed and is fully operational at the Joint Marine Committee



Organizing fishermen for sustainable fishing.

Office to aid the surveillance and monitoring of Sierra Leone's waters. Furthermore, the embassy conducted feasibility studies to install other radar systems around Bailor and Yelibuya in the North and Bonthe and Sulima in the South. Various other efforts in this direction were undertaken, including the procurement of a multi-purpose, fast surveillance and patrol vessel, which can be used to police the entire exclusive economic zone (200 nautical miles).

- Furthermore, the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources has worked with local councils to register over 10,000 fishing canoes in the country. Appropriate fishing nets were provided in exchange for illegal fishing nets at affordable and subsidized rates.

The following are the identified challenges in the sector: no comprehensive fish stock assessment has been done for an extended period, which means the government lacks credible data and information to determine the number of fishing vessels that can fish sustainably in certain areas; no food safety authority has been established to certify seafood using international standards such as the European Union Export Market Certification; there is no fishing harbour complex to accommodate shore-based fish processing and dry-docking activities in the fish value chain; and the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources is unable to meet its commitments in the payment of subscription fees to international organizations such as the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the Sub-regional Fisheries Commission, INFOPECHE, and the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean.

Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives are to begin the industrial processing of marine products and to promote responsible, environmentally sound, and sustainable fishing and aquaculture practices through good governance, while contributing to poverty reduction and wealth creation in Sierra Leone.

Key targets

1. By 2023, the fisheries sector generates at least US\$15–20 million in government revenue and contributes at least 16 percent to the country's GDP.
2. By 2023, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.
3. By 2023, effectively regulate harvesting; end overfishing and illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing; stop destructive fishing practices; and implement science-based management plans in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yields as determined by their biological characteristics.

Key policy actions

1. Undertake fish stock assessments to establish the abundance and distribution of the country's fish stocks and to set up a quota management system, where licensing of

industrial fishing vessels will be based on the quantity of fish caught by vessels instead of the size of the vessels.

2. Construct cold room facilities for the preservation of fish and fishery products in every headquarter town throughout the country.
3. Develop commercialized fish farming in ponds and in the wild, in order to buoy up fish production and enhance diversified growth in the fisheries sector, including the promotion of commercial aquaculture investment.
4. Combat illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing through continued installation of vessel monitoring systems in all licensed fishing vessels.
5. Enhance collaboration with the United States, the Sub-regional Fisheries Commission, and the African Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership to undertake regional fishery surveillance patrols and enforcement of fishery regulations and laws.
6. Harmonize laws and improve on the legal framework.
7. Secure the European markets certification for fish exports.
8. Construct fish harbour complexes, promote the use of technology in the value addition chain, and mobilize the private sector to invest in fisheries and the marine sector.

2.3 Revitalizing the tourism sector

International tourism has experienced uninterrupted growth for the past eight years and is now considered the world's third-largest export sector. In 2017, destinations worldwide welcomed more than 1.3 billion international arrivals, with a growth rate of 7 percent, the highest since 2010. The sector witnessed 84 million more arrivals in 2017 than in 2016, generating an international tourism receipt estimated at US\$1.3 trillion, an increase of 7 percent as against 2016 (UN World Tourism Organization Tourism Highlights).

Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, received 57.8 million international visitors in 2016 and generated revenue of about US\$34.8 billion, with a growth rate of 4.7 percent as against 2015. For 2018, the tourism sector on the continent is forecasted to grow at a rate of up to 7 percent, surpassing projected growth in Europe.

Despite these favourable projections, the Government of Sierra Leone is yet to tap into the opportunities provided by international tourism. The outbreak of war in the 1990s, which lasted for a decade, dealt a harsh blow to the tourism sector, as arrivals and related revenue plummeted drastically. The country's tourism infrastructure was badly damaged and vandalized, leaving very few tourist attractions in place for the entire period and for years afterwards. During the aftermath of the war, some efforts have been made by successive governments to maximize benefits from tourism, surpassing the peak period of the 1980s, when international tourist arrivals reached 200,000 (in 1986). The tourism infrastructure mainly



Sierra Leone's pristine beaches are an unrivalled tourist attraction.

catered to high-end sun, sand, and sea tourism, with France and the Scandinavian countries the main target markets.

With some levels of peace and stability during the 2000s, the sector experienced consistent annual growth, averaging 28.6 percent between 2003 and 2013. In particular, international visitor arrivals increased from 38,615 in 2010 to 81,250 in 2013, driven largely by the re-emergence of iron ore mining – business-related visits made up the largest segment of visitors.

However, the consistent growth rate came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of Ebola virus disease in 2014: flights were suspended, tourism establishments were partially or fully shut down, restrictions were placed on the

movements of people, and employees were dismissed, leading to the disruption of economic and social activities. The outbreak caused significant loss of revenue and a massive reduction in international arrivals. The fall in tourism was compounded by the external shock of the fall in global iron ore prices. Arrivals dropped by 70 percent from 81,000 in 2013 to 24,000 in 2015, while international receipts dropped from US\$58.8 million in 2013 to \$16.8 million in 2015.

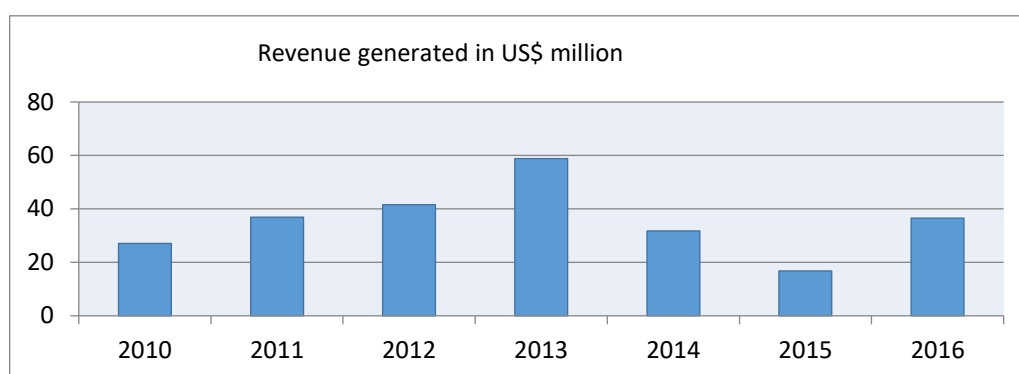
Nevertheless, the tourism sector was quick to bounce back when the country was declared Ebola free. International arrivals increased by more than 300 percent in 2016 as against 2015, at which point Sierra Leone was rated the world's fastest growing travel destination globally.

Figure 2.2: Tourist arrivals by air



Source: National Tourist Board

Figure 2.3: Revenue generated from the tourism sector



Source: National Tourist Board

Table 2.3: Comparison with other countries in the subregion in international arrivals and receipts, 2015

	International tourist arrivals	International tourist receipts (US\$ million)
Sierra Leone	24,000	23
Gambia	135,000	120
Senegal	1,007,000	368
Ghana	897,000	819

Source: UN World Tourism Organization Highlights

The adoption of the National Tourism Policy and the National Ecotourism Policy in 2017 have provided blueprints to guide the orderly and sustainable development of the sector, thereby ameliorating the risk of the haphazard development that had been experienced in the past. The National Ecotourism Policy seeks to attract up to 20,000 international and 30,000 domestic ecotourism visits by 2025. The policy has placed significant emphasis on the protection of the environment, in collaboration with the Environment Protection Agency and the National Protected Area Authority.

The natural and historical resources of the country are considered its prime tourist attractions, with rich ecosystems and biodiversity harbouring some of the world's most unique flora and fauna (including numerous endemic

species), and a coastline of more than 400 kilometres, with excellent beaches, exotic islands, and opportunities for water sports. Referred to as the land of the free, the country played a major role in the abolishment of the transatlantic slave trade, became the home of thousands of freed slaves, and still holds the ruins of one of the most authentic slave forts in the subregion. Capitalizing on the vast array of natural, cultural, and historical resources, if harnessed properly, could put Sierra Leone in a favourable situation to compete with other countries in the region such as Ghana, the Gambia, and Senegal.

There are numerous challenges facing the tourism sector. These include a poor regulatory environment, a weak policy framework, an incomplete and outdated tourism master plan



Cultural performances for entertainment.



Encouraging ingenious knowledge and technology for national development.

and tourism register, and poor institutional capacity to identify and market tourism products and services.

Another critical issue is inadequate infrastructure. Movement within Freetown and to the rural areas is poorly coordinated, while basic tourism infrastructure such as credit card facilities, shopping facilities, leisure facilities, and tourist attractions require enormous improvements. In addition, there is poor maintenance of tourist sites. There is therefore a need to rehabilitate historical attractions (i.e. Bunce Island, a former settlement for slave traders, historical villages with descendants of slaves, Old Fourah Bay College, St. Charles Church, etc.) to improve visitors' experiences.

In addition to the unfavourable image of the country to the international tourism market, which must be overcome, Sierra Leone is a high-cost destination with questionable value for money. For example, the average cost of hotel accommodation per night is relatively high and not commensurate to the quality offered in other destinations in the region. Airfare from regional capitals to Freetown is also relatively high.

The shortage of skilled labour in the sector is another hinderance to its development. There is a need to address the inability of the Hotel and Tourism Training Institute to provide the quantity and quality of training demanded by the industry.

Finally, air pollution, deforestation, desertification, sand mining, encroachment on environmentally sensitive areas, poor sewage and waste disposal systems, and a dwindling wildlife population threaten the natural beauty and biodiversity of the country, thereby potentially damaging tourism opportunities.

Despite the wide range of challenges, opportunities exist going forward with the implementation of the new National Development Plan. The current government administration has placed a higher premium on tourism as one of the key growth sectors, alongside agriculture and fisheries, with the ability to contribute to the diversification of the economy, job creation, revenue generation, and poverty alleviation. It is embarking on enhancing the environment for tourism operators through plans to provide visas on arrival, reduce visa costs for target markets, and review the high costs of travelling to the country. It is also supporting the formation of the Tourism Federation and other stakeholder associations to enhance public-private partnerships and strengthen relationships

with community stakeholders; undertaking a comprehensive survey of tourism assets and establishments countrywide; capitalizing on the digital and technological advances globally to enhance the government's revenue generation drive and showcase the potentials of the sector digitally; and regularly cleaning Lumley Beach and improving its general outlook, with a view to making it a prime first point of entry for leisure tourists.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to increase state revenue, provide jobs, and promote the cultural heritage of the country through improving the policy and legal environment and developing the relevant infrastructure through a holistic approach to diversified tourism in Sierra Leone.

Key targets

1. By 2023, develop and upgrade at least three strategic historical and cultural sites.
2. By 2023, increase skill capacity in the hospitality industry by a quarter.
3. By 2023, increase annual revenue and contribution to GDP by at least 100 percent.

Key policy actions

1. Improve the international image of Sierra Leone and diversify marketing of the country.
2. Improve the policy and legal framework.

3. Promote competition in the sector to reduce costs and improve value for money.
4. Rehabilitate and develop historical and cultural sites through a holistic rehabilitation plan.
5. Create a human resources development plan, upgrade the existing school for hotel management, and collaborate with international hospitality institutions.
6. Promote eco-tourism to ensure the protection of the country's rich biodiversity.
7. Support local entrepreneurs to promote tourism-based activities that link with the rural economy, harvest seasons, wildlife, farming practices, art, and culture.
8. Establish public–private partnerships and promote private sector involvement.
9. Promote adventure tours such as safaris, jungle tours, mountain trekking, etc.

2.4 Manufacturing and services

Although these two sectors are interlinked, they often require separate diagnostics. The common element in both is the importance of the private sector and the possibilities for growing small and medium-sized enterprises.

The manufacturing sector remained small, accounting for only 2 percent of GDP in 2016 and 2017. The growth of manufacturing improved slightly to 4.9 percent in 2017 from 4.5 percent in 2016, supported largely by an increase in electricity generation. However,



Local craft industry for economic diversification.

energy constraints and other bottlenecks in the business environment continue to constrain manufacturing firms. Growth in manufacturing is therefore projected at a moderate 3.3 percent in 2018 and 4 percent in 2019.

The services sector is the second largest sector of the economy after agriculture, contributing an average of 36 percent of GDP. The services sector recovered strongly from the disruptions caused by Ebola, growing by almost 5 percent in 2016 and 2017, driven mainly by growth in the trade, tourism, communications, and banking services subsectors. As observed earlier in this document, the overconcentration of the economy in a few sectors contributes to the volatility of economic growth in recent years and makes it difficult to achieve sustainable inclusive growth and employment creation.

To overcome this constraint, there is an urgent need to modify the structure of the economy to more productive sectors, which have greater potential for economic growth and job creation. In addition to improving the productivity of agriculture, fisheries, and tourism, Sierra Leone can generate better jobs and more income by promoting the manufacturing and services sectors and increasing the productivity of its informal sector. These sectors offer significant potential for economic growth, employment, and income diversification.

The diversification of the economy into the manufacturing and services sectors requires substantial improvements in the business environment. There are a number of constraints affecting growth and employment generation in manufacturing and services. The unstable

macroeconomic environment – which has volatile growth, high inflation, high domestic interest rates, a depreciating exchange rate, and a high debt burden – is a bane for the development of the manufacturing and services sectors. This situation is worsened by the energy, transport, and ICT infrastructure deficit, which impedes private sector investment by increasing production and marketing costs and preventing links between internal and external markets. According to the African Development Bank, Sierra Leone's infrastructure compares poorly to the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, as it was ranked 46 out of 54 countries on its Africa Infrastructure Development Index in 2016.

Access to capital is very limited and is a binding constraint to private investors, especially for the entry of new entrepreneurs and those living in rural areas. According to the 2014 Labour Force Survey, nearly half (47 percent) of household enterprises reported that they were unable to borrow the necessary capital for their businesses. This has been echoed by the large informal sector, which lacks access to value-added opportunities in value chains.

The unfavourable business regulatory environment constrains both domestic and foreign investment. There is a need to regain and sustain reform momentum, as the country ranked 163 out of 190 countries on the World Bank's Doing



Developing the manufacturing sector to this level and higher.

Business index 2018, which was a drop from 160 in 2017 and 148 in 2016. Widespread corruption requires the development of transparent and accountable institutions that ensure a fair playing field for all actors, including access to a trustworthy justice system.

Finally, the labour market does not meet demand, as it is constrained by archaic labour laws and the inability of a large proportion of the labour force to meet the necessary skill requirements.

Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives are to improve and expand the manufacturing and services sectors for value addition and job creation and to contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Key targets

1. By 2023, improve the Ease of Doing Business ranking to levels higher than 2016.
2. By 2023, increase the contribution of manufacturing to GDP from 2 percent to 5 percent.
3. By 2023, increase the contribution of services to GDP from 36 percent to 45 percent.

Key policy actions

1. Improve infrastructure and the business regulatory environment.

2. Promote financial intermediation and financial inclusion within a stable financial system.
3. Restore and safeguard macroeconomic stability through the implementation of prudent fiscal policies.
4. Establish special economic zones and export processing zones.
5. Implement targeted interventions to increase the productivity of the informal sector.
6. Invest in education, especially technical, vocational, and higher education, to produce the skilled labour force demanded by the market.
7. Develop and adapt technology for marketing.

2.5 Improving the management of oil and gas exploration/production

Oil and gas exploration hold tremendous promise for modernizing the national economy. If properly managed, the benefits will range from streams of tax and non-tax revenues to other cascading effects on employment, technology transfer, local capacity development, and commercial expansion, among others.

Four successive discoveries made earlier in the decade were the outcome of sustained national efforts aimed at taking advantage of regenerated interest in the Gulf of Guinea by multinational oil corporations. However, global oil price

volatility and other factors have led most of these corporations to withdraw their exploration activities from Sierra Leone.

Even though the per barrel price has recovered, establishing deliberate policy measures and getting the right players on board will capitalize on this opportunity. In doing this, government seeks to maximize the potential benefits of the extractive sector through a rekindling of the waning interest in the exploration landscape.

Coupled with the limited number of oil and gas companies actively exploring petroleum deposits in the country is limited governance capacity for onshore exploration activities. Above all, there is limited seismic and geographic data on potential exploration sites.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to revitalize the oil and gas industry through sustainable exploration and an expansion of its scope, and at the same time build the capacity of the sector for operational excellence.

Key targets

1. By 2023, mainstream transparency and accountability practices into the sector, according to the 2016 Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative standards.
2. By 2023, establish a petroleum commission.
3. By 2023, formulate and promulgate legal frameworks and laws for the sustainable development of oil and gas exploration and development.

Key policy actions

1. Ensure the attraction and retention of oil and gas corporations by undertaking aggressive marketing campaigns.
2. Expand the frontiers of oil and gas exploration activities by facilitating the incorporation of onshore exploration activities into the country's exploration space.
3. Improve the governance of the sector through the development of regulations and laws to manage the sector.
4. Ensure sector coordination and the harmonization of policy measures with regional and subregional initiatives for redefinition of the Exclusive Economic Zone beyond 200 nautical miles.
5. Mobilize the private sector to invest in the sector.
6. Restructure and capacitate the petroleum directorate with the requisite personnel and equipment.

2.6 Improving the management of mineral resources

Mining has been a mainstay of the Sierra Leonean economy since independence. The country is well known for its vast endowment of diamonds and iron ore, but it is also rich in bauxite, rutile, ilmenite, zircon, gold, platinum, tantalite, chromite, and columbite. Direct and indirect employment in large-scale mines engage over 30,000 people, with an estimated 300,000 people (including dependents and extended families) deriving their livelihoods

from these mines. The sector has been contributing about 24 percent to GDP and over 80 percent to export earnings (in 2013), although its contribution has still been well below its potential, providing on average 16 percent of total revenue (between 2013 and 2017). The mining sector was greatly affected by the dual shock of the drop in commodity prices and the Ebola virus disease outbreak in 2014, which can be seen in Table 2.4.

The civil war in the 1990s resulted in the closure of all large-scale mining operations and the degradation or destruction of the majority of the mining infrastructure. In the post-war period, the sector gradually recovered, mainly through the rehabilitation of former mining sites. At the onset of the fall in commodity prices in 2014, the mining sector accounted for the majority of the country's foreign exchange earnings. With lower prices, the current

outlook for the mining sector is less positive, but given the inherent volatility of prices of mineral resources, there is good reason to be optimistic about the mining sector of Sierra Leone in the long term.

Iron ore has been the most important mining product in recent years. Following the commencement of two large-scale iron ore projects – Marampa and Tonkolili – in late 2011, iron ore from 2012 to 2014 accounted for 86 percent of the mining sector's contribution to GDP, 67 percent of mineral exports, and 55 percent of government revenues from mining. Marampa, which had been dormant since 1975, was acquired by London Mining Company in 2005.

Tonkolili, on the other hand, was operated by African Minerals Limited, which acquired the licence in 2010. Despite combined exports

Table 2.4: Mining sector's contribution to the economy of Sierra Leone

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Contribution of mining revenue to total National Revenue Authority revenue (billion leones)	440	386	345	315	239
Mining revenue as percent of total revenue collected by National Revenue Authority*	21	18	18	11	10
Mining sector as percent of GDP**	24	27	4	6	5

* Source: National Revenue Authority

** Source: Statistics Sierra Leone

from these projects averaging US\$721 million a year between 2012 and 2014 and ambitious expansion plans – African Minerals Limited's stated objective, for example, was to become 'the largest seaborne producer of iron ore in Africa' – both African Minerals Limited and London Mining Company had to suspend operations and went under administration as the iron ore price fell sharply in 2014. Shandong Iron and Steel Group, a Shanghai Stock Exchange-listed company that had previously acquired 25 percent of the Tonkolili project, and Timis Mining Corporation, a private company owned by the ex-Chief Executive Officer of African Minerals Limited, subsequently took over the Tonkolili and Marampa projects respectively. Operations at the Tonkolili project restarted in December 2015, but shut down in November 2017 owing to lower prices for their product and serious operational difficulties.

The Marampa mines remain dormant, but are likely to be taken over by another company and may recommence production by 2019. Beyond iron ore, there are three other large-scale mining projects currently engaged in production. Koidu Limited, a subsidiary of Ocea Limited, which is 100 percent owned by BSG Resources, produces diamonds and made exports averaging US\$95 million a year between 2012 and 2015. From 2016 to 2017, Koidu Limited transitioned from open-pit (surface) mining to underground mining. Sierra Minerals Holding Limited, a subsidiary of the vertically integrated aluminium producer, Vimetco NV, mines bauxite and made exports averaging US\$28 million a year between 2012 and 2015.

Sierra Rutile Limited, listed on London's Alternative Investment Market, operates the world's largest primary rutile mine, producing rutile, ilmenite, and zircon. It made exports averaging US\$135 million a year between

2012 and 2014. Since Iluka Resources acquired ownership of Sierra Rutile in late 2016, Sierra Rutile Limited has expanded its dry mining operations at Lanti and Gangama. The company is planning to reduce its mining costs by adopting 'in-pit' mining at Gbeni.

Prospects look positive for Sierra Rutile Limited, with planned expansion of its operations in the Sembehun group of deposits in the North. Looking ahead, two other large-scale diamond projects operated by subsidiaries of Ocea Limited are at varying stages of development, and two large-scale gold projects, which have been planned for a number of years, are expected to start production in the coming years (depending on movements in the gold price). Currently, all of Sierra Leone's gold exports are from the artisanal and small-scale mining sector. This sector also accounts for almost half of diamond exports. Therefore, while the large-scale mining sector makes the greatest contribution to GDP and revenues, the artisanal and small-scale mining sector continues to be relatively important in Sierra Leone, especially in terms of employment.

Examining the mineral licences and exploration activities of firms provides insight into the mineral sector's operations and prospects for the future. Table 2.5 shows the number of mineral licences issued for industrial and artisanal operations. There is a downward trend in the issuance of small-scale mining licences due to the high charges imposed by the Environment Protection Agency for the Environmental Impact Assessment licence and annual monitoring fees. For artisanal mining, there was a 13 percent reduction in the number of licences issued in 2017 when compared to 2016, as a result of the enforcement of regulations regarding areas designated for exploration work.

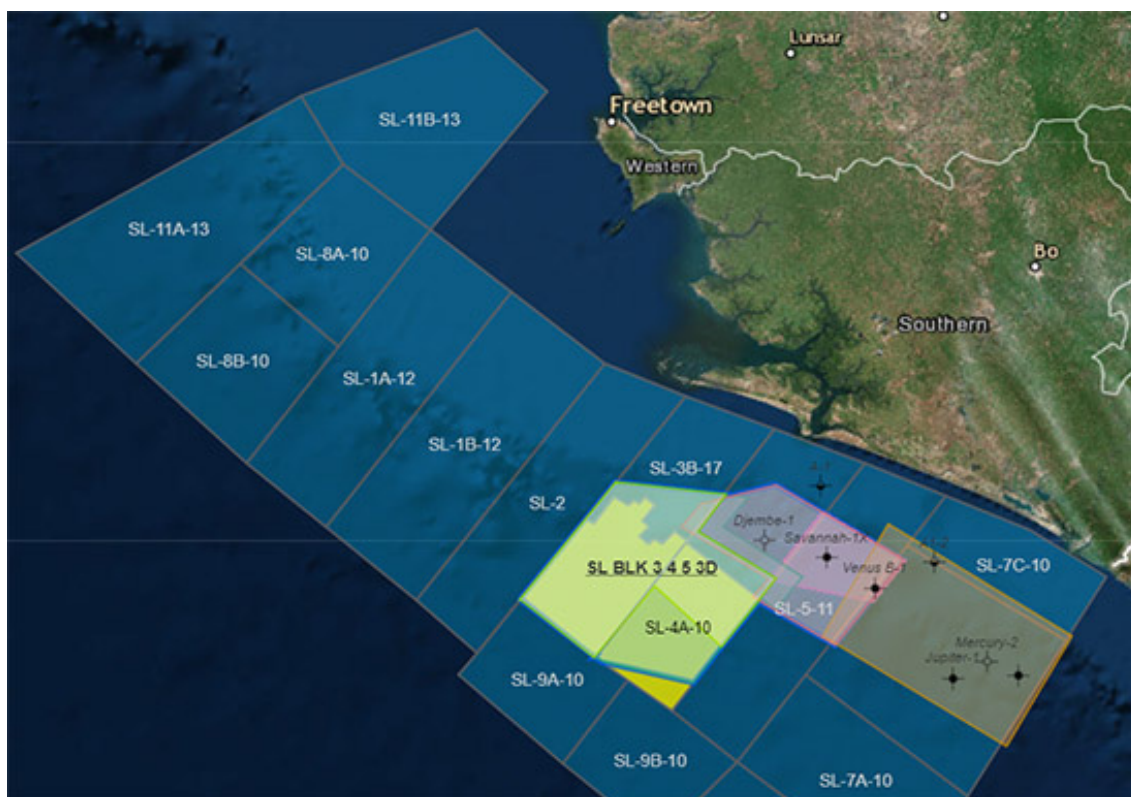


Table 2.5: Mineral rights for industrial and artisanal mining 2017

Artisanal category	Number of licences	Industrial category	Number of licences
Artisanal mining licence	998	Reconnaissance	None
Mine Manager's Certificate	654	Exploration	107
Financial Supporter's Certificate	307	Small scale	5
		Large scale	14
<i>Source: Mining Cadastre Administration System</i>			



Improvement in the status of artisanal mining.

The mining law does not allow overlap in mineral rights, and the consent of exploration companies is required for the National Minerals Agency to grant artisanal mining licences in their concession. With respect to exploration activities, there are only three exploration licence holders – Allotropes Diamonds, Golden Saints Resources, and AMR Gold (Sierra Leone) Limited – who are in the advanced stages of exploration. This represents 3 out of over 107 exploration companies that are registered in the Mining Cadastre Administration System. This means that most of the exploration licence owners have not fulfilled their workplan, reporting, and/or financial obligations.

The National Minerals Agency has proceeded with plans to cancel the mineral rights of all non-performing and non-compliant exploration companies. Since April 2018, more than 40 exploration rights were cancelled due to breaches of statutory obligations. This has freed up significant quantities of territory for better and more committed exploration companies. In the medium term, the strict enforcement of such a policy will also significantly increase the revenue contribution from exploration licences.

Local government institutions such as district councils and chiefdom administrations are also playing important roles, as they are responsible

for ensuring that communities in mining areas benefit from the sector. Each of these institutions has specific roles and responsibilities. However, given the intrinsically linked and overlapping challenges, and the sometimes overlapping and conflicting mandates of the different institutions, coordination among government institutions can be challenging.

Some general progress in sector governance and the delivery of economic benefits has been recorded over the years. The MTNDP can build on this to produce better outcomes in the sector for national socio-economic transformation and development, as much as there are critical challenges to address going forward.

Linkages between the mining sector and the rest of the economy, through infrastructural development, local content, and downstream processes, are recognized as being crucial for diversification and broad-based development. In this direction, the framework for increasing the use of local suppliers and labour by private actors in the mining sector is relatively well developed.

While revenue management has not been showing clear sustainable development purpose, structure, and discipline, the government is aware of the need to use mining revenues to protect against revenue volatility, invest in projects that enable economic diversification, and promote intergenerational fairness.

Coverage of the local impacts of mining by the current legislative and regulatory frameworks is relatively comprehensive. The Mines and Minerals Act 2009 and the Environmental Protection Agency Act 2008 make acquisition and retention of mineral licences conditional on companies adhering to performance

requirements on health, safety, environmental protection, and community development.

In the minerals sector specifically, Section 159 of the Mines and Minerals Act 2009 requires the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources to develop a transparency framework for the mining sector. While this framework does not yet exist, Sierra Leone has been compliant with the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative since 2014, and the government, through the Open Government Partnership, has a policy to support the disclosure of information, including on natural resource governance.

One key challenge is the lack of geological data and knowledge about the mineral resources in the country, which hinders the effective exploitation of these resources and prevents the government from getting the best value for them.

The volatility in the international price of minerals is another challenge. The large fluctuations in international commodity prices in recent years made it difficult for some of the mining companies to sustain operations, culminating in the closure of the two iron ore mining projects.

Duplication, overlapping, and divergence exist in key legislation for the mining sector. In most cases, legislation is enacted with no reference to existing legislation. The result is two or more pieces of legislation contradicting each other on the same issue, thereby creating confusion for the investor.

There are widespread illicit mining operations across the country. Despite efforts to curb illicit mining, it remains prevalent in all parts of the country, perpetuating the smuggling

of minerals such as diamonds and gold, and undermining domestic revenue collection as a result. This has been deepened by the menace of transfer pricing. Some of the large-scale mining companies, such as those engaged in bauxite and iron ore mining, sold their output directly to their parent companies, thereby reducing taxable income and domestic revenue.

Mining Lease Agreements are not standardized. Despite the development of a Model Mining Agreement and the National Mineral Agency's strong advocacy for the usage of such, two Mining Lease Agreements negotiated in December 2017 did not use the Model Mining Agreement as a basis, resulting in an unpredictable licence management regime. The government cannot adopt a competitive process for allocating mineral rights due to limited geological information.

Finally, there are huge local capacity limitations. There is a shortage of skilled labour along the mining value chain from production to processing to marketing.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to improve the governance and management of the mining sector, including value addition for employment, poverty reduction, community benefit, environmental rehabilitation, and revenue generation.

Key targets

1. By 2023, increase mining revenue from 10 percent of domestic revenue in 2017 to 20 percent.

2. By 2023, increase the share of the mining sector's contribution to GDP from 5 percent in 2017 to 20 percent.
3. By 2023, undertake environmental rehabilitation in five mined sites in the country.

Key policy actions

1. Review mineral legislation and implement the Extractive Industry Revenue Act.
2. Formalize the artisanal mining sector.
3. Tackle transfer pricing by adopting advance pricing agreements.
4. Review the mining lease agreements.
5. Undertake a countrywide airborne geophysical survey.
6. Implement a block system for licence administration.
7. Develop a minerals laboratory certified by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).
8. Implement an auction system for the sale of gemstones.
9. Strengthen the regulatory and oversight capacity of the National Minerals Agency and civil society organizations.
10. Pilot 'green gold' activities to increase women's economic opportunities in the gold value chain.
11. Mobilize local entrepreneurs in the sector.
12. Strengthen the governance of the mining and minerals sector.

2.7 Promoting an inclusive rural economy

One of the major challenges that has militated against the symmetrical growth and development of Sierra Leone has been the marginalization, and sometimes the outright exclusion, of Sierra Leone's burgeoning rural population from fully participating in the economy of the state. Recent poverty diagnostics of the country show that rural poverty is on the increase. Although this fact has been recognized by successive governments, significant measures to address this development imbroglio have eluded development practitioners for decades.

Measures that were put in place to ameliorate rural poverty have not been overly successful. Decentralization, for example, which was reintroduced in 2004 to bring development closer to people living in rural communities, has failed to fully appreciate the role that households in local communities can play in transforming local economies and by extension boost growth at the national level. The disconnect between district and chiefdom governance, which is caused mainly by deficiencies in the legal and policy framework for local governance, highlights the extent of the marginalization of rural households in the economy and politics of the state.

Critical challenges range from rural inhabitants' limited access to resources to the lack of adequate rural infrastructure and services needed to drive the rural economy.

In order to revive the rural economy, create jobs for rural youth, and put money in the pockets of thousands of rural inhabitants, the government has underscored the need to improve rural households' access to key national resources,

including land, water, education, and skills, as well as improved rural infrastructure and other government services, especially flexible financial services.

The main goal is to ensure that, by 2023, rural communities have opportunities to unlock the unlimited economic potential within the respective localities and participate fully in the economic, social, and political life of the country.

It is broadly envisioned that Sierra Leone's rural economy will be driven by agriculture and, where possible, by mining, tourism, agro-processing, and fisheries. This vision to trigger and grow the rural economy of Sierra Leone will go beyond 2023, and the full details of the long-term strategy for involving the majority of the rural inhabitants in the country's economy will be included in the long-term plan that will succeed this MTNDP.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to ensure that rural communities have better opportunities to participate fully in the economic, social, and political life of the country.

Key targets

1. By 2023 establish a special economic/ industrial zone outside Freetown.
2. By 2023, ensure more rural inhabitants are out of extreme poverty than in 2018.
3. By 2023, ensure more rural inhabitants have access to credit with a flexible repayment structure than in 2018.

4. By 2023, ensure rural access to basic ICT and Internet connection to drive e-commerce is expanded beyond that of 2018.
5. By 2023, ensure more districts benefit from social and infrastructural improvement than in 2018.
8. Review policies and laws relating to small and medium-sized enterprises.
9. Improve electricity supply in rural communities.

Key policy actions

1. Establish special industrial zones with uninterrupted power supply, water, and communications to accelerate the growth of the local economy.
2. Establish local industries such as agro-processing, tourism, fisheries (in coastal areas), and small enterprise development within rural communities.
3. Ensure the alignment of NGO activities with government priorities on rural economic development.
4. Review and strengthen the regulatory framework for microfinance institutions.
5. Expand on mobile technology to improve access to credit and repayment.
6. Re-establish national development banks to provide equity capital to Sierra Leoneans in business with credible foreign companies.
7. Establish a fund to provide access to medium- and long-term capital to support small and medium-sized enterprises and encourage lending institutions to lend a significant proportion of bank loan portfolios to small and medium-sized enterprises.

CLUSTER THREE: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

The development of new infrastructure and the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure is very important for the stimulation of economic growth in particular and the development of Sierra Leone in general. Good infrastructure not only drastically reduces the cost of doing business, but it also attracts foreign direct investment, which is essential for stimulating economic stabilization, diversification, and growth.

The poor infrastructural landscape in Sierra Leone has had a tremendously negative impact on economic diversification, notably in agriculture, tourism, fisheries, transportation, and services, subsequently limiting economic expansion, foreign direct investment, productivity, and stabilization while creating a regional and global disadvantage.

The Government of Sierra Leone's objective of developing quality infrastructure for economic competitiveness and socio-economic development is compatible with the long-term agenda of becoming a middle-income country. This agenda incorporates the provision of a stable and affordable energy supply, transportation, water infrastructural systems, waste management, and ICT, while also promoting private sector growth and manufacturing.

3.1 Energy

Limited access to affordable and reliable electricity supply in Sierra Leone is a challenge for growth and development. Biomass, mostly

from wood and charcoal, constitutes the major source of energy (about 80 percent), with resultant deforestation and environmental degradation. The importation of petroleum products (about 13 percent of the country's energy) uses a significant amount of foreign currency. The large-scale Bumbuna 1 Hydro Project generates around 40 percent of Freetown's energy.

The Government of Sierra Leone unbundled the power sector in 2015 and created new state utilities. The Electricity Generation and Transmission Company, together with independent power producers, is exclusively restricted to electricity generation and transmission. The Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority is charged with the responsibility of bulk power purchase from generators and sale to end users.

Sierra Leone has a tropical climate with continuous sunshine, which is ideal for solar power. High levels of rainfall and large water bodies create the conditions for hydropower, while large amounts of green vegetation provide biomass. The country therefore has huge potential for renewable energy, and the government's pursuit of renewable energy from these diverse sources is the best way to increase energy production sustainably.

In 2018, the energy sector of Sierra Leone had an approximate output of 105 megawatts of installed generation capacity connected to the main grid, with 53 percent of electricity generated and provided by independent power producers. Demand is forecast to exceed 360 megawatts by 2023, due primarily to the



Existing infrastructure requires massive improvement.

Ministry of Energy's desire to restore electricity supply to all the district capitals, in addition to a general increase in domestic demand.

Challenges exist in energy transmission and distribution. The transmission grid is inadequate for transmission from areas where low-cost renewable electricity can be generated (Bumbuna, Bekongor, Mange) to areas where low-cost fossil fuel (heavy fuel oil, liquefied natural gas, or coal) may be shipped (or produced) and converted to power, and to load centres (towns and mining sites). There is also a need to increase the transmission grid to accommodate the upcoming West African power pool initiative. The distribution network has numerous challenges, with Freetown being the most problem prone due to outdated infrastructure and capacity.

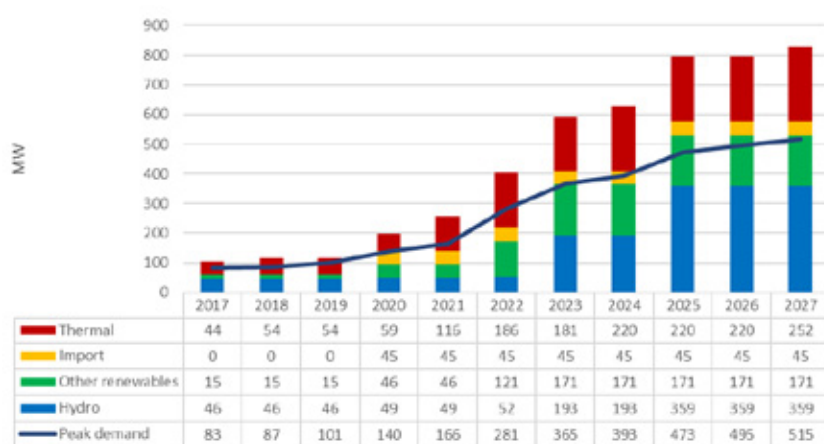
Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to produce/generate and distribute adequate electricity and power from renewable and clean sources for increased access by the majority of the population.

Key targets

1. By 2023, restore electricity in all district headquarters and cities.
2. By 2023, increase electricity generation from 25 to 60 percent.
3. By 2023, increase installed electric capacity from the current 100 megawatts to 350 megawatts

Figure 3.1: Sierra Leone's generation capacity on the interconnected grid



Exploring renewal energy, especially hydro-electricity, from our abundant waterfalls.

4. By 2023, increase the country's capacity for renewable energy (solar and hydro) contribution to 65 percent.
5. By 2023, 20 villages and eight towns in each district connected to the national grid or off-grid standalone schemes.

Key policy actions

1. Embark on increasing electricity generation, transmission, and distribution.
2. Improve on the policy and regulatory environment of the energy sector.
3. Restore electricity supply to all district headquarter towns and cities.
4. Increase investment in low-cost renewable energy (solar, hydro, wind, and biomass) production and distribution.
5. Improve governance at all levels of the sector – the Ministry of Energy, the Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority, the Electricity Generation and Transmission Company, and the Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission – to develop responsible leadership and institutional culture.
6. Ensure expansion of the transmission grid nationwide by increasing the annual regular kilometric coverage.
7. Ensure rural electrification is carried out through engagement and involvement of key stakeholders, including the private sector.

3.2 Transforming transportation systems

Sierra Leone is located along the Atlantic coast with a coastline type (a ria coast) ideal for natural harbours. The Queen Elizabeth Quay in Freetown is a viable sea port for shipping. In addition, the historical railway and outlined road network provides the opportunity and potential for efficient road connections. There is an international airport and dormant airstrips all over the country. The geographic nature of the country allows for different means of developing and improving on land, air, and sea transportation.

Seven legally constituted agencies exist in Sierra Leone for the production and coordination of an efficient national transportation system, ensuring the country becomes a first-class provider in the region of cost-effective transport facilities. They include: a) the Ministry of Transport and Aviation; b) the Ministry of Works and Public Assets; c) the Sierra Leone Roads Authority; d) Road Maintenance Fund Administration; e) the Sierra Leone Road Safety Authority; f) Sierra Leone Maritime Administration; and g) Sierra Leone Airport Authority. In addition, the Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation is the public bus company that provides urban and inter-urban passenger transport.

Sierra Leone's transport system is highly vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, especially flash floods and landslides. Climate change will have severe consequences in Sierra Leone, as the average annual temperature has increased by 0.8 degrees Celsius since 1960, and projections suggest an increase in annual temperature by 1 to 2.6 degrees Celsius by the



Urgent action is needed to address feeder roads and transport systems.

2060s.¹ The threats to the transport system in Sierra Leone are exacerbated by poorly engineered and constructed roads. The drainage structures are in very poor condition due to deficient maintenance.

National road system

The public road network represents the most vital and dominant transport infrastructure in the country, as other transportation modes, such as rail and river-based transport, are either non-existent or very limited. The road network is limited and well below the African average.

¹ Sierra Leone's Climate Action Report, 2015.

The Sierra Leone road transport network consists of an estimated 11,555 kilometres of road, of which 8,555 kilometres are classified as Class A (primary), Class B (secondary), or Class F (feeder) roads, including 3,000 kilometres of local and township roads. The country has 1,031 kilometres of paved road, representing 9 percent of the total road network, considerably low compared to the average of 18 percent in Africa.

In road construction in Sierra Leone, the culture of intermodal development is seldom embraced, making it impossible to fully utilize and realize the full benefits of the roads constructed.



Improved national road network for sustainable development.

Major challenges identified include exceptionally high costs due to massive corruption; poor and weak coordination among the departments involved; political meddling in the business and governance of the Roads Maintenance Fund; inadequate security to safeguard road infrastructure against vandalism; poor road traffic enforcement; an inadequate road accident database to inform policy; and limited post-accident care, among others. Road safety is a concern in Sierra Leone in general, but in Freetown in particular.

Urban transport

Freetown suffers from chronic congestion and severe road safety challenges due to an inability to keep pace with growing demand, in addition to decades of neglect. The motorization rate is still low when compared with other sub-Saharan

countries. Freetown represents a particularly attractive destination for internal migration, but providing the accompanying employment, housing, and transport services to residents has been a challenge. Transport in Freetown is mainly by road, but the infrastructure suffers poor connectivity and therefore requires considerable rehabilitation and maintenance.

The Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation, the public bus operator, provides formalized public transport in Freetown, which is very limited. The city has seen the rapid growth of unregulated, informal operators of small vehicles. Over 70 percent of these are a mix of full-sized buses (of which there are very few), minibuses (*poda-podas*), motorcycle taxis (*okadas*), and auto rickshaws (*kekes*).

Challenges plaguing urban transport include increasing demand in Freetown and other urban

areas, resulting in alarming traffic congestion and pollution; inadequate road and pedestrian infrastructure; poor connectivity and no proper hierarchy of roads; a considerable road maintenance backlog; and unreliability, among others.

Sea transport and the role of Sierra Leone Maritime Administration

Sea transport is extremely critical for economic transactions, as over 80 percent of all international trade in goods is carried by sea. Maritime transport is therefore the bedrock of international trade and globalization.

Sierra Leone has one of Africa's largest natural harbours, and it is taking advantage of its geographical location by reconstructing its three major ports. Out of the nine ports in the country, Freetown's Queen Elizabeth II Port is the principal commercial port and is managed by the semi-autonomous Sierra Leone Port Authority. There are about 800 kilometres of rivers and waterways in Sierra Leone, of which 600 are navigable all year round. Currently, there is no proper use of river transport as a competing mode to transport bulk commodities to Freetown and other cities. The Sierra Leone Port Authority has transitioned to a landlord port model from a service port model, and there is increasing private participation in the operation of the port and the provision of port services. The Government of Sierra Leone has licensed out the existing port facilities to private port operators and provided an additional berth for a container terminal (Berth 7), increasing the overall capacity at Queen Elizabeth II Quay to 300,000 twenty-foot equivalent units. There is huge revenue potential in this setup, which would allow the maritime industry to generate

sufficient funds for self-financing for many years to come.

Security of the maritime industry is vital for the growth and stability of global economies in general and Sierra Leone's national economy in particular. Therefore, the country's vast sea transport potential along the Atlantic Ocean (over 500 kilometres) requires adequate security, which the Sierra Leone Maritime Administration Act of 2000 ('create a safe, secure, and efficient maritime industry') clearly defined.

The major challenges facing sea transport and maritime administration are limited security; a weak and inadequate regulatory framework, especially regarding the requisite legislation; weak institutional capacity; deteriorating physical infrastructure; poor law enforcement and application; inadequate safety mechanisms; lack of inter-agency cooperation among subsector stakeholders; and exemption of private companies, especially mining entities, from paying cargo levies on import and export, thereby denying much-needed revenue to the state and Sierra Leone Maritime Administration.

Estuary crossing

The current transport options for crossing the estuary from Freetown to Lungi are either unsafe, unreliable, difficult, inconvenient, or time consuming. About a million passengers a year cross the estuary to the north of Freetown, in vessels of varying efficiency and safety. The most successful services introduced in recent years have been the small, fast water taxis that run between Aberdeen on the west side of Freetown and Lungi International Airport. They have replaced many services (helicopters,

hovercraft, fast ferries, etc.) that had been tried in the past but were not sustainable.

Challenges in the estuary crossing system include expensive fares (US\$40 for a one-way trip); unsafe local boats; dilapidated infrastructure (e.g. a decaying and dangerous ferry berth); and limited investment, among others.

Air transport

Sierra Leone Airports Authority figures indicate that Lungi International Airport handled about 200,000 passengers in 2016, which is very low volume when compared to other airports in the West African subregion. Freetown is connected to capitals in West Africa and three countries in Europe, but it lacks connectivity with other surrounding countries. There has been irregular growth in the air transport market for Sierra Leone over the past decade. In 2014 and 2015, the Ebola outbreak caused the suspension of the operations of six out of the nine operational airlines in the country (a 66.6 percent decrease in scheduled aircraft movement), and this resulted in a 35.3 percent decrease in passenger throughput, with a corresponding 44.3 percent decrease in revenue generated from passenger traffic. Since the national carrier, Sierra National Airlines, ceased operations in 2006, there has been no sustainable commercial air transport operator based in the country.

Air transportation is challenged by safety concerns (rated at a 20 percent security level), low passenger volume, and a limited number of carriers flying into the country. The Government of Sierra Leone, in line with the Economic Community of West African States Vision 2020, will improve the air transport sector by developing a sound and seamless regional air transport system that is safe, reliable, efficient,

affordable, well connected within West Africa, and integrated with the global network.

Specific policy actions will include: (i) enhancing global civil aviation safety by certifying Freetown International Airport at Lungi to meet international standards; (ii) improving ferry and sea coach services between Tagrin and Freetown to support passenger travel and comfort; (iii) enhancing global civil aviation security and facilitation; and (iv) developing an air transport master plan to foster the development of a sound and economically viable civil aviation system.

Rail transport

Sierra Leone's national rail network consisted of two links connecting Freetown to the northern and eastern parts of the country respectively up to the mid-1970s before ceasing operations due to competition from road transport and the resulting decline in rail traffic.² Most of the railway infrastructure was either removed or damaged beyond repair during the civil war. Consequently, it may be extremely difficult and expensive to restore the lines or build a new rail system. There is currently a developed rail line owned and operated by an iron ore mining company that runs from the port at Pepel to the Tonkolili mines. This privately owned rail line consists of 74 kilometres of reconstructed rail (i.e. a reconstruction of the remaining portion of the 'historical network' of narrow-gauge rail) between Pepel and Lunsar, and a new narrow-gauge set of 126 kilometres from Lunsar up to the mine site, completed in 2011. The 74-kilometre track section has been upgraded to support increased axle loads.

² Aurecon (2012), Sierra Leone Transport Sector Strategy Development Study Working Paper 2 and 3: Transport System and Infrastructure Gaps.

Amid the challenges, several opportunities exist for the government to explore in the overall transformation of the transport sector. Sierra Leone boasts a long coastline and large bodies of water (rivers) that run across the country, with much potential for maritime and river-based transport; there is strong political will and committed leadership to explore innovative options for financing investment in the sector; a cordial relationship exists with development partners; regional integration can provide flexible harmonization of standards and practices; local content and resources exist to undertake an infrastructural investment programme in partnership with foreign investors; and the private sector can participate in infrastructure and service provision in the transport sector, including the coordination and integration of policies and legislation.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to plan, develop, and implement infrastructure development in an integrated, holistic, and cross-sectoral manner that will increase connection and safety for better utilization and broader benefit across the country.

Key targets

1. Expanded public transport facilities in all major cities by upgrading jetties for water transport and launching a railway rehabilitation project, thereby expanding inter-urban transport.
2. By 2023, all laws, rules, and regulations of direct importance to the sector are revised and reconciled, removing all conflicts in legislation that affect the smooth and

effective governance of institutions within the transport sector.

3. By 2023, domestication of all nine International Maritime Organization mandatory instruments.

Key policy actions

1. Provide adequate transportation infrastructure for national development.
2. Improve governance and strengthen oversight and coordination.
3. Integrate and properly coordinate transportation infrastructure.
4. Develop multimodal connectivity of the transport system.
5. Enhance and facilitate civil aviation safety and security to meet global standards.

3.3 Improving water infrastructure systems

Sierra Leone abounds in water from rainfall (there are more than five wet months per year), ranging from 2,000 millimetres in the north-east to 5,000 millimetres on the Freetown Peninsula. The country's Atlantic Ocean coastline is 500 kilometres long, and numerous rivers, including Rokel, Moa, Sewa, Little and Great Scarcies, Pampana, Jong, and Mano, with lengths ranging from 40 kilometres to 290 kilometres, run across the country. In addition, much of the country is underlain by a basement complex that provides sufficient groundwater for rural well supplies, where secondary features or deep weathering profiles



Harnessing diverse sources for a sustainable water supply.

are developed. The best aquifers seem to be the coastal Bullom series and alluvial deposits. Despite this abundance of water, access to potable water by the majority of the population has been challenged due to contamination and limited investment using optimal planning to harness water resources. Furthermore, the infrastructure for collection, processing, storage, and distribution is very obsolete.

Most of the country's population, of which about 70 percent live in rural areas and small towns, obtain water from rivers, springs, swamps, and other unprotected sources with very poor sanitary and hygienic conditions. The coverage of the rural population by safe water supply facilities is still very low, at about 48 percent. As a result, waterborne diseases are very common and are partly responsible for the high child mortality rate and the low life expectancy.

Water resources are mainly for domestic use and some industrial purposes in Western Area,

while there is some water use for irrigation, fishing, hydropower, mining, and transportation within the provinces. The main centres of concentrated demand are the capital Freetown, whose population is estimated at 1,050,711; Koidu – 506,544; Bo – 575,478; Kenema – 609,891; and Makeni – 606,544 (National Housing and Population Census, 2015). The current operational water supply schemes are Guma Dam and the water supply network for the capital Freetown, which is managed and operated by the Guma Valley Water Company. Seven other urban water supply schemes are operated and managed by the Sierra Leone Water Company. It is important to note that between 1966 and 1978, 43 water treatment plants were installed with Government of France loans and grants; these were under the management of the then Water Supply Division of the Ministry of Energy and Power.

The challenges facing the water sector are aggravated by rapid population growth, climate change, deforestation, natural disasters, and

uncoordinated urban planning. This situation is precipitated by an absence of harmonized policies, weak legislation, and poor coordination of activities implemented especially by non-governmental organizations. In addition, water production equipment is old, and the human resource, logistical, and technical capacity gaps have made the situation worse.

Established legal frameworks, policies, and strategies, along with institutional structures, provide guidelines for the management of water supplies. The National Water and Sanitation Policy (2010) provides for improvement on sector coordination, improved institutional capacity at national, local government, and community levels, and private sector involvement towards better water management. The policy also recommended reforms in new institutions, including updating obsolete regulations.

Laws were promulgated for sector regulators (the Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission Act 2011; the National Water Resources Management Agency Act 2017). Furthermore, amendments were proposed for the two water utilities, resulting in the Guma Valley Water Company Act 2017 and the Sierra Leone Water Company Act 2017. The National Decentralization Policy (2010) is another major policy that drives water service delivery. In addition, the water security project in the Rokel-Seli river basin revealed how Sierra Leone can develop transboundary and national security plans.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to increase access to clean potable water for the population and to improve sanitation through relevant infrastructure.

Key targets

1. The percentage of the population with access to safe drinking water increases from 59.6 percent to 80 percent by 2023.
2. The percentage of the population with access to an improved water source within a total collection time of 30 minutes increases from 69 percent to 85 percent by 2023.
3. The percentage of the population with access to unreliable or limited water services is reduced from 24 percent to 7 percent by 2023.

Key policy actions

1. Increase water supply and distribution nationwide.
2. Implement reforms to unbundle the water sector.
3. Review the regulatory framework governing the water sector.
4. Improve coordination, collaboration, planning, and implementation among actors.
5. Ensure the National Water Resources Management Agency is established and functional.

3.4 Waste management

Waste management has both economic and environmental implications for Sierra Leone. Current waste generation, especially in urban communities, is conspicuously high, and this situation is exacerbated by an utter lack of safe



Improving garbage disposal for a sustainable waste management system.

disposal mechanisms/systems. The uncoordinated enforcement of appropriate regulations, coupled with disorganized and unplanned settlements with inadequate sewage disposal systems, has contributed to dire environmental hazards and disasters in recent years, especially in urban areas. Most of the landfill sites in cities and towns are poorly managed, and their location poses a health hazard for the general population.

The management of both garbage and sewage in urban towns, particularly Freetown, is poor. To date, the institutional arrangements for city cleaning is weak and unstructured. Deforestation of the hillsides, largely for housing construction, has compounded the problem. Most shacks in Freetown do not have access to latrines, and the sewage pipes have deteriorated. It is not unusual for human waste to be seen amid garbage piles and on the streets of Freetown. Rural sanitation challenges include

garbage in backyards, limited access to latrine facilities, and open defecation.

Some investment in sanitation in the provincial cities of Bo, Kenema, and Makeni has improved waste management in these urban centres. Valuable lessons have been provided for rolling such initiatives out to other parts of the country. There exists huge potential for recycling waste in the country, including converting biomass to energy, with possible employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for women and youth.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to properly dispose of waste in a manner that is less harmful to human health and the environment while exploring the potential for employment, innovation, energy, and agriculture.

Key targets

1. All cities and district headquarters have sewage and solid waste disposal systems.
2. Waste disposal systems include recycling in all cities and district headquarters.
3. Increased awareness on proper waste disposal exists in cities and towns.

Key policy actions

1. Invest in waste management systems for all cities and district headquarters.
2. Review and improve the legal framework on waste management.
3. Empower cities and councils, through decentralization, to be fully in charge of waste disposal.

4. Mobilize the population (through education and participation) for improved waste collection and disposal.
5. Invest in the innovative conversion of waste to energy.

3.5 Information and communications technology

ICT is key driver of transformation in almost all spheres of our lives. Advanced countries and those aspiring for development embrace ICT as an integral part of their development drive. With this global advancement in digital and technological innovation, Sierra Leone must embrace the sector and also position itself adequately for optimal benefit. The need for integrating all facets of technological



Organized collection for proper disposal and recycling.



Information and communications technology for accelerated and quality education.

innovation into our social and economic efforts is imperative.

The Government of Sierra Leone therefore recognizes ICT as an enabler to address the bottlenecks of outdated practices that have hindered sustainable development for far too long. Sierra Leone needs to leapfrog certain technology steps in order to catch up with other nations. It is therefore the desire of the government to make critical use of ICT for economic diversification, stabilization, and growth. This will ultimately boost socio-economic development, make the economy more competitive, and bring efficiency and effectiveness in governance. Building a digital economy and leveraging ICT tools to stimulate growth in all sectors of the economy will be the focus of the government.

Key challenges in the ICT sector include an inadequate legal framework, an inadequate regulatory and institutional environment, high costs, and the lack of a national electronic

governance system to improve capacity and the delivery of public services, among others.

Sierra Leone has still not fulfilled her international obligations on the implementation of the International Telecommunication Union road map for the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting. Further, there is no district metro fibre ring to improve ease of access to ICT (including mobile, voice, and data communication) services by citizens. Much therefore needs to be done to close the gaps related to the national fibre backbone, a national data centre (cloud computing), a Government Common Core Data Network, and an integrated system for government-wide communication to extend the Government Common Wide Area Data Network to local councils and remaining MDAs. Special policy measures and initiatives are needed to facilitate these actions.



Improved telecommunications infrastructure.

Box 5.1: Snapshot of the ICT sector

Fixed telephone subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	0.2
Mobile cellular subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	84.6
Mobile broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	20.4
Households with a computer (%)	4.2
Households with Internet access at home (%)	10.7
Individuals using the Internet (%)	11.8

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to improve ICT services for increased access and affordable cost in order to ensure that it is integrated into all development initiatives for growth, innovation, entrepreneurship, and building a digital economy.

Key targets

1. All cities and district headquarter towns are accessible by modern ICT services, especially Internet.
2. By 2023, 30 percent of the population is penetrated by broadband.
3. By 2023, mobile penetration is increased to 80 percent of the population up to chiefdom levels.

Key policy actions

1. Review the regulatory and legal framework for the ICT landscape.
2. Expanded ICT coverage in Sierra Leone (increase current Internet broadband penetration and raise mobile penetration for the population).
3. Encourage electronic governance in government business and operations.
4. Develop resilience in ICT infrastructure by having multiple back-up services.
5. Upgrade rural telecommunications by improving customer choice and affordability.

3.6 Presidential Infrastructure Initiatives

African countries and economies need swift transformation, and massive infrastructure initiatives have been identified as the best vehicle. Heads of state of the African Union are on board so that they can transform their economies and engender socio-economic growth and development for the attainment of middle-income status and self-sufficiency by 2063, as stipulated by the United Nations SDGs and the African Union Agenda 2063.

In Sierra Leone, large-scale infrastructure with the multifaceted potential of transforming the economy and stimulating growth and development is either non-existence or dilapidated and unrepairable. Without the requisite infrastructure, attracting private sector and foreign direct investment is extremely challenging.

Upon assumption of office, the President, recognizing the African Union obligation, swiftly embarked on identifying several large-scale infrastructural initiatives classified into short-, medium-, and long-term projects. The underlying drive for such commitments included a positive socio-economic impact on the country and job creation (more than 5,000 jobs in the next five years). There will be an integrated approach to project design and implementation; the financing model is an off-balance sheet with no sovereign guarantee, with project implementation on a cost recovery basis by private sector partners.

The President's commitment in pursuing the Presidential Infrastructure Initiatives is clearly defined by providing leadership and strategic direction for prioritizing and financing according to the needs of the country, and acting as

a moral guarantor to investors, especially in revenue mobilization for the projects. Securing political will and commitment in the coordination and implementation of such projects is vital, while at the same time ensuring the alignment of these short-, medium-, and long-term projects with other national priorities.

Short-term projects

1. New airport terminal
2. Lungi–Freetown accessibility (modern ferry service)

3. Completion of Peninsular Road
4. Water supply to Bo and Kenema
5. Ferry transportation along the Freetown coastline
6. Lumley–Juba–Regent road interchange
7. Construction of a port in Bonthe

Medium-term projects

1. Construction of Juba Bridge
2. Waterfront commercial development project



Large-scale infrastructure for sustainable development.



Improved national road network for sustainable development.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3. Construction of a coastal road | 2. Construction of new cities (two in Freetown and one in Lungi) |
| 4. Private sector energy generation | 3. Construction of a new port |
| 5. Water, sanitation, and hygiene project for Freetown | 4. Construction of a railroad as part of rural infrastructure development |
| 6. Low- and medium-cost housing in strategic cities across the country | 5. Agro-processing |
| 7. Construction of a new State House in Freetown | 6. Bicongor Hydro Project |
| 8. Construction of a new conference centre in Freetown | |
| 9. Construction of a shopping mall in Freetown | |
| 10. Construction of ultra-modern office spaces for MDAs | |

The strategy driving these Presidential Infrastructure Initiatives includes a unique financing model, the **special purpose vehicle**, which has been used to cluster these projects around major bankable ones. For example, Special Purpose Vehicle 1, which is the Lungi Bridge, will be the vehicle that will drive other projects, such as the coastal road, the waterfront commercial development, the airport expansion, and the three new cities/free trade zones.

Long-term projects

1. Construction of the Lungi Bridge

Strategic objective

The strategic objective of the Presidential Infrastructure Initiatives is to provide vital infrastructure that can have a positive impact on the socio-economic development of the country and can create jobs through public–private partnerships.

Key targets

1. Five thousand jobs are created in the country.
2. Commuting between Freetown and Lungi is made easy.
3. Water supply is available in Bo and Kenema cities.
4. Traffic congestion is eased in Freetown.
5. Abundant electricity and power supplies exist in all cities and district headquarter towns.
6. Adequate accommodation for governance is available nationwide.
7. Freetown is a destination for major international events and conferences.
8. Adequate housing exists for Freetown's population.
9. Port services are expanded to provincial areas.

Key policy actions

1. Secure the requisite legal and operating environment for implementation.
2. Create partnerships with private investors.

3. Mobilize resources.
4. Coordinate various actors and stakeholders.
5. Ensure monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process.
6. Mobilize the population during implementation.

3.7 Fostering private sector growth and manufacturing

The private sector is the most stable engine of economic growth, as it creates opportunities for expansion, diversification, and promotion of entrepreneurship. Private sector growth will ensure the creation of a vibrant middle class, which at the moment is thin in Sierra Leone and mostly a product of the public service sector. Developing the private sector through promoting local businesses and creating space for foreign direct investment is very necessary for stimulating sustainable economic growth and democratic governance in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone is endowed with abundant natural resources attractive to private sector investment. Huge potential exists in the transformation and value addition of locally produced primary (raw) products. The share of value-added output in the economy has generally been very small. In 2012, the country's manufacturing sector contributed only 2 percent to GDP, which fell far below the average of 7.7 percent recorded for African least developed countries at the time. Also, the country's manufacturing value added per capita was only one-fifth of the average African least developed countries. The share of manufacturing jobs in Sierra Leone's



Encouraging the private sector in economic diversification.

total employment was estimated at around 2 percent, and was dominated by informal small and medium-sized enterprises using simple, labour-intensive methods of production.

The linkages between the manufacturing sector and primary sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and minerals have been very weak. Locally manufactured consumer goods include alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, confectionery, cement, paint, juice, flour, soap, textiles,

apparel, handicrafts, and furniture. Industries are concentrated in the west of the country, mainly in Freetown, with very few scattered among the regional headquarter cities.

Low participation of women in the value chain is part of the broader problem the industry faces. While a small number of women own medium- and large-scale enterprises, the majority are engaged in micro-production, with no access to formal sector skills and capital.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry figures on small and medium-sized enterprises supplying goods and services to foreign companies increased from 326 in 2015 to 617 in 2016 and 712 in 2017; the number of trained small and medium-sized enterprise owners increased from 887 in 2016 to 1,087 in 2017. There are 14 licensed banks operating in Sierra Leone. Of these, only one (Sierra Leone Commercial Bank) is solely owned by the government. Rokel Commercial Bank is partly owned by the government. Only one bank is wholly owned by private Sierra Leoneans, while the rest are foreign-dominated banks (controlling 75 percent of financial sector assets).

The World Bank's Doing Business index ranked Sierra Leone 148 out of 190 in 2017, and the Global Competitiveness Report ranked Sierra Leone 133 out of 134 countries surveyed in 2012. Subsequent ranking did not change significantly and stood at 132 out of 138 countries surveyed.³

Key challenges that impede the promotion of the private sector and the growth of the manufacturing sector are as follows: continued classification of the country as a fragile state; limited capital provision and labour market; limited data and information on private investment opportunities (information asymmetry); regulatory constraints, including inconsistent tax regimes; foreign exchange and general macroeconomic risks; limited use of commercial financing; physical infrastructure problems; an inability to capture the informal sector, where retail trade, garages, repair workshops, and handicraft workshops are rife; weak infrastructure and technology; weak policy and legal environment; inadequate bank coordination; shortage of skilled professionals; and absence of long-term financing and foreign currency lending.

Nevertheless, there are enormous opportunities to leverage for the structural transformation of the economy through private sector growth, especially manufacturing. Sierra Leone is a relatively peaceful country, with a high degree of religious tolerance; it has a very youthful population (demographic dividend); it possesses a rich ecology and beautiful landscapes; and there is strong political will and a visible determination by the leadership to grow the economy and provide equal opportunities for all of its citizens to prosper.

The country boasts the largest natural rutile reserves in the world, besides having huge energy potential and high domestic demand. All this represents a significant opportunity to secure considerable investment financing from the massive stock of private resources available internationally.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to improve the general business environment for the attraction of private investment, with greater local ownership and competition.

Key targets

1. Industrial and economic zones are established in all regions nationwide.
2. Number of registered firms increases by 300 percent and the list of manufactured goods increases by 200 percent.
3. World Bank Doing Business index rating is improved (aiming to be in the first hundred).

³ State Opening of Parliament statement delivered by the President Bio, May 2017, pp. 10–11.

Key policy actions

1. Improve the legal and regulatory environment for private sector development.
2. Expand manufacturing and include value addition for local products.
3. Capture the informal sector with a view to supporting its growth and development.
4. Harmonize tax regimes to remove inconsistencies.
5. Encourage and promote diaspora participation in trade and investment.

FIRST PERSON

'The newly established Karene District was created with five of the most vulnerable chiefdoms from Port Loko and eight of the most deprived chiefdoms from Bombali District. There is basically no infrastructure in Karene (council offices, government hospital, water, electricity, good roads, etc.). Therefore, an inclusive National Development Plan helps to improve the district's infrastructure.'

—John Dito Kamara, Chairman, Karene District Council

'Coordination between development partners and the private sector is crucial for successful implementation of the NDP.'

—Representative of development partners

CLUSTER FOUR: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS

Quality management of development policies has a positive influence on economic performance and plays a crucial role in the overall socio-economic and political development of the country. The interaction of interest groups to develop and implement policies that adhere to rules and laws is an important part of attaining good governance and accountability. The democratic developmental state approach underpinned by inclusive politics, inclusive development, and inclusive economic growth is not an end in itself. Rather, the approach is adopted to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are redistributed to all Sierra Leoneans through the provision of affordable housing, public health services, and free education. However, it is recognized that good governance, like quality and inclusive education, is an indispensable prerequisite for achieving the development goals that are outlined in this first five years of the 20-year National Development Plan.

Previous attempts to address the country's faulty good governance and accountability architecture have focused mainly on a quick fix of a few superficial issues, without deep reflection on the core societal challenges that breed divisions in society, create unpatriotic tendencies among citizens, and erode the integrity of state officials. As a result, the country continues to be engulfed in a vicious cycle of divisiveness, exclusion, and the weakening and subversion of state governing institutions. In order to depart from the old method of addressing the persistent challenges facing good governance and accountability, the government will ensure

that every citizen feels they are an integral part of an inseparable and indivisible country.

To achieve this, conscious effort must be made to strengthen transparency and accountability; encourage and support national cohesion; intensify and support the fight against corruption and illicit financial flows; strengthen the audit service; enhance the functioning of public financial management structures; strengthen justice sector institutions; build trust in state institutions; intensify and optimize public service delivery; strengthen decentralization, local governance, and rural development; and provide capacity, welfare, and logistical support to security institutions and personnel.

This section focuses on the issues highlighted above and presents the government's first five-year targets in a 20-year continuum towards achieving good governance, positive nationalism, transparency, and accountability.

4.1 Political development for national cohesion

Section 35(1) of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone mandates political parties to participate in shaping the political will of the people and disseminate information on political ideas and national social and economic programmes.

This mandate evidently has been neglected. In recent times, the political environment of our nation has been characterized by a high



Credible elections for peace and democratic development.

level of intolerance and intimidation by political party leaders, members, and supporters. Political parties' weak internal governance, exclusion of women, youth, and persons with disability in decision making, manipulation of information, and breach of party constitutions promote tribal and regional division, violence, and instability. It is evident that these problems are more prominent during electoral cycles. Unfortunately, existing government regulatory structures and enforcement mechanisms are too weak to respond to these challenges.

Despite these challenges, the Government of Sierra Leone is aware that citizens have shown commitment to peaceful coexistence by engaging in activities such as non-violent public

campaigns, alliance building among political parties, and other initiatives.

The government will build on this by ensuring that every citizen is an integral part of an inseparable and indivisible country that promotes inclusive politics, governance, and development as the only guarantor for sustaining peace and security. Addressing inadequacies or inconsistencies in the current legal framework and promoting political education aimed at sensitizing members of political parties and the broader electorate about positive attitudes, knowledge, skills, and cross-party alliances, among others, will be a crucial element for achieving this.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to ensure a democratic and cohesive society that is peaceful, stable, and tolerant.

Key targets

1. By 2023, set up a Peace and National Cohesion Commission.
2. By 2021, review the legal and regulatory framework with a view to eliminating anomalies that are inconsistent with a developmental state, especially those dating back to the colonial period.
3. By 2020, introduce massive civic education to improve public knowledge on civic responsibilities and obligations and the roles of public institutions, including the constitutional mandate of political parties.
4. By 2023, the Political Parties Registration Commission has decentralized operations to all districts.
5. By 2023, a National Council for Civic Education and Development is established in order to create a critical mass of Sierra Leoneans with knowledge about political issues and the developmental state model.



Political tolerance and inter-party dialogue for national cohesion,

Key policy actions

1. Initiate policy reforms to ensure that Sierra Leoneans are free to live and work anywhere in the country regardless of tribe, geographical origin, and other considerations.
2. Facilitate the establishment of a Peace and National Cohesion Commission by an act of Parliament.
3. Build the capacity of political institutions, including the Political Parties Registration Commission.
4. Develop political inclusion and participatory policies.
5. Establish and/or strengthen community structures and mechanisms to detect and resolve violent conflict.
6. Establish a National Commission for Civic Education and Development.
7. Fully implement the National Youth Service scheme, in which young people from one part of the country will be cross-posted to other parts for their national youth service.
8. Encourage all political parties to undertake initiatives aimed at diversifying their membership across regional and ethnic divides.

4.2 Fighting corruption and illicit financial flows

Corruption and illegal financial flows have been some of the most persistent challenges facing successive governments, posing a significant threat to socio-economic growth, development, and stability. Abundant evidence shows that

fighting corruption and illicit financial flows at all levels is crucial for alleviating extreme poverty and boosting private sector growth and development. The lesser the incidence of corruption in a country, the greater the likelihood of steady economic growth, as investor confidence will increase significantly.

In 2017, the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index ranked Sierra Leone 130 out of 175 countries. This dismal ranking has been consistent over the past decade, reaching an all-time low of 158 out of 175 in 2008.

Leakages and extralegal activities in revenue generation sectors have contributed immensely to the poor performance of Sierra Leone in this global integrity barometer. For instance, the annual revenue loss caused by illegal fishing in Sierra Leone is estimated to be in the region of US\$29 million. The promulgation of strong legislative instruments such as the Anti-corruption Act of 2000, which established an independent Anti-corruption Commission, and the 2008 Anti-corruption Act, which further enhanced the powers of the commission, including the power to prosecute, has done little to improve the situation of corruption in the country.

Furthermore, despite other concrete policy interventions such as the implementation of the National Anti-corruption Strategy, the introduction of a systems and processes review as a prevention mechanism that mainly targets government MDAs, and smart public education and outreach strategies, including the 'Pay No Bribe' campaign, corruption continues to ravage the fabric of Sierra Leonean society. This has significantly undermined the country's revenue generation capacity, destroyed the reputation of the country in the international



Fighting to curb bribery and corruption in our society.

community, and posed a significant threat to the country's development potential.

Several challenges have been identified in the fight against corruption: limited implementation or non-implementation of the recommendations of Audit Service Sierra Leone; lack of a commensurate reward system in public and private sectors; a fall in ethical standards; weak staff capacity; scarcity of strong evidence and credible witnesses to gain convictions; absence of a whistle blower policy; and weak collaboration among partners.

As bad as the situation is, there are critical opportunities that must be leveraged to turn the tide against corruption and illicit financial flows. For instance, a critical lesson learned over the years is that buy-in and ownership of the general public and political will and determination to fight corruption are essential ingredients for a successful eradication campaign. Currently, the government has shown genuine will and determination to intensify the war against corruption, and the public have demonstrated a keen interest in the fight, as the number of whistle blowers among the general public has increased significantly.

Strategic objective

The ultimate objective is to reduce corruption significantly through the empowering of the Anti-corruption Commission to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption in all its forms and scale up the fight against illicit financial flows in Sierra Leone to increase domestic revenue to finance development programmes.

Key targets

1. Implement 100 percent of the Auditor-General's annual recommendations for reducing corruption.
2. By 2023, develop and implement more service in sectors compared to what existed in 2018.
3. By 2023, establish a division of the High Court for corruption trials, with adequate facilities for judges and other personnel.
4. By 2023, establish an oversight and inter-agency coordination mechanism to combat all forms of corruption, especially illicit financial flows.
2. Adopt a new framework to ensure accountability and transparency in the public sector in the form of a National Public Sector Transparency and Accountability Initiative to subject the public sector to more scrutiny by civil society and development partners.
3. Set up a system for planning, monitoring, and reporting on development results, referred to as results-based management, wherein development targets will be set at the start of each year and senior managers will be accountable for delivering on these results.
4. Review the Anti-corruption Act 2008 to make provision for plea bargaining.
5. Detect and deter cross-border tax evasion, enhance the implementation of anti-money laundering laws and practices, and deepen collaboration with Interpol to track illegal finances abroad.
6. Put mechanisms in place to curtail trade mis-invoicing and improve the transparency of multinational corporations.

Key policy actions

1. Review the relevant provisions of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991 (Section 119 in particular) and the Anti-corruption Act to strengthen the Anti-corruption Commission's investigative and prosecutorial mandate with respect to audit reports tabled by Audit Service Sierra Leone before Parliament to give it powers to proceed without the need to wait for parliamentary investigations.

4.3 Strengthening public financial management

It is strongly recognized by the government that effective and efficient public financial management (PFM) systems are essential for effective and sustainable economic management and public service delivery in Sierra Leone. The country can only be effective and accountable if it is anchored on good PFM institutions and systems. Additionally, Sierra Leone's economy is largely donor driven, and therefore building good PFM systems is imperative for inspiring donor confidence.



Strengthening fiscal discipline and the efficient management of resources.

The government commitment is demonstrated in the ongoing implementation of the PFM strategy 2018–2021. The overall thrust of the new strategy is to accelerate the prudent, efficient, effective, and transparent management and use of public financial resources. The strategy targets a range of improvements across the PFM cycle that will contribute to macroeconomic stability, enhance the delivery of public services, and improve accountability across revenue collection and expenditure. This remains a fundamental dimension of the public policy efforts required to ensure a successful transformation of the economy of Sierra Leone to a middle-income country by 2035.

Despite efforts to improve fiscal risk reporting and public investment management, the management of assets and liabilities systems remained underdeveloped from 2014 to 2017. Similarly, significant attention was not paid to

the monitoring of public financial and non-financial assets. Monitoring and controls over government liabilities, such as guarantees for public–private partnerships, remain ineffective.

A significant opportunity stems from the existence of a policy-based fiscal strategy and budget for a framework on policy-based planning and budgeting, along with medium-term economic and fiscal forecasts. However, these elements require additional work in order to fully support more effective strategic alignment of resource allocations.

Another opportunity worthy of note is that accounting and reporting systems recorded significant progress regarding the coverage and timeliness of annual financial reporting, along with improved accounting practices to support financial data integrity. Nevertheless, deficiencies must be addressed, notably in the timeliness

and quality of in-year reporting. Similarly, external scrutiny and audit have recorded progress, with wider coverage and stronger standards for external audit, but inadequate parliamentary oversight and weak executive follow-up remain on audit recommendations.

In the midst of these opportunities, key challenges still linger. In terms of predictability and control in budget execution, a lot remains to be done. Assessments have pointed to a considerable ‘compliance gap’ between legal requirements and effective practices in the PFM policy area. There have been particular concerns around the frequency and transparency of budget revisions, the effective application of expenditure controls, the integrity of payroll management, and critical weaknesses in procurement systems and practices.

Other specific challenges that have to be surmounted in PFM range from the unreliability of the budget to weakness in public finance transparency, lacklustre management of public assets and liabilities, insufficient external scrutiny, and poor reporting systems.

Strategic objective

The overall objective is to advance the prudent, efficient, effective, and transparent management and use of public financial resources within the new PFM Strategy 2018–2021, with a special focus on implementing instruments aimed at improving revenue generation; effectively addressing fiscal risk; improving public debt management; advancing integrated financial management information systems; strengthening procurement and public asset and payroll management; and improving ICT and e-governance.

Key targets

1. By 2021, conduct Public Expenditure Reviews in education, health, and energy-related MDAs.
2. By 2023, establish a comprehensive national fixed asset register.
3. By 2023, fully implement public financial management reforms for local councils and decentralization.

Key policy actions

1. Separate the Ministry of Finance from the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and enhance the latter's capacity for more effective coordination of donor spending, improving programme/project design, implementation support, and monitoring and evaluation.
2. Strengthen public expenditure tracking, the Audit Service Commission, and the involvement of non-state actors in monitoring public spending.
3. Develop a National Development Monitoring and Evaluation System within MoPED that will generate real-time information on outputs and outcomes of all development projects implemented by the government and donors.
4. Evaluate the ongoing reforms and introduce additional reforms to strengthen public expenditure management.
5. Develop and introduce a standardized overseas travel policy for the public service, covering all categories of workers, including government ministers.

6. Develop the capacity of ministries, departments, and agencies in expenditure planning, management, and reporting.
7. Implement all activities in the new Public Financial Management Strategy 2018–2021 within the time frame stipulated.
8. Develop internal policies to enhance quality control and prompt reporting and effective monitoring.
9. Initiate innovative revenue mobilization strategies.
10. Establish SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely) public financial management collaboration and oversight systems.

4.4 Strengthening audit services

The Government of Sierra Leone has given special attention in the MTNDP to strengthening the operations of Audit Service Sierra Leone within the country's new PFM Strategy 2018–2021. This is crucial for the plan's overarching thrust towards ensuring a sound national development policy delivery mechanism anchored on a disciplined civil service, zero tolerance for corruption, and effective public service delivery. The role of Audit Service Sierra Leone in the socio-economic development of Sierra Leone cannot be overemphasized. Ensuring the effective functioning of the country's supreme audit institution, responsible for auditing all government MDAs, is *sine qua non*.

Some significant successes have been achieved over the years, although tremendous challenges have remained. The level of stakeholder

awareness about the role, functions, and independence of Audit Service Sierra Leone has significantly increased. The institution has been consistent in producing timely, relevant, and quality audit reports in recent times. This has been achieved through ensuring quality control; complying with professional standards and organizational effectiveness by delivering relevant training to staff; increasing the efficiency of audits through an increased focus on risk and better monitoring of outputs; auditing expenditures made on behalf of Sierra Leoneans by international organizations; increasing the number of professionally qualified audit staff; and ensuring that all audit work is properly reviewed.

Other important interventions include increasing the audit coverage of money received and spent by public institutions; conducting audits in 'specialized' audit areas such as procurement audit, ICT audit, and environmental audit; increasing the capacity of the Performance Audit Division; and ensuring that real-time audits are carried out on development projects.

Audit Service Sierra Leone has been successful in increasing the impact of audit reports through continuously developing and enhancing its working relationship with the Public Accounts Committee, improving audit recommendations, and developing strong relationships with other organizations with similar or overlapping objectives. There is currently effective and efficient human capital in Audit Service Sierra Leone through the development of staff welfare programmes and the regular staff appraisal system. These efforts were linked to staff rewards and promotions and annual training plans, and were rolled out through an effective and efficient ICT platform to facilitate audit service operations.

In the midst of these successes, some challenges still linger, including the following: limited financial independence; inadequate office accommodation; lack of information technology to drive audits; limited operational resources; and poor motivation of staff.

Going forward, the MTNDP will build on lessons learned over the years as opportunities to deliver better audit services. The major opportunity going forward is the new Audit Service Sierra Leone Act of 2014, which, among other things, aimed at rationalizing the varying roles played by various stakeholders relating to audit service administration and operations in the country. The new act strengthens recognition of the need to make the institution more independent and accord it the requisite support to carry out its operations as constitutionally expected.

Strategic objective

The overall objective for strengthening Audit Service Sierra Leone is to provide more efficient and effective use of government revenue through sound fiscal management practices.

Key targets

1. By 2023, ensure that full annual performance audits are conducted.
2. By 2023, conduct a revenue audit annually and submit it to Parliament.
3. By 2023, set up a system to fully implement and follow up on all financial audit recommendations and those from the Auditor-General's Annual Report.

Key policy actions

1. Strengthen the capacity of Audit Service Sierra Leone.
2. Increase access to necessary revenue-related information.
3. Undertake and coordinate specialized audits, including a procurement audit, an ICT audit, and an environmental audit.
4. Support non-state actors to track and follow up on audit reports and engage the public in this direction.
5. Increase collaboration with the Anti-corruption Commission and other stakeholders to enforce audit recommendations and strengthen sanctions.

4.5 Promoting inclusive and accountable justice institutions

The Government of Sierra Leone recognizes that judiciary and justice sector reforms are critical to advancing the rule of law, promoting justice, and guaranteeing human rights. While it is recognizable that over the years the justice sector has been undergoing a reform process, there is an urgent need for the improvement and acceleration of such reforms, particularly in the area of access to justice and the introduction of robust mechanisms for the application of the rule of law. These are fundamental steps towards promoting sustainable peace and development in the country.

To date, the country can boast only 35 judges, 47 state councils, 30 magistrates, 14 legal defence councils, and 40 paralegals nationwide.



Strengthening the justice sector for a free, fair, and just society.

Though it may seem that there is a fair presence of formal justice structures (police stations, local courts, magistrate courts, and other supporting institutions such as the Local Police Partnership Board) across the country, justice delivery services have been inadequate to meet growing demand, especially for the most marginalized and deprived sections of the country. To this effect, access to and expedition of justice are still limited for the majority of the citizens in the country.

A Public Perception Survey undertaken in 2017 by the Justice Sector Coordination Office to gauge the opinion of the public on the functioning of the justice sector revealed that most citizens remain sceptical about the country's justice sector, especially in terms of its impartiality, neutrality, and independence. There was an overwhelming opinion that institutions such as the judiciary and the police,

apart from engaging in corrupt practices, are simply political tools used by those in power to impose their will. This negative view is reinforced by the current operations, financing, and recruitment procedures, which still do not ensure the independence and operational autonomy of such institutions.

Despite the fundamental role of this sector, it is still marred by limited resources; shortage of staff and limited capacity; lack of public trust in the judiciary and police; inadequate funding to support justice sector reform; and poor data and records management systems.

However, as a key priority of the government, a strong commitment has been made to advancing the rule of law and promoting justice and human rights. As a matter of urgency, the government is in the process of overhauling the judiciary and the justice delivery system in the

country, with a view to restoring public confidence in its independence and impartiality and making justice accessible and available to all.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to ensure that all citizens benefit from a fair, impartial, and effective justice sector through enabling increased access to justice, expedition of justice, protection of human rights, and equal opportunities for economic development.

Key targets

1. By 2023, ensure that the number of cases awaiting judgement for six months is considerably lower than in 2018.
2. By 2023, increase public confidence and trust in the justice sector as measured in periodic surveys.
3. By 2023, all administrative districts have at least one resident High Court Judge.

Key policy actions

1. Review and ensure that appointments and recruitment of justice sector actors are on merit and competency in effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery.
2. Strengthen the Judicial and Legal Service Commission to become more independent in the discharge of its role and functions.
3. Strengthen the Judicial and Legal Training Institute for continuous development of

the judicial and legal profession in Sierra Leone.

4. Support the expansion of legal aid services nationwide.
5. Introduce courtroom technology to be in line with emerging issues for efficiency, especially the expediting of cases.
6. Improve case management systems, including roll-out and linkages across the sector.
7. Pursue the amendment of the Criminal Procedure Bill.
8. Harmonize bail application processes and procedures.
9. Strengthen access to and protection of witnesses, including victims and jurors.
10. Strengthen alternative dispute resolution mechanisms across the sector.
11. Strengthen the juvenile justice system, the Juvenile Justice Strategy, and other provisions of the Child Rights Act.
12. Strengthen the Integrity Management Committee within the judiciary and roll it out across the sector.
13. Strengthen service delivery mechanism to ensure protection of rights.
14. Pursue compliance to national, regional, and international reporting obligations by strengthening M&E and other systems across the sector.
15. Build the capacity of the justice sector MDAs to improve communication, collaboration, and coordination among actors.

16. Improve the policy and legislative framework to accelerate the justice sector reform process.
17. Strengthen data, information, and statistical systems across the justice sector for effective records and information management.
18. Pursue the establishment of specialized environmental, anti-corruption, labour, and tax courts, among others.

4.6 Building public trust in state institutions

Public trust in state institutions is an important ingredient in building a strong civil coalition around the sustainable development programmes of the government. One of the main expectations of citizens is that their government will fairly and effectively deliver social services to every citizen on an even keel, irrespective of their socio-economic background or political persuasion. It is also the popular expectation among citizens that public officials will manage state resources in a manner that will benefit the state and its citizens. In short, public trust requires public service by state institutions that is devoid of institutional inertia and discrimination.

Over the past decade, public trust in state institutions has dwindled significantly, and this in part is due to the perceived pervasive corruption within these institutions, in addition to professionalism in the public sector being rapidly replaced with political patronage and nepotism. The mode of operation of state institutions over the last five years largely has been

based on ‘who you know’, ‘what political party you belong to’, or ‘how much money you have’. In other words, the merit-based approach to public service delivery has taken a back seat to corruption and nepotism.

The core challenges include the lack of independence of some state institutions, especially the judiciary, the National Electoral Commission, and the police, which presents a serious public trust issue; weaknesses in human rights and democratic institutions; patronage and nepotism in public service delivery; and the tendency for abuse of power and state authority by government officials.

Additionally, acrimonious political division and lack of patriotism have stymied objectivity among Sierra Leoneans generally. Essentially, members of the public who belong to opposition parties tend to have less trust in state institutions compared to those who support the ruling party.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to build trust in state institutions through the implementation of strategies to strengthen national cohesion and ensure a peaceful, just, and inclusive society. The aim is also to build a national spirit of cultural voluntarism for increased public acceptance of and participation in the national socio-economic development programme; to harness the energies and expertise of every Sierra Leonean towards nation-building and socio-economic transformation; and to build citizens’ confidence in state institutions that provide services to the general citizenry.

Key targets

1. By 2023, the level of public trust in state institutions is significantly improved compared to 2018.
2. By 2023, about 50 percent of the adult population express satisfaction that state institutions are functioning better than in 2018.
3. By 2023, create a favourable space for human rights organizations to effectively promote transparency and accountability in an unfettered manner.
4. By 2023, create a citizens' bureau that will meet annually with public authorities to review a wide range of issues stemming from the previous 12 months.
4. Strengthen the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law.
5. Strengthen human rights and democratic institutions by promoting democracy and ensuring free and fair elections.
6. Review the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Report (2018) and the Government White Paper (2018) with the aim of pursuing a constitution that would address the needs and aspirations of the people.
7. Develop the capacities of democratic institutions through adequate funding, qualified and competent human resources, as well as efficient and effective systems and procedures.

Key policy actions

1. Establish a Peace and National Cohesion Commission that will build and promote national cohesion (promote national unity, foster national identity, inculcate a national philosophy and ideology, and encourage continuous dialogue on national cohesion).
2. Expand the capacity of human rights organizations and organizations promoting democracy, and sensitize the public on their work throughout the country.
3. Build and promote national cohesion through the eradication of tribalism, nepotism, and other forms of discrimination; promote national unity and ensure togetherness; foster a national identity and inculcate a national philosophy and ideology; and encourage continuous dialogue on national cohesion.

4.7 Strengthening public service delivery

The public service of Sierra Leone is the bedrock for the implementation and delivery of the government's ideas and plans. A strong and capacitated public service is critical to achieving the nation's development aspirations. According to the Civil Service Code, public service refers to the service of the state in respect of the Government of Sierra Leone in a civil capacity. Civil service is an important element of the executive arm of the government, but actually comprises all employees of government, whether appointed on a permanent or contract basis.

The role of the Public Service Commission is 'to appoint persons to hold or act in offices in the public service (including power to make appointments on promotion and to confirm appointments) and to dismiss and to exercise

disciplinary control over persons holding or acting in such offices'. The commission has made recent progress on internal reforms, with a new organizational and administrative structure, institutionalized merit and competence-based recruitment, three regional offices, a new records management approach, etc.

Some efforts have been made towards strengthening civil service capacity by filling critical vacancies (Grades 6–13), confirming appointments and promotions, mainstreaming local technical assistants, and re-designating officers. Through reforming the Public Service Bill and reviewing the Public Service Regulations of 1982, discipline and accountability in the civil service has improved, along with human resource management. From these activities, one key lesson has emerged, which is the need for the Public Service Commission application process to be automated to avoid long queues of applicants collecting application forms.

In the midst of this progress, pressing challenges still persist in the public service: the absence of a central authority responsible for policy design and standardization of procedures in the management of all public service human resources; lack of clarity regarding institutional responsibilities and division of labour; lack of coordination, collaboration, and accountability within the public service; obsolete and antiquated legislation; and delays in receiving recruitment requests. Additionally, there is low female participation at all levels of the public service; uncompetitive remuneration for public servants; limited performance management systems; and inadequate implementation of the recommendations of management and functional reviews.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to create a lean, performance-oriented, highly motivated, modern, and efficient public service that delivers high-quality services to the people of Sierra Leone in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Key targets

1. By 2023, quality social service delivery is available to every Sierra Leone.
2. By 2023, automate the processes for personnel recruitment and retirement.
3. By 2023, establish and support the Wages and Compensation Commission.

Key policy actions

1. Rationalize the structure of the public service with a view to having clear political leadership and direction.
2. Restructure the Human Resources Management Office by creating the necessary departments that will be staffed by career Human Resources Officers with the right competencies and skills, with a view to modernizing the civil service to face the challenges of the 21st century.
3. Develop a new architecture of state governance and a national civil service organogram.
4. Establish a National Civil Service Capacity Enhancement scheme.
5. Reintroduce and scale up a 'hire purchase scheme' and housing scheme for serving

members of the civil service and related services to enable them to acquire capital items (with values consistent with their official emoluments).

6. Review of the Public Service Regulations of 1982, enact the Public Service Bill, and review the Civil Service Code, Regulations, and Rules.
7. Decentralize the Public Service Commission interview process to the regions.
8. Conduct a human resource audit in at least 30 MDAs.
9. Conduct administrative inquiries in at least 20 MDAs.

4.8 Strengthening decentralization, local governance, and rural development

It is recognized that the cornerstone for ensuring inclusivity in the governance system at all levels is the empowerment of local governments and implementing a decentralized approach to efficient service delivery. Since the reestablishment of the local councils in 2004, studies on the progress made in the decentralization process have presented a mixed picture. While decision making has been localized, thereby allowing for the participation of local people in the day-to-day administration of their respective localities, the creation of two power structures (the district councils and chiefdom councils) without adequate legal and policy frameworks to define relationships, roles, responsibilities,

and jurisdictions has created a serious quagmire for successive governments.

Efforts are being made to build the capacity of local governance structures, with the aim of equipping them with the requisite skills and resources to deliver services and uphold peace, stability, and justice, by promoting inclusive local coordination structures. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development promotes the decentralized approach by assigning roles and responsibilities to local councils and coordinating programme devolution from central government to local councils, as mandated in the Local Government Act 2004.

Within the ministry's Directorate of Local Government, the Decentralization Secretariat was established as a technical division to support the implementation of and capacity building for local government reforms. Additionally, the Local Government Service Commission is primarily responsible for ensuring that local councils have adequate quality human resources for enhanced service delivery. Over the years, the ministry's role has evolved from direct implementation of community development programmes to policy formulation, coordination, and monitoring of programmes implemented by local councils.

Some progress has been made since the enactment of the 2004 Local Government Act. A stable, transparent, and formula-based intergovernmental fiscal transfer system has been developed and is being implemented. Annual allocation and disbursement of grants to local councils have increased over the years as responsibilities for delivering basic social services have been transferred to local councils in line with the devolution of functions. Local councils have medium-term development

plans that are subject to review and linked to their medium-term expenditure framework budgets. These are prepared in line with the 27-digit chart of account, which will ease integration with central government and facilitate reporting on general government allocation and expenditure.

Challenges and problems still lingering within the local governance architecture, despite the progress made in decentralization, principally revolve around issues of capacity, funding, overlapping roles between the councils and chiefdoms, and the perennial problem of lack of transparency and accountability.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to strengthen local council operations and facilitate strong, inclusive collaboration and coordination mechanisms within local governance systems. The aim is to enhance the complete devolution process; strengthen chiefdom, ward, and village development committees; and facilitate synergies among local councils, ward committees, and chiefdom administrations for effective service delivery.

Key targets

1. By 2023, complete the de-amalgamation of the remaining 27 chiefdoms.
2. By 2023, operationalize the Local Councils Development Operational Guidelines in all 22 local councils.
3. By 2020, complete the review of the Decentralization Policy and Local Government Act 2004.

Key policy actions

1. Review the National Decentralization Policy and amend the Local Government Act 2004.
2. Facilitate completion of the devolution process.
3. Bring chiefdom governance in line with local governance and make chiefdom structures play a major role in the decentralized service delivery process.
4. Finalize the National Rural Development Policy to provide the policy environment to ensure the proper coordination of all rural community development interventions.
5. Review PFM guidelines (medium-term expenditure framework budget preparation and reporting manuals) for local councils and chiefdoms.
6. Harmonize the relationship between local councils and the Council of Paramount Chiefs to ensure mutual respect and trust for effective service delivery.
7. Define new conditions of service for paramount chiefs and most essential chiefdom staff with a view to building capacity for future challenges.
8. Restore the dignity and prestige of paramount chiefs by improving their conditions of service and making them an integral part of the local governance development process.
9. Reintroduce the development grant allocation to councils and increase national budget allocation to councils commensurate with their devolved responsibilities.

10. Ensure that the staff of MDAs managing the devolved sectors are supervised and controlled by the local councils.

4.9 Strengthening security institutions

The security sector ensures a politically stable environment that allows government to function effectively, inspires public confidence, protects investments, reassures the international community, and promotes democracy and the rule of law.

During the last five years, the sector has delivered key results in strategic areas, especially in the areas of security coordination, disaster

management and risk reduction, protective security, border security, maritime patrol, counter terrorism, and election security. The various security structures established at the national and community levels since the end of the civil conflict in 2002 (including the National Security Council, the National Security Council Coordinating Group, the Strategic Situation Group, the Joint Intelligence Committee, the Joint Coordination Centre, and the decentralized security committees, including provincial, district, and chiefdom security committees) have tremendously improved the security sector. Currently, Sierra Leone is considered one of the most peaceful countries on the planet.

However, critical challenges still remain to be addressed in order to build on the gains that have been made in the sector and to make



Sierra Leone a safe and secure place for all: the unavailability of funds to implement sector programmes and activities; poor conditions of service for sector personnel; inadequate security coordination at the chiefdom level; a noncordial relationship between the public and private security sectors; and weak participation of the public in security-related matters.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to have a security sector that is effective, efficient, highly apolitical, and professional, one that can contribute significantly to sustainable development and the advancement of democracy and the rule of law, and can ensure a robust response to national threats and emergencies.

Key targets

1. By 2023, ensure that the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces are more modernized and mechanized than in 2018.
2. By 2023, ensure that the early warning and response capacity of the security institutions is significantly higher than in 2018.
3. By 2023, ensure that community engagement in security processes and functions is greater than in 2018.

Key policy actions

1. Develop participatory strategies geared towards improving the conditions of service of all service men and women.
2. Reintroduce fairness, transparency, professionalism, and the merit approach in

recruitment, promotions, transfers, and deployment of service personnel.

3. Work towards mechanizing and modernizing the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces to enable them to contribute to non-traditional military functions such as relief and disaster interventions, agriculture, and construction.
4. Remove disaster management from the Office of National Security and establish a national specialized agency for disaster preparedness and management.
5. Upgrade health care for service and ex-service men and women and their families.
6. Provide subsidized education support for all Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces and Sierra Leone Police officers and their children intending to pursue professional higher education at national institutions.
7. Create safe ICT infrastructure and develop strategies that will serve as a solid basis for the protection of information systems and networks against cyber attacks.
8. Strengthen the intelligence wing of the security sector to detect and thwart terrorism and terrorist-related activities.

4.10 Strengthening external relations for integration

Sierra Leone's civil war, Ebola outbreak, and recent disasters have dented its international image. This situation has been compounded by the country's inability to make its contributions and fully participate in regional and international bodies. This had huge consequences

on economic performance, as the country does not take advantage of certain international opportunities.

The key challenges that have plagued the country's external relations include, but are not limited to, poor leadership, limited investment, inadequate staff strength (number and capacity), poor economic performance, and weak representation due to non-payment of dues and contributions to international bodies.

To transform the economy of Sierra Leone, the current leadership is considering the following: supporting an open, liberal trade and investment regime; minimizing and removing barriers to trade; and implementing policies to encourage foreign direct investment through partnership.

The Government of Sierra Leone looks to accessing larger sub-regional and regional markets that will be facilitated and accompanied by a deliberate programme of pursuing investment in infrastructure to enable and promote Sierra Leone as a communication and telecommunication conduit and hub. Furthermore, Sierra Leone's ria coastline (with its great potential for a natural harbour) presents a comparative advantage for international trade.

This MTNDP is pursuing aggressive, open economic diplomacy with trade liberalization, including removing policies that inhibit foreign direct investment.

Strategic objective

The objective is to rebrand and position the country strategically to take its rightful place in the community of nations so that it becomes a favourable destination through its attractive image.

Key targets

1. By 2023, ensure the number of trained/career diplomats serving the country is higher than in 2018.
2. By 2023, ensure the international image of Sierra Leone is more favourable than in 2018.
3. By 2023, expand Sierra Leone's diplomatic missions and presence abroad.
4. By 2023, ensure the level of representation in regional and international organizations is higher than in 2018.
5. By 2023, ensure that the number of Sierra Leoneans serving in regional and international organizations is higher than in 2018.

Key policy actions

1. Establish a diplomatic academy for training and producing career diplomats through international engagement.
2. Host more regional and international high-profile meetings in Sierra Leone.
3. Update and regularize payments of subscriptions and other support to regional and international organizations.
4. Mobilize and encourage nationals to work in regional and international bodies by advocating for special quotas or considerations.
5. Support Sierra Leone's participation and constructive engagement in subregional, regional, and international organizations.
6. Construct the Mano River Union headquarters in Freetown to fulfil Sierra Leone's obligation as host country.

7. Strengthen the research and documentation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by creating a research division and resource centre to empower and enhance staff and partners.
8. Raise the level of representation and performance in regional organizations and others (Economic Community of West African States, African Union, Commonwealth of Nations).
9. Maintain a full commitment to the domestication of all relevant international treaties and protocols.
10. Elaborate a new robust foreign policy that clearly promotes international cooperation built on respect, mutual trust, and benefit.
11. Introduce and develop special career schemes to mobilize young graduates to become career diplomats.
12. Assess and strengthen foreign embassies and missions for upgrading and positioning in preparedness for and response to emerging global issues through proactive initiatives.
13. Restructure the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to fully reflect the new national policy objectives.
14. Ensure personnel serving in foreign missions have the skills to ensure productivity and efficiency.
15. Identify and appoint country brand ambassadors who will improve and promote the country's image.

CLUSTER FIVE: EMPOWERING WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

5.1 Women

According to the 2015 Sierra Leone Population and Housing Census, women account for 50.8 percent of the population. Despite significant efforts from the government, donors, and civil society, significant gender inequality and discrimination remains deeply entrenched in Sierra Leone at household, community, national levels. Sierra Leone historically stands in the bottom ten of the Gender Development Index, ranking 177 out of 182 ranked countries in 2013 (UNDP, 2013).

Gender discrimination is largely a result of long-standing social and cultural norms and gender stereotyping that dictate relationships, roles, and responsibilities between men and women, as well as access to power, resources, and privileges. These are further reinforced by a range of discriminatory laws, including statutory and customary laws. Even when national laws are enacted to address these inequalities, effective enforcement has always been the major challenge. This is largely due to the deeply held traditional practices and sociocultural norms that reinforce discrimination. Laws that seek to address the above issues are largely ignored – one example is the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Bill, which establishes a minimum of 30 percent representation of women in governance at all levels.

Over the past decade, the government has made numerous efforts to develop and enact a range of laws, policies, and strategies at the national level to tackle gender inequality and

discrimination. This included the passage of the three 'gender justice laws', which respectively address domestic violence, improve women's access to land through inheritance, and strengthen women's rights in marriage and divorce through a registration process. In addition, the 2012 Sexual Offences Act defines all sexual activity without consent as an imprisonable crime. Additional government structures have been established with gender equality and women's empowerment as part of their mandates: the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs; the Human Rights Commission; the Family Support Unit in the Sierra Leone Police; and the Legal Aid Board, among others.

All these institutions have proved insufficient to address gender inequality in all its forms. Bold action by government might be required to address this, similar to the establishment of the National Children's Commission in 2014 to focus on issues specifically affecting children. The establishment of a Gender Affairs Commission is therefore urgently required in order to monitor gender equality issues in the country and to ensure that there is the requisite leadership and focused attention on gender equality and women's empowerment across all sectors and at all levels.

The key challenges facing women and girls include: domestic and sexual violence; discrimination; weak systems/institutions to address gender issues; and poor collaboration among the agencies responsible for addressing women's issues. Entrenched culture and traditions, which



Empowering grass-roots women at the local level to participate in development.

often accentuate the position of the male over the female, have led to the exclusion of women and girls in the socio-economic transformation of the country.

A key lesson learned over the years is that, while political will is important for women's empowerment to be achieved, society as a whole must create the needed socio-economic and cultural milieu for women to realize their fullest potential in every sphere of life. The existence of national laws and policies, as well as community by-laws, is a significant point of departure for women's empowerment and provides the needed framework within which government can address the fundamental issues. However, in order for these national laws and policies

to translate into actual positive outcomes for women and girls in Sierra Leone, they must be implemented and enforced, which requires concerted political will as well as financing. In addition, actions to strengthen gender equality must be integrated into the development plans of all line ministries, departments, and agencies, as well as those of local governments; they should not just be confined to the responsibility of a single line ministry at the national level.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to promote the overall empowerment of women in the political, social, economic, and cultural spheres.

Key targets

1. By 2023, ensure that there are more women in leadership positions in government than in 2018.
2. By 2023, ensure that more women are supported to engage in entrepreneurial activities than in 2018.
3. By 2023, develop and implement a national data and information management system on gender-based violence cases.
4. By 2023, drastically reduce by more than 50 percent the number of women experiencing GBV compared to 2018.

Key policy actions

1. Review and increase budgetary resources for the implementation of the Sexual Offences Act of 2012.
2. Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs and national non-governmental organizations to provide psychosocial services to all victims.
3. Strengthen knowledge about the referral pathway for sexual abuse.
4. Stigmatize perpetrators of sexual violence.
5. Increase the capacity of the Family Support Units, the Ministry of Justice, and the Judiciary to investigate and prosecute reported cases and punish the perpetrators without any exception, including by not accepting any out-of-court settlements in such cases.
6. Strengthen protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration support for victims of sexual abuse.

7. Strengthen legislative frameworks to promote gender balance, including electoral frameworks; quotas with sanctions legislated and enforced; the criminalization of violence and enforcement of laws; and the modification of discriminatory laws.
8. Support legislation on political party registration/regulation that will require more women in leadership at all levels of political parties and institutions.
9. Review policies and laws to ensure that they are gender responsive, and strengthen institutional frameworks to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.
10. Review, finalize, and implement existing policies and strategies, such as the National Referral Protocols on Gender-based Violence, the National Strategy for the Reduction of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting, and the National Strategy for the Reduction of Adolescent Pregnancy; ensure that services are funded and provided in line with each policy.
11. Review existing and pending legislation, including the Matrimonial Causes Act, the Child Marriage Bill, and others, and advocate for their passage into law.

5.2 Children and adolescents

According to the 2015 National Census, Sierra Leone has a total of 3,411,907 children, making up 48.1 percent of the population, of which 50.4 percent (1,718,149) are males and 49.6 percent (1,693,758) are females. About 36.6 percent are within the age range of 0–5 years, 32.8 percent are within the age range of 6–10



The best interests of the child are guaranteed.

years, 17.4 percent are within the age range of 11–14 years, and 15.2 percent are within the age range of 15–17 years.

According to the 2017 MICS, about one in four children have functional difficulties, ranging from physical impairments (walking and mobility) to visual and/or hearing impairments to learning, emotional, or behavioural impairments. In addition, according to the 2016 Sierra Leone Child Poverty Report, eight out of every ten children experience poverty in housing, education, information, water, sanitation, health, and nutrition.

A national headcount of street children in Sierra Leone, conducted between September and November 2011, revealed that 49,698 children across the country live and work on

the streets for their survival. Since 2011, those numbers may have significantly increased due to increased poverty, separation of children from their parents, neglect, violence, the Ebola epidemic, and natural catastrophes such as mudslides and floods.

There is equally an emerging problem of parents with disability now living on the streets with their children, without any support system to allow them to take better care of their children. This increases the children's risk of abuse, and excludes them from education, which could undermine the government's Free Quality School Education Programme.

Figures on violence against children, child labour, child trafficking, teenage pregnancy, and child marriage remain among the worst in the

subregion and in Africa as a whole. For children in conflict with the law, access to juvenile justice has been a serious challenge.

However, it is worth noting that the worsening situation of child protection in Sierra Leone has not persisted for want of appropriate policies, laws, or strategies. In fact, there have been several interventions from government and its partners since the end of the civil war in 2002 in support of child protection. The country has made a number of significant achievements in developing national legislation and policies to protect children and improve their overall well-being.

This includes the 2007 Child Rights Act, which covers a range of measures to protect the rights of children in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Other laws have included the 1989 Adoption Act, the 2004 Education Act, the 2005 Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act, the 2007 Domestic Violence Act, the 2011 Persons with Disability Act, and the 2012 Sexual Offences Act. National policies have included the 2015 Child Welfare Policy, the 2015 Alternative Care Policy, the 2010 Free Health Care Initiative, the 2009 Code of Conduct for Teachers, and the 2012 National Referral Protocol on Gender-based Violence, not to mention a wide range of strategies covering child justice, trafficking, gender-based violence, teenage pregnancy, and early marriage.

Despite these genuine attempts to address children's rights, serious challenges remain that require the attention and intervention of all stakeholders, with the government leading some key intervention areas. Key challenges facing children range from abuse and neglect to exploitation and child poverty. This has been

underpinned by weak child protection systems, inconsistent laws and policies, a weak juvenile justice sector, and inadequate political will.

It has been observed that some cultural practices and societal mindsets have significantly undermined the fight against children's rights violations, neglect, and abuse. Additionally, child protection must be based on a multi-dimensional approach involving all relevant sectors and authorities. There are currently real opportunities to improve the welfare of children and protect them from harm and danger. The establishment of child protection institutions and structures at national and local levels, as well as the enactment of child-sensitive legislation over the years, present a significant opportunity on which the government can build.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to ensure a 'children first' approach for the survival, protection, and development of children, including disabled and vulnerable children, as well as to prioritize the best interests of children at all times, with a special focus on addressing sexual violence, teenage pregnancy, child marriage, orphans, vulnerable children, child trafficking, child labour, and juvenile justice.

Key targets

1. By 2023, reduce the number of children suffering from violence, abuse, and neglect compared to in 2018 levels.
2. By 2023, address all inconsistencies in child-related policies and acts, especially those related to the age of consent for marriage.

3. By 2022, the institutional and human capacity of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs to address child rights and child welfare issues is better than in 2018.
4. By 2022, ensure that all Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs and district council offices are using the Child Protection Information Management System, with agreed reporting, service delivery, and referral systems.

Key policy actions

1. Harmonize the Registration of Customary Marriages Act and the Child Rights Act to ensure that the age of consent for marriage is consistent.
2. Design policies and harmonize and standardize laws to combat child marriage.
3. Develop a national strategy to combat child marriage.
4. Provide protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration support for victims of child marriage.
5. Review the Sexual Offences Act 2012, with a costed implementation and monitoring plan.
6. Make school attendance for children legally compulsory and penalize parents/guardians who wilfully flout the law.
7. Ratify and domesticate the Hague Adoption Convention to ensure that adoption processes in Sierra Leone meet international standards.
8. Review and enact the 2010 Adoption Bill, aligning it to the provisions of the 2016 National Civil Registration Act on Adoption and the Hague Adoption Convention.
9. Review and develop a new Child Justice Strategy, as the old one expires in 2018, based on lessons learned from implementing the old one.
10. Review the Child Rights Act of 2007 to address emerging issues on child protection.
11. Strengthen the capacities of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs and city and district councils to fully implement the Alternative Care Policy on street children.
12. Develop a comprehensive strategy/policy to address child labour in all its forms and ensure that there are increased opportunities for children to access quality education.
13. Strengthen the local councils to monitor and ensure the implementation of a Child Labour Policy/Strategy.

5.3 Empowering persons with disabilities

Pursuing a comprehensive narrative and programming for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in National Development Plans is consistent with UN Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, driven by the principle of leaving no one behind. SDG 16 talks of promoting peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, which naturally captures the need for the active inclusion of everyone in development processes, including PWDs. SDG

10 focuses specifically on reducing inequality within and among countries, including by empowering and promoting the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, or other status.

Other goals on ending extreme poverty, education, economic growth, decent work, and human settlements also include specific targets related to people with disabilities. SDG 4 emphasizes the need for ensuring inclusive and equitable education, in response to which Sierra Leone saw an increase in the proportion of children with disability enrolling in primary school from 0.48 percent in 2013 to at least 26.6 percent to date. In addition, SDG 1 advocates for a reduction in poverty in all its forms, which suggests the need, among others, for data disaggregation to monitor poverty reduction progress among PWDs.

The government recognizes that PWDs are among the poorest in society, and there has been weak implementation of plans and legislation related to PWDs over the years, with limited and delayed government budgetary allocation. This is a growing concern, as about 1.1 percent of the population is physically challenged or lives with disability – an estimated 77,000 persons nationwide, including the blind, the deaf, amputees, and persons with polio.

Specific challenges facing PWDs include inadequate domestic investment in addressing disability issues, inadequate facilities and equipment for PWDs, weak implementation of the Disability Act, inadequate and unreliable data on PWDs, and societal stigma.

In spite of these challenges, key opportunities exist that can be leveraged in the new National Development Plan. Despite funding challenges,

FIRST PERSON

'This is a new initiative by government which we have for many years been advocating for. We feel pleased that, for the first time, government has not only engaged us in the preparation process, but is taking on board disability issues as part of its development planning process. Our needs can only be met when government plans with us. This consultation gives us hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel.'

—Thomas Lebbie, President, Sierra Leone Association of the Blind

there are advocacy groups that promote the interests of PWDs. Moreover, there has been renewed commitment on the political front to support disability programmes, coupled with already established public institutions in this direction. Existing programmes for PWDs include inclusive education programmes aimed at increasing access by children with disabilities to mainstream schools; education of children with learning disabilities in specialist schools and through non-governmental organization projects; and grants to special needs institutions.

Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives are to ensure the comprehensive review and implementation of policies and laws relating to disability, especially efforts to make public facilities disability friendly; to review and improve incentives for teachers in special needs institutions; to provide free health care for the physically challenged and the aged; and to provide livelihood support



Caring for the physically challenged.

to persons living with disability for economic empowerment and self-reliance.

Key targets

1. By 2023, the proportion of persons with disability benefiting from social protection systems (cash transfers) is 20 percent higher than in 2018.
2. By 2023, the proportion of children with disabilities who are fully immunized is 15 percent higher than in 2018.
3. By 2023, support 60 skills and life skills training centres for PWDs.

Key policy actions

1. Revisit the administration and implementation of the Social Safety Net Programme.
2. The government will provide free education for PWDs at preschool, primary, and secondary levels.
3. Provide teaching and learning materials and assistive devices required by PWDs.
4. Provide training to teachers and other education officers to deliver inclusive and special needs education and reduce stigma and discrimination.
5. Review and improve incentives for teachers in special needs institutions.



Vice President Jalloh assuring the physically challenged of welfare protection.

6. Undertake infrastructural modifications to ensure learning institutions are physically accessible.
7. Formulate and fully implement policy on inclusive and special needs education at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.
8. Provide welfare assistance to persons living with disability and the aged.
9. Provide livelihood support to persons living with disability for economic empowerment.

CLUSTER SIX: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, SPORTS, AND MIGRATION

Sierra Leone's population is estimated at 7.1 million, with 59 percent residing in rural areas and 41 percent residing in urban areas. The population continues to grow exponentially at an average annual rate of 3.2 percent as follows: Western Area 4.2 percent; northern region 3.3 percent; eastern region 2.9 percent; and southern region 2.5 percent.

Sierra Leone is experiencing a demographic transition, characterized by a high birth rate, a declining death rate, and a rapidly expanding population. These dynamics have resulted in a young population, with 42 percent of the population below 15 years of age. Providing adequate socio-economic opportunities is becoming increasingly difficult, resulting in migration from rural to urban areas as well as from urban areas to other countries. As a result, the government has prioritized youth employment and empowerment to create opportunities for the youth and make migration less attractive.

6.1 Youth entrepreneurship (employment and empowerment)

Youth entrepreneurship offers innovative solutions for economic growth among young people, but youth enterprise initiatives are still relatively new to development processes. A nation's workforce is the most valuable asset and needs to be constantly motivated to ensure economic

and social transformation. Unfortunately, conditions of service for workers in Sierra Leone are among the worst in the subregion. There is therefore significant unemployment for both skilled and unskilled workers. Since over half of the population cannot read or write, the need to educate and train the youth is paramount, as literacy and essential skills are a prerequisite for productive employment.

Employment laws and regulations need to be reviewed and enforced to ensure that they are attractive to the national workforce, particularly given that Sierra Leone has a relatively young population with high unemployment. Addressing employment will require addressing youth empowerment, as the youth are untrained and lack the requisite skills for the job market.

The Government of Sierra Leone and its development partners have made tremendous strides towards ameliorating the challenges that face young people. Despite the policy interventions and actions by the government and its partners, young people are still grappling with a number of challenges: a lack of skills relevant to the contemporary job market; limited development programmes for youth; exclusion of young people in top-level decision making; inadequate access to finance; limited jobs and poor work conditions for youth; inadequate policy and legislation that protect the welfare of young people; and drug use and abuse, among others.



Providing a secure future for the youth.

Growing awareness among youth of their role in development and the willingness of the political class to include young people in development at all levels are opportunities the government seeks to leverage in order to improve the socio-economic condition of all young people in Sierra Leone, irrespective of location or political persuasion.

Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives are to support the youth to undertake viable and innovative business activities through start-up protects and to promote collaboration among them by taking advantage of their ingenuity for job creation. It is also to ensure the enforcement of labour

laws for the benefit of youth in employment and business.

Key targets

1. By 2023, increase youth employment by 15 percent, with special attention to gender equity.
2. By 2023, ensure that the number of young people involved in entrepreneurial activities is higher than in 2018.
3. By 2023, ensure that the National Youth Service and the Skills Development Project (technical and vocational education and training) is fully operational.

Key policy actions

1. Conduct skills training for youth through technical and vocational education and training.
2. Review the current design of the National Youth Service and enforce its implementation.
3. Establish a Youth Empowerment Fund to support youth to engage in small and medium-sized entrepreneurship ventures.
4. Promote youth engagement in agriculture.
5. Monitor and enforce labour laws and the local content law to ensure compliance and protect national workers and businesses.

6.2 Sports

The Government of Sierra Leone recognizes the enormous benefit sport provides and therefore acknowledges its importance in sustaining peace, building social and national cohesion, and creating enormous economic potential (job creation, income generation, and stability), especially for young people. The relevance of sport has been neglected by successive governments and the entire society.

Sport and its culture in Sierra Leone after the civil war has faced huge challenges, including a weak policy and legal environment; low budgetary allocations and a narrow investment base; and poorly maintained, inadequate facilities (stadiums, arenas, courts, fields, etc.). The governance and administration of sporting bodies at national, regional, and district levels has been chaotic, with limited sporting activities in schools and communities. There have been heavy restrictions on participation and

an inability to qualify for major international sporting competitions. This might be due to the various actors not recognizing sports as a major catalyst for peace, economic growth, and development.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to use sport as a key driver for education, entertainment, revenue generation, national cohesion, and consolidation of peace.

Key targets

1. By 2023, recommence national competition events for all sporting activities.
2. By 2023, fully enhance the regulatory environment for the sports sector.
3. By 2023, participate in at least one international competition annually.
4. By 2023, complete at least one sport facility rehabilitation or construction project in the regions.

Key policy actions

1. Establish a Sport Development Fund to be financed by corporate establishments, international sporting organizations, and the government.
2. Review the policy and legal environment for sport development in the country.
3. Develop and implement a comprehensive capacity-building programme for all sporting disciplines.



Sports for entertainment and national cohesion.

4. Recognize sporting heroes and heroines through special national awards and by providing opportunities to transfer their skills to the younger generation.
5. Support participation in major international competitions by supporting the sporting bodies and associations to provide athletes to compete at all levels to promote the country's image.
6. Increase budgetary support to sporting activities, particularly football, athletics, cricket, volleyball, and basketball.
7. Reactivate school and community sporting activities, with a view to identifying and developing talent for national and international competitions.
8. Recommence national competition events for all sporting activities.
9. Establish sports academies and provide facilities for sports development and recreation around the country.
10. Develop the administrative, technical, and support services for sports.

6.3 Addressing migration challenges

Migration is an outlet for Sierra Leonean youth to escape from the lack of opportunities besetting them in their communities and

the country at large. Internally, migration is pervasive in the eastern and southern regions, as well as Western Area. External migration is largely to Europe, normally through illegal and dangerous channels. It is observed that men are more likely to migrate.

The migration situation is underpinned by high levels of poverty and unemployment, especially among youth, women, and vulnerable groups. However, the context is highly unpredictable due to the lack of reliable and up-to-date labour market data, ineffective communication on employment-related information due to the inadequacy of employment centres, obsolete labour laws, and the not-yet-implemented National Employment Policy. The dissonance between the skills in demand in the changing labour market and those produced by existing educational and training institutions has limited the opportunities in the labour market and encouraged the migration of youth. Low levels of adult literacy and limited entrepreneurship experience among some young people have also bolstered outward migration.

In addition, there is limited access to finance for youth empowerment, and the business environment is not favourable due to the unstable macroeconomic environment, unfavourable regulatory framework and barriers, and weak infrastructure, all of which constrain private investment.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to ensure that internal and external migration is reduced and effectively managed.

Key targets

1. By 2023, the conviction rate of human traffickers is 5 percent higher than the 2018 figure.
2. By 2023, the general public, especially the youth, are more aware of irregular migration, human trafficking, and violent extremism.
3. By 2023, provide protection services to all victims of human trafficking.

Key policy actions

1. Conduct an awareness campaign on irregular migration, human trafficking, and violent extremism in partnership with youth and women's groups.
2. Develop a coherent policy and legal framework on migration.
3. Combat human trafficking through training border operatives and supplying them with the necessary tools and equipment.
4. Promote the acquisition of technical and vocational training/skills among the youth to promote employability, through the establishment of district-level vocational centres in partnership with the private sector.
5. Review the 2005 Trafficking in Persons Act and include sufficiently stringent sentences with longer prison terms.
6. Increase efforts to arrest, prosecute, and convict traffickers, including addressing procedural delays and judicial corruption, as well as ensuring survivors' safety and

enabling their participation in judicial processes, both to increase prosecution rates and offer survivors compensation.

7. Train prosecutors and judges to investigate and prosecute trafficking cases.
8. Enact the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.
9. Upgrade the existing structure of industrial growth centres pioneered to provide vocational and entrepreneurial skills that are employable and market driven to youth, women, and other vulnerable groups.

CLUSTER SEVEN: ADDRESSING VULNERABILITIES AND BUILDING RESILIENCE

Sierra Leone experiences two seasons with a marked difference in rainfall and temperature. The rainy season lasts for more than five months from May to September, with average temperatures around 22–25 degrees Celsius, while the dry season is from October to April, with temperatures averaging 25 to 27 degrees. The average annual temperature has increased by 0.8 degrees since 1960.¹ These two seasons come with potential hazards that can result in disaster.

Bush fires and drought leading to crop failures are some of the frequent disasters during the dry season; flooding and mudslides occur during the rainy season. These disasters are exacerbated by climate change and human-induced activities, including shifting cultivation and farming methods, massive deforestation from logging and charcoal burning, and indiscriminate construction of unplanned and uncoordinated settlements.

The Ebola virus disease outbreak, the flooding of urban settlements, and the 2017 mudslides in Freetown are recent disasters that have confirmed the country's vulnerability ranking as the third most disaster-prone nation.

Since the end of the civil war, Sierra Leone has faced monumental challenges in its development aspirations relating to the economy, human resource capacity, the environment, health care, and social and cultural development. The combination of these factors has placed the country in a state of fragility. According to a

1 McSweeney et al. (2010), *UNDP Climate Profile for Sierra Leone*.

recent international report on fragility, there are many concrete examples in which the syndrome of fragility and its different dimensions reinforce each other.² Figure 7.1 presents information that encapsulates the vulnerability of the country.

The Global Climate Risk Index indicates a level of exposure and vulnerability to extreme events, which countries should understand as warnings in order to be prepared for more frequent and/or more severe events in the future.

The risks to the country's essential water resources are numerous. These risks include deforestation due to loss of flora species from logging and farming, land degradation due to bad land management and use, and unregulated use of chemicals by industries and large-scale mining operations and agricultural entities. Water pollution (particularly drinking water) is a serious problem. Almost half of the population of Sierra Leone has no access to safe drinking water, and only 13 percent of the population have access to improved non-shared sanitation facilities.³

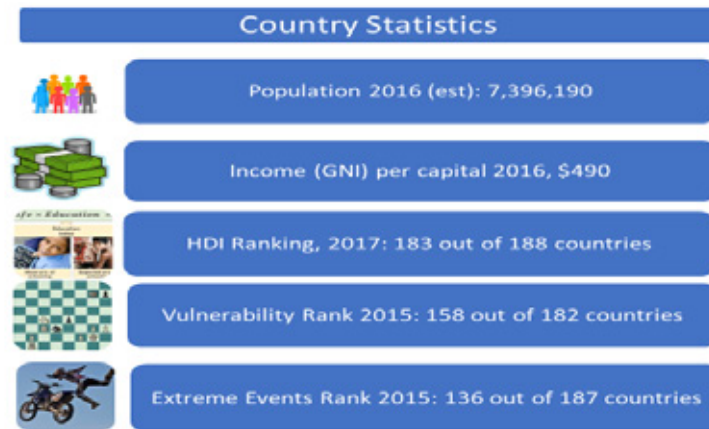
Climate change has further added to the scale and complexity of the risks faced by Sierra Leoneans. The country is ranked as the third most vulnerable to climate change in the world.⁴ Accordingly, this has adversely affected the environment, agriculture, food security, and

2 International Growth Centre Commission on State Fragility, Growth and Development (April 2018), 'Escaping the Fragility Trap'.

3 Government of Sierra Leone, 'Feasibility Study for Manual Drilling Mapping of Favourable Zones'.

4 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2014.

Figure 7.1: Country vulnerability statistics



Source: Adapted from Irish Aid (2017), Sierra Leone Climate Action Report 2017

even the livelihoods of communities. Storms have affected the lives and livelihoods of fishing communities, and flooding has negatively impacted agriculture and human habitat. Water-borne diseases (i.e. typhoid, dysentery, cholera, diarrhoea, etc.) have increased due to the lack of safe drinking water.

The Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency is responsible for the collection of national climate-related data and weather forecasting. The timely compilation, analysis, and dissemination of weather and climate information is a prerequisite for early warning and disaster prevention and mitigation. It can also be useful in the agricultural sector. High dependence on rain-fed agriculture and natural resources, coupled with high rates of poverty, unemployment, and environmental degradation, leave Sierra Leone vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. These impacts are even more pronounced for vulnerable groups such as women and the disabled, particularly in rural communities.

The socio-economic progress made after the end of the civil war in 2002 has been undermined by disease outbreak and natural disasters. The Ebola outbreak (2014/2015) had telling effects on Sierra Leone's macroeconomic, social, and disaster-responses systems. The weaknesses in the country's health-care system, in addition to the poor infrastructure and road system, exacerbated the epidemic.⁵ The outbreak made an already weak system more vulnerable. The August 2017 landslides in Freetown on Mount Sugar Loaf resulted in the deaths of more than 1,000 citizens and destroyed hundreds of properties, amounting to US\$31.65 million in damage and losses.⁶

Some initiatives have provided opportunities for lessons from these disasters – an Ebola recovery strategy, a rapid damage and loss assessment, and land policy reforms – to prepare the country for resilience and to improve the vulnerability ranking.

⁵ *National Ebola Recovery Strategy for Sierra Leone* (2015).

⁶ World Bank (2017), 'Rapid Damage and Loss Assessment of August 14th, 2017 Landslides and Floods in Western Area'.

Demographic changes and anthropogenic activities have exacerbated vulnerability in the country. These have been compounded by policy shortcomings and human activities that accelerate land degradation. The climate-sensitive agriculture sector, which provides livelihoods for approximately 75 percent of the population and contributes more than 50 percent of GDP, is still grappling with the serious challenge of increasing productivity and enabling land acquisitions for industrial agriculture projects.

7.1 Building national environmental resilience

The natural landscape of Sierra Leone is comprised of diverse ecosystems, including lowland rainforests, mountain forests, freshwater swamps, mangrove/coastal ecosystems, and marine ecosystems. Nearly 75 percent of the land area of Sierra Leone is considered arable (5.4 million hectares out of a total of 7.2 million hectares). The most fertile areas are low-lying coastal plains, including mangrove

swamps and riverine grassland, as well as inland valley swamps and the alluvial/floodplains of the major river systems. However, shifting cultivation methods, recurrent bushfires, overgrazing, charcoal burning, use of trees as firewood, increasing population, and short fallow periods have contributed to deforestation and soil erosion resulting in land degradation. Mining activities have added to the problem, accelerating deforestation, land degradation, soil erosion, and siltation, with the consequent contamination of river systems and tidal creeks, leading to displacement of villages.

The 2013 Verisk Maplecroft Index ranked Sierra Leone the number three country in the world with the least capacity to respond or adapt to environmental change.

Sierra Leone has a very rich biodiversity, but unfortunately over the years overexploitation of the nation's terrestrial and marine biodiversity has intensified. There are a total of 48 forest reserves and conservation areas in Sierra Leone, representing about 4 percent of the land area (180,250 hectares). Most of them are

Box 9.1: A snapshot of the environment in Sierra Leone

Emissions of CO ₂ (million tonnes)	1
Proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected (%)	5
Number of threatened species	131
Electricity access rate (%)	2
Renewable electricity production (%)	30
Change in agricultural land area since 1990 (%)	46
Change in forest area since 1990 (%)	-13
Rural population with access to improved drinking water source (%)	26



Preventing coastal erosion.

inadequately protected and managed. Sierra Leone is well endowed with natural resources, including arable land for farming, forests, fresh water, wetlands (swamps), wildlife, fisheries, and mineral resources. However, the unregulated use of land and natural resources over the years has resulted in environmental degradation in both rural and urban areas.

Environmental compliance and enforcement in Sierra Leone is to be addressed within the confines of the Environmental Protection Agency Act of 2008, amended in 2010. The capacity of stakeholder institutions, including the security sector, the judiciary, and civil society, is being built. Environmental awareness and education efforts with different stakeholders at national and local levels continue to respond to the issues.

Despite these developments, the environmental sector is challenged by weak legislation and an inadequate legal framework; limited funding and investment; weak capacity of regulatory institutions; insufficient data and information on the environment; weak coordination among line MDAs; weak enforcement; traditional practices; and people's limited knowledge about the environment, biodiversity, and conservation. Restricted livelihood opportunities are an additional challenge.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to protect the environment while making tremendous efforts in rehabilitation and management in order to increase the capacity of Sierra Leone to reduce its

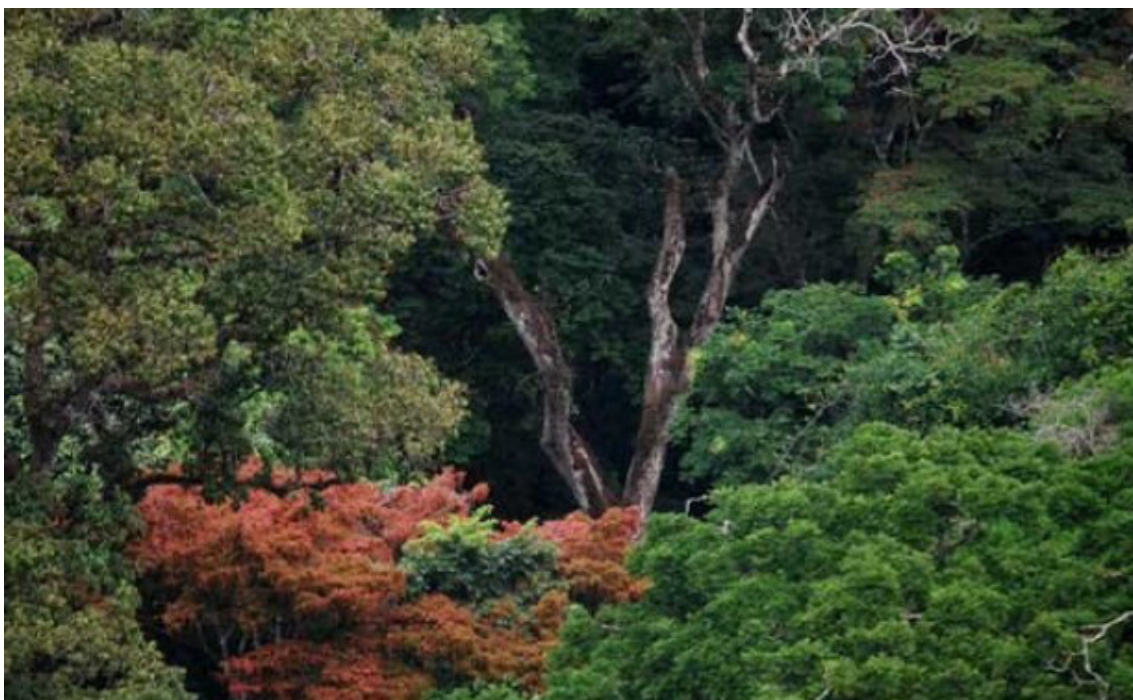
vulnerability to external shocks and effectively respond to future emergencies.

Key targets

1. By 2023, put in place an environmental court to prosecute cases related to environmental infractions.
2. By 2023, ensure that a policy is in place for the management of toxic chemicals and hazardous substances.
3. By 2023, review and pursue land degradation neutrality targets.
4. Progressively amend regulations on ozone-depleting substances.

Key policy actions

1. Review the Environmental Protection Agency Act and other legislation to strengthen and enhance the legal framework for enforcement and compliance.
2. Increase the proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected.
3. Control land degradation and minimize pollution.
4. Increase the coverage of terrestrial sites of biodiversity importance to protect biodiversity and endangered species.
5. Educate and raise awareness about changing traditional and cultural practices that are harmful to the environment.



Conserving forests to prevent disasters.

6. Formulate regulations and enact legislation on environmental standards and the management of chemicals and toxic and hazardous substances.

7.2 Forestry management and wetland conservation

Sierra Leone is endowed with enormous forests, wetlands, and water resources, as well as a rich array of wetland flora and fauna, all of which are vital to biodiversity and the livelihoods of the people. The eight major river systems that flow almost parallel to each other from the north-east to the south-west are the main sources of water: Great Scarcies, Little Scarcies, Rokel/Seli, Bankasoka, Jong, Sewa, Moa, and Mano. These river systems are supplied in turn by an extensive network of tributaries and streams that originate from catchment areas within and outside the country.

Inland wetlands are found in virtually every part of the country, from the extreme north (e.g. Lake Idrissa) to the extreme south (e.g. Lake Mape). The lakes are very important to communities surrounding them, providing sustainable domestic water supplies throughout the year, as well as fertile land, irrigation for agriculture, and fish. Floodplains and inland valley swamps are vital ecosystems that support year-round agriculture, which is crucial to the survival of the local communities. Inland wetlands are generally important habitats for a host of wildlife, such as migratory birds, resident birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and fish.

Along the 520 kilometres of coastline bordering the Atlantic Ocean are many networks of coastal ecosystems that form the drainage

basin of the numerous rivers. The four major estuarine systems – Scarcies River, Sierra Leone River, Yawri Bay, and Sherbro River – form the major coastal wetland ecosystems, not only holding the largest mangrove cover in the country in combination, but also providing habitats for and supporting the largest number of species of coastal/marine animal life (migratory birds, aquatic mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and fish). These wetlands are vital for maintaining healthy and functioning coastal/marine ecosystems, in addition to the socio-economic and cultural value they have for the local populations.

A significant proportion of the population of the country lives within or in close proximity to forest areas or inland or coastal wetlands. The sustainable management and utilization of forest resources is critical for: a) preservation of the environment, biodiversity conservation, research, and education; b) supply of products such as wood for furniture, construction, and domestic energy, especially for the poor; c) supply of bush meat, medicinal plants, and other non-timber products; and d) watershed protection, soil protection, and local, regional, and global climate change mitigation.

Furthermore, the forest is home to a wide range of plant and animal life. The country has rich indigenous flora and fauna, including important endemic species, as well as internationally rare and threatened species. Indigenous flora and fauna exceed 2,000 species of vascular plants, 46 amphibian species, 69 reptile species, 600 bird species, and almost 200 species of mammals, including 15 types of primates and 18 types of antelopes.

The fishing industry generates huge local income and foreign exchange annually, and this is made possible by viable spawning and breeding



Curtailing logging to prevent deforestation.

grounds. Wetlands are generally important reservoirs for water, purifiers of terrestrial wastes, zones for aquifer recharge, and critical habitats for fish, crustaceans, turtles, birds, mammals, crocodiles, amphibians, insects, and aquatic plants, in addition to supporting biodiversity on surrounding land. Wetland biodiversity is a crucial component of food security, and they fulfil many ecological roles, including the provision of feeding, breeding, and nursery grounds for many fauna species. Wetlands are essential for the health, welfare, and safety of people who live in or near them. They are productive environments that provide cultivable areas for agricultural activities, fuelwood, transportation routes (particularly for accessing remote areas),

natural laboratories for research, and herbal medicines.

However, the poor use and management of forests and wetlands over the years threatens these contributions. This is mainly due to the large number of people who depend on these resources for their livelihoods. Conservation efforts are limited, making it imperative to develop strategies to manage these scarce resources.

Key challenges identified in forest and wetland conservation include, but are not limited to, a weak regulatory and legal framework, limited management of marine resources, massive



environmental degradation, lack of awareness among the population, limited data and information, uncoordinated conservation efforts, and financial constraints.

Nonetheless, there exist opportunities to capitalize on Sierra Leone's forest and wetland resources, which are recognized globally. The country is party to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. The establishment of the National Protected Area Authority under the National Protected Area Authority and Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2012 is an added anchor for ensuring the sustainable management of forestry and wetland resources.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to enhance the holistic conservation and management of Sierra Leone's

biodiversity in all ecosystems for the benefit of present and future generations through an integrated approach.

Key targets

1. By 2023, establish a National Timber Agency.
2. By 2023, declare at least two new Ramsar Convention sites for wetlands management.
3. By 2023, ensure that a Wetlands Act is in place.

Key policy actions

1. Improve legal and enforcement mechanisms with appropriate laws.

2. Enhance the management and oversight capacity of regulatory agencies.
3. Combat environmental degradation and manage forests and wetlands.
4. Promote the conservation of the environment through educating and mobilizing the population through awareness raising.
5. Increase marine protection and maintain the number of forest reserves and conservation areas.

7.3 Improving disaster management governance

Sierra Leone is exposed to a range of natural and human-made hazards. The exposure of the population to recurrent or persistent localized hazard conditions has the potential to have debilitating and cumulative impacts on the lives of the population. Such conditions have been seen in both urban and rural exposure to recurring localized floods, landslides, windstorms, fires, and rock falls. Sierra Leone's vulnerability correlates to its climate, geography, high poverty levels, and limited environmental management systems. The country is now ranked as one of the most prone to disasters.

As discussed above, environmental, health, and market shocks have impacted significantly on Sierra Leone's fragile economy in recent times. The limited capacity of the state to respond to such shocks and disasters has often resulted in humanitarian crises. Table 7.2 presents the prevailing hazards and risks recorded in Sierra Leone from 2005 to 2017.

Building resilience is fundamentally about creating a system that is not thrown off course

in the face of such shocks. Economies can be made shock-ready by building surveillance systems that identify potential risks. In some cases, acting in anticipation of shocks is the best form of risk mitigation.

The Government of Sierra Leone established the Office of National Security through the National Security and Central Intelligence Act 2002 as the primary coordinator during national emergencies. The Department of Disaster Management in the Office of National Security discharges that function through the strategic and operational coordination of MDAs, local government, development partners, non-governmental organizations, private sector actors, and civil society organizations. There is a need for disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery in ensuring human and environmental security.

The National Policy for Disaster Risk Reduction has been developed through a consultative engagement with stakeholders and is awaiting launch. A National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction has been established under the Office of the Vice President. To bring disaster mitigation and management to the local level, District Disaster Management Committees have been established in 14 districts (with only Karene and Falaba Districts remaining). A National Hazard Profile exists for the country, developed in 2005 and reviewed in 2017. This is expected to inform and feed into the proposed Economic Community of West African States early warning system in the country. The profile also provides an excellent basis for planning future actions in different sectors of the economy. The Climate Information, Disaster Management and Early Warning System (known as CIDMEWS) was developed to collect and process climate and other environmental information for greater awareness.



Photo by Trocaire.

Preventing and mitigating disasters through mobilization, education, and enforcement.

Table 7.1: Prevailing hazards and risks in Sierra Leone 2005–2015

HAZARDS/RISKS	AREA OF PREVALENCE	IMPACT
FLOODS	Freetown, Pujehun, Kambia, Bonthe, Kenema, Moyamba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human casualties • Loss of crops • Loss of livestock and poultry • Infrastructure damage • Deterioration of drainage systems • Outbreak of waterborne diseases
FIRES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic fires • Wild/bushfires • Electrical/industrial 	Urban and local areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human casualties • Damages of housing • Economic loss
STORMS AND LIGHTNING	Mainly eastern and northern provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human casualties • Fires • Infrastructure damage
EPIDEMICS	Nationwide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ebola, human casualties
MUD / LANDSLIDES	Kono District, Tonkolili District, Western Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human casualties • Infrastructure damage
PEST INFESTATION	Kambia, Bombali, Koinadugu, Moyamba, Kailahun, and Pujehun Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of crops • Loss of livestock and poultry
POLLUTION	Predominantly urban; mining areas nationwide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity loss • Outbreak of waterborne diseases
TRANSPORT-RELATED ACCIDENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea transport • Road transport • Air transport 	Freetown peninsula waters and the coastal communities; Freetown to provincial areas and vice versa; Lungi International Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human casualties • Injuries • Infrastructure damage
UNPLANNED URBANIZATION Including population movement	Mainly urban Sierra Leone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor sanitation • Increased trend in disaster events
DEFORESTATION	Mainly Eastern and Northern provinces, and Western Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in water catchment area • Water shortage • Loss of biodiversity • Increase erosion • Increase land/mudslides
MINING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sand mining • Aggregate stone mining • Mineral mining 	North, East, South, and the Western Area rural districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human casualties • Land degradation • Coastal erosion • Food insecurity • Pollution
CLIMATE CHANGE	Nationwide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased magnitude of extreme weather events • Food insecurity • Coastal erosion • Overall increased magnitude of natural disasters

Source: Author compilation

Poor coordination at the strategic and operational levels, an ineffective data management system, an inadequate policy and legal framework, limited capacity to respond, limited community involvement, and insufficient early warning mechanisms are the major disaster response challenges Sierra Leone faces.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective is to build and institutionalize a robust early warning and response system to effectively respond to disasters through reinforced governance and management architecture for national disaster-related issues.

Key targets

1. By 2023, achieve 100 percent completion status for the functioning and operations of a National Disaster Risk Management Agency.
2. By 2023, achieve 100 percent completion status in the development of Local Disaster Preparedness and Response Plans based on the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment.
3. By 2023, achieve 100 percent completion status in the development of a flexible information system for data on disaster victims, internally displaced persons, missing persons, damaged and lost properties, and the reunion of families.

Key policy actions

1. Develop policies and a legal framework on vulnerability and disasters.
2. Improve on disaster response within the country at all levels.
3. Strengthen early warning mechanisms and legal frameworks.
4. Enhance coordination and collaboration among key actors.
5. Increase community involvement in responding to disasters and implement the Climate Information, Disaster Management and Early Warning System developed for climate information dissemination.

CLUSTER EIGHT: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

This MTNDP proposes courageous steps to transform the economy and stabilize it through resilience to shocks and less dependence on donors. The plan includes the mechanism for implementation and for translating the development aspirations of the country, as presented by the President to Parliament, into goals, objectives, and specific strategies to be implemented by MDAs, districts/councils, and chiefdoms. It also serves as a vehicle for domesticating Sierra Leone's commitment to the international development agenda – the SDGs, the African Union Agenda 2063, and the New Deal's Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals.

This chapter presents an overview of how the MTNDP would be implemented. It presents the national development planning system, including the processes to be followed, the statistical requirements, and the roles and responsibilities of key actors. The chapter also outlines the financing requirements and the related resource mobilization strategy. It describes the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the plan, statistics requirements and functions, and the mechanism for communicating the development outcomes to the citizenry.

8.1 Implementation arrangements

The implementation of programmes and projects is carried out at both national and local levels, depending on the nature of the activity. However, even though there is a policy of decentralization, most key infrastructural programmes are implemented from the national

level due to the limited capacity of the districts to appropriately manage those programmes. The system in Sierra Leone can be described as both 'top down' and 'bottom up', with the districts designated as the basic planning unit and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED) as the apex body to coordinate the system.

MoPED is the coordinating ministry and the top planning authority. Ministries, departments, and agencies are at the national level of the structure, the regional administrations are at the regional level, and the districts are at the local level, including other subunits such as the chiefdoms and councils. The basic objective for the decentralized planning system is to ensure that we have a mechanism for broad participation, consultation, and partnership at all levels of society. The MDAs and the districts are the main conduits for the implementation of plans, programmes, and activities based on their respective institutional mandates. It is therefore envisaged that the MTNDP will be implemented within this framework, as shown in Figure 8.1. This arrangement illustrates an improvement in the coordination and implementation of the plan, and further enhances decentralization. The preparation process follows this framework in collaboration with cluster/subcluster working groups.

The implementation of a significant proportion of programmes in this MTNDP will be carried out by the MDAs. Hence, to ensure adequate coordination, harmonization, alignment, and mutual accountability, all sector projects must be implemented within the development framework. The MDAs will specifically ensure the following:

- Effectively and efficiently facilitate and implement projects/activities as stipulated in the National Development Plan.
- Ensure programmes and/or activities are well aligned to national development priorities.
- Ensure coordination at the sectoral level and collaboration with other actors in the implementation of activities.
- In collaboration with MoPED, monitor, evaluate, and report on the activities implemented by other actors in their respective sector.

The roles and responsibilities of the regional administrations are to ensure that the decentralized MDA plans do the following:

- Provide guidance to the decentralized departments at the district level on how to implement their sector M&E plans.
- Collate and validate sector data from the decentralized district departments through site inspections and regional workshops.
- Forward the collated district M&E reports to the policy, planning, monitoring, and evaluation departments and MoPED.
- Ensure that all programmes and projects in the provinces and districts are systematically monitored and evaluated in accordance with the district monitoring and evaluation set-up.

The district is a strategic unit of operations for all developmental programmes. Thus, coordination of national activities at the district level shall be done not only by the sector ministry, but also within the established structures and

bodies for coordinating district development activities with planning officers, monitoring and evaluating officers, etc.

The chiefdom and local councils shall specifically ensure the following:

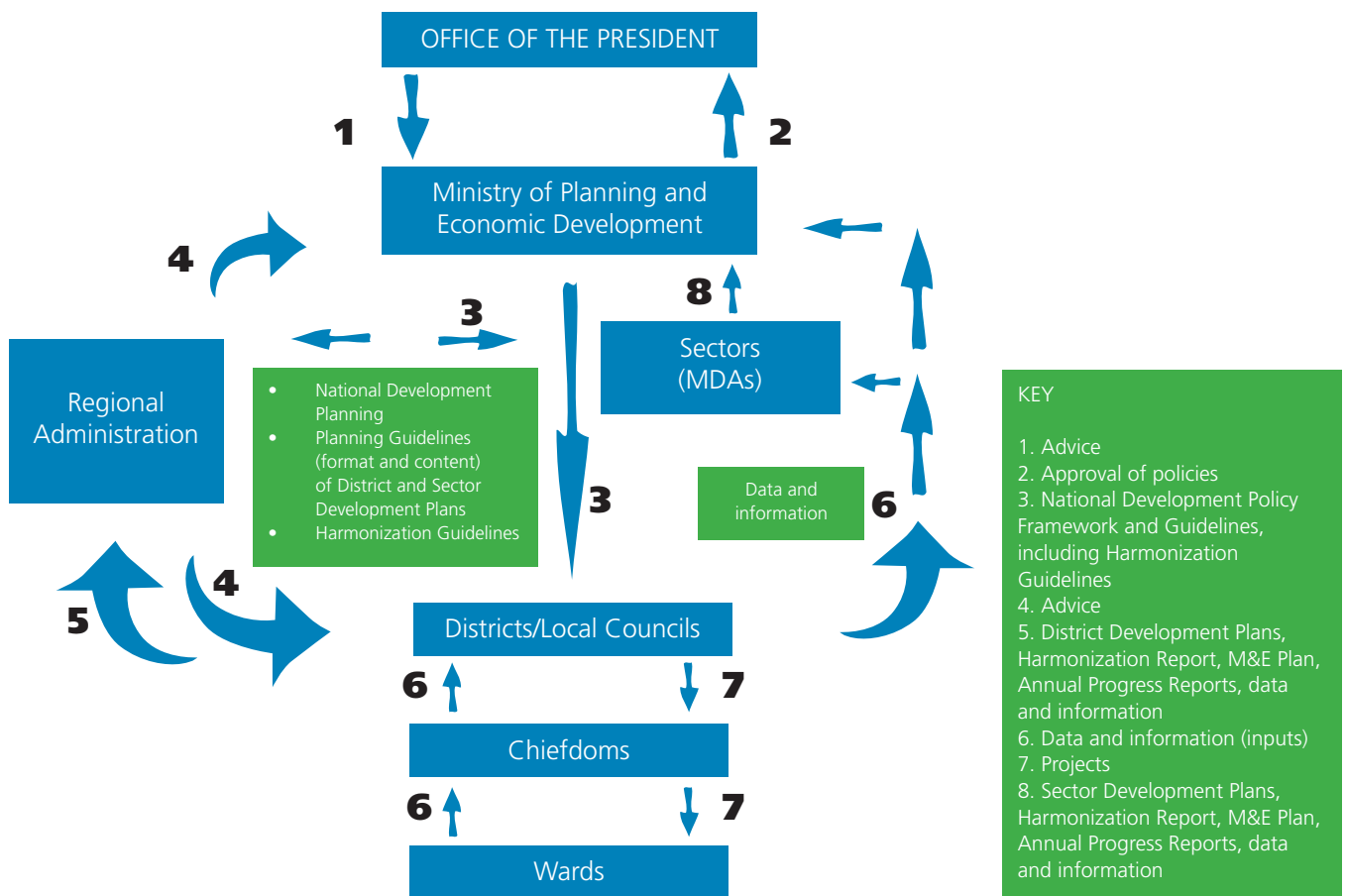
- Facilitate the work of all players at local and district levels, supporting their partnerships with sectoral and national oversight institutions and actors, as well as community institutions and actors.
- Ensure all activities at the district level are aligned with the National Development Plan.
- Constantly liaise with MoPED and the line MDAs on the operations, reporting, and implementation of programmes at the district level.

Plan implementation structure

The implementation of the plan is the responsibility of the MDAs individually and in some cases collectively, as shown in the policy matrix and indicator framework. To this end, performance contracts will be signed with the Office of the President. Coordination and monitoring of the plan's progress will be led by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development.

The annual national budget, as an instrument of financial expression of the development plans, presents the quantum of financial resources needed for the implementation of the planned programmes, projects, and activities each financial year. Therefore, the extent of implementation of programmes and projects largely depends on the budget allocations given to them. It is imperative that timely and

Figure 8.1: Overview of the National Planning System



adequate budget funding is given to ensure the successful implementation of the MTNDP and any other subsequent sector and district plans.

For the smooth implementation of the plan, the Ministry of Finance, in collaboration with the Ministry for Planning and Economic Development, is expected to organize policy and technical hearings on the draft budgets submitted by MDAs to ensure that they are aligned to the MTNDP and their sector plans (which form basis for the MTNDP). Then, the final budget ceilings are provided by the

Ministry of Finance for the finalization of budgets by the MDAs and districts (as the case may be). After the passage of the Appropriation Bill by Parliament, the implementation of the MTNDP will commence.

Over the period of the implementation of the MTNDP, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development will ensure the effective linkage of the plan and the annual national budget, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance. The ministry will also lead the monitoring and evaluation of programmes

and projects, including flagship projects, on a real-time basis, with a view to identifying bottlenecks capable of derailing the projects and to taking remedial actions quickly. MoPED will also strengthen its internal capacity to engage relevant MDAs and districts in the implementation of the priority policies and strategies identified in the MTNDP. It is expected that the Office of the President will ensure the reform of the public sector and strengthen public institutions that can deliver efficient public services and execute the government agenda.

The Ministry of Finance will concentrate on resource mobilization and allocation based on priority policies and programmes under the MTNDP, tracking revenues and expenditures. It will also collaborate with other institutions to produce annual performance reports, as part of the budget documents. The supervisory arrangements for plan implementation are described below.

Ministerial Oversight Committee

This committee will comprise all ministers of government and will be chaired by the Minister of Planning and Economic Development. This committee will ensure that the coordination of activities, policies, and programmes is consistent with the priorities of the plan. Specifically, the committee will do the following:

- Ensure that all projects and programmes implemented are aligned to the priorities identified in the MTNDP.
- Review the results framework and reach consensus on the indicators to be monitored and reported on.

- Ensure that programmes and projects are coordinated and complementary.
- Review and endorse reports from the sector working groups.
- Facilitate round table discussions to address challenges to implementation and resource mobilization.
- Ensure that new programmes and initiatives are adequately discussed at the committee level prior to submission for funding.

Sector working groups

Sector working groups will comprise all sectors and development partners providing support to these sectors. Chaired by the professional head of the respective ministries and co-chaired by the lead donor agency in the sector, the sector working groups will do the following:

- Coordinate the collection of relevant sectoral data that will be used to monitor progress in the implementation of the MTNDP.
- Identify critical funding gaps and, in collaboration with MoPED, facilitate round table discussions to mobilize resources to finance funding gaps.
- Monitor sector progress on MTNDP targets and prepare summary reports on progress for presentation to the Ministerial Oversight Committee.
- Provide quality assurance for sector and district reports.

District working groups

The district working groups will comprise local and district council representatives, development partners, NGOs and civil society organizations working in the district, representatives of MDAs in the district, lead operating in the district, and District Budget Oversight Committee members. The district working groups will mirror the sector working groups at the district level. Specifically, the district working groups will focus on the following:

- Identify cross-cutting issues that impede the implementation of the MTNDP at the district level.
- Provide regular updates to the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development on the implementation of the MTNDP.
- Provide reports on the progress of the implementation to the sector working groups.

Government–development partner dialogue

In addition to being members of the sector working groups, development partners and the government will hold bilateral meetings to establish development partners' portfolios, provide an effective mechanism for planning and monitoring progress, and address specific challenges in a timely manner. To ensure structured and regular dialogue, quarterly and annual Development Partnership Committee meetings will be held as follows:

- Quarterly Development Partnership Committee meetings between the government and development partners will be held to review and discuss development

progress and challenges. These will be chaired by the Minister of Planning and Economic Development; co-chairing arrangements will be agreed upon between MoPED and the development partners.

- Annual Development Partnership Committee meetings between the government and development partners will be held with a wide range of stakeholders to review and discuss development progress and challenges and agree on the strategic direction for the forthcoming year. This will be chaired by the President.

8.2 Financing the plan

The total projected cost of the five-year MTNDP is US\$8.15 billion. Of this amount, the sum of US\$5.49 billion represents direct project-related costs, while the sum of US\$2.66 billion represents the government's statutory expenditures to support project implementation (see Table 8.1). The government has projected to raise US\$6.60 billion from both internal and already committed external resources, leaving a financing gap of US\$1.55 billion, for which new money is being sought to fully finance the National Development Plan.

Table 8.2 presents projected available resources for direct project financing by policy cluster, showing non-salary, non-interest recurrent expenditure and capital (domestic and foreign) spending. Table 8.3 presents a year-by-year summary of the financing gap. The contribution of each Sierra Leonean resident in the country (per capita contribution) to filling this financing gap is estimated at US\$40 per annum. A detailed profile of the projected available resources for financing the plan is presented in Table 8.4.

Table 8.1: Cost of the National Development Plan 2019–2023 (US\$m)

<i>Policy Cluster/Sub-clusters</i>						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
CLUSTER 1: HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT						
Free Quality Basic and Secondary Education	39.86	55.61	64.71	79.64	95.16	334.98
Tertiary and Higher Education	31.90	35.66	39.05	52.68	57.28	216.57
Health-care Improvement	69.92	79.69	88.38	94.78	95.61	428.38
Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene	3.98	5.44	6.25	6.76	7.55	29.98
Strengthening Social Protection	13.91	10.96	15.06	18.02	22.01	79.96
Lands and Housing	12.81	8.82	12.90	38.47	46.72	119.72
CLUSTER 2: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY AND PROMOTING GROWTH						
Increasing Productivity and Commercialization of Agriculture Sector	22.91	22.54	27.64	41.30	34.49	148.89
Increasing Sustainable Management of Fisheries and Marine Resources	8.32	10.04	9.46	11.33	12.58	51.73
Revitalizing the Tourism Sector	11.28	12.44	12.52	14.36	18.67	69.27
Manufacturing and Services	8.60	9.16	5.57	5.79	4.91	34.04
Managing Natural Resources, including Minerals, Petroleum, and Gas	13.73	10.75	5.91	4.18	3.89	38.46
Promoting an Inclusive Rural Economy	6.0	8.0	9.0	10.0	7.0	40.0
CLUSTER 3: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS						
Energy	25.65	36.29	66.25	287.76	196.71	612.65
Water Resources	48.09	62.87	63.32	94.18	91.18	359.64
Transport System	78.05	110.80	168.80	439.33	241.58	1,038.55
Waste Management	6.80	8.80	9.90	18.70	16.20	60.40
Information and Communications	18.65	20.92	18.92	21.70	15.83	96.02
Presidential Infrastructure Initiatives	18.75	33.66	38.84	120.66	130.45	342.36
Fostering Private Sector Growth	7.72	7.67	5.89	6.18	6.51	33.97
CLUSTER 4: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS						
Political Development for National Cohesion	4.0	3.12	1.71	0.85	0.92	10.59
Fighting Corruption and Illicit Financial Flows	5.2	2.92	1.84	0.18	0	10.13
Strengthening Public Financial Management	18.65	29.91	24.44	21.39	6.51	100.90
Strengthening Audit Service	5.69	1.73	1.86	1.21	0	10.47
Inclusive and Accountable Justice	13.31	16.86	19.63	22.71	25.20	97.71
Improving Public Trust in State Institutions	9.43	9.89	10.69	14.46	15.32	59.79
Strengthening Public Service Delivery	17.58	17.08	15.55	12.62	13.64	76.48
Strengthening Decentralization, Local Government and Rural Development	15.48	18.38	20.93	66.43	69.86	191.08
Strengthening Security Institutions	36.95	34.65	25.10	44.23	41.52	182.45
Strengthening External Relations for Integration	3.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	20.0
CLUSTER 5: EMPOWERING WOMEN, CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS, AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES						
Empowering Women	10.36	10.96	9.81	10.72	11.27	53.12
Empowering Children and Adolescents	4.82	5.77	5.57	6.05	6.35	28.57
Empowering Persons with Disabilities	6.13	7.51	9.43	24.93	28.24	76.24
CLUSTER 6: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, SPORTS, AND MIGRATION						
Youth Employment	12.40	13.42	15.77	15.73	18.30	75.62
Sports	7.76	8.53	8.80	9.10	9.50	43.69
Addressing Migration Challenges	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	22.50
CLUSTER 7: ADDRESSING VULNERABILITIES AND BUILDING RESILIENCE						
Building National Environmental Resilience	5.77	8.18	6.06	5.68	5.03	30.72
Forestry Management & Wetland Conservation	10.93	8.57	11.31	6.47	4.76	42.03
Disaster Management Governance	4.96	4.88	4.53	4.31	4.95	23.63
CLUSTER 8: MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION						
National Plan Implementation	3.95	5.76	6.0	3.95	6.77	26.43
Coordinating Financing of National Development Plan	15.20	20.39	27.38	29.23	30.86	123.06
Monitoring and Evaluation	4.25	4.48	5.22	5.23	4.75	23.92
Strengthening Statistical System	5.44	2.31	6.69	5.23	7.63	27.30
Development Communication	0.15	0.18	0.22	0.23	0.25	1.02
TOTAL Direct Project-related Costs	672.84	794.06	916.41	1,685.27	1,424.45	5,493.02
<i>add</i>	Government's Statutory Expenditures					2,660.64
	Wages and Salaries					1,610.12
	Debt Service Obligations					936.18
	Contingency and Others					114.34
GRAND TOTAL NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN COST						8,153.66
<i>less</i>	Total Projected Available Resources					6,601.64
Financing Gap						(1,552.02)

Table 8.2: Non-salary, non-interest recurrent budget estimates, and foreign and domestic development estimate of Government of Sierra Leone (US\$m)

Policy Clusters/Sub-clusters	Non-salary, non-interest recurrent					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
CLUSTER 1: HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT						
Free Quality Basic and Secondary Education	27.58	28.20	37.79	65.13	70.88	229.59
Tertiary and Higher Education	26.98	30.21	38.40	42.12	47.31	185.03
Health-care Improvement	27.37	31.20	43.10	49.95	58.37	209.99
Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthening Social Protection	1.45	1.60	1.76	0.35	0.36	5.52
Lands and Housing	0.67	0.74	0.81	1.14	1.20	4.55
CLUSTER 2: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY AND PROMOTING GROWTH						
Increasing Productivity and Commercialization of Agriculture Sector	15.46	25.14	24.56	10.13	10.06	85.35
Increasing Sustainable Management of Fisheries and Marine Resources	6.27	7.41	8.51	3.80	4.52	30.51
Revitalizing the Tourism Sector	4.28	4.82	5.38	2.83	2.98	20.29
Manufacturing and Services	2.75	2.99	3.31	3.94	5.11	18.10
Managing Natural Resources, including Minerals, Petroleum, and Gas	1.50	1.61	1.77	3.25	2.90	11.03
Promoting an Inclusive Rural Economy						
CLUSTER 3: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS						
Energy	20.10	18.20	21.45	26.08	26.41	112.23
Water Resources	1.60	1.70	1.80	2.05	2.15	9.31
Transport System	15.52	16.32	19.69	17.79	18.26	87.58
Waste Management	1.30	1.50	1.60	1.50	2.10	8.0
Information and Communications	7.24	9.79	9.85	10.17	10.25	47.31
Presidential Infrastructure Initiatives	1.50	2.0	2.50	3.0	1.50	10.50
Fostering Private Sector Growth	2.04	2.22	2.45	2.98	3.58	13.28
CLUSTER 4: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS						
Political Development for National Cohesion	0.15	0.16	0.18	0.52	0.57	1.57
Fighting Corruption and Illicit Financial Flows	0.67	0.74	0.81	1.19	1.31	4.72
Strengthening Public Financial Management	4.44	4.89	5.38	6.75	7.39	28.84
Strengthening Audit Service	7.47	8.21	9.04	13.64	15.02	53.37
Inclusive and Accountable Justice	3.33	3.67	4.03	6.11	6.73	23.88
Improving Public Trust in State Institutions	2.45	9.91	10.91	12.65	13.29	49.21
Strengthening Public Service Delivery	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthening Decentralization, Local Government and Rural Development	2.95	3.14	3.48	5.73	6.43	21.73
Strengthening Security Institutions	26.10	31.20	36.23	43.33	45.50	182.36
Strengthening External Relations for Integration	0.20	0.50	0.40	0.30	0.60	2.0
CLUSTER 5: EMPOWERING WOMEN, CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS, AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES						
Empowering Women	2.36	3.07	3.45	7.92	9.56	26.36
Empowering Children and Adolescents	0.54	0.59	0.72	0.76	0.81	3.42
Empowering Persons with Disabilities	0.30	0.35	0.46	0.50	0.59	2.19
CLUSTER 6: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, SPORTS, AND MIGRATION						
Youth Employment	5.90	6.36	6.88	6.56	7.12	32.82
Sports	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.60	1.80	7.30
Addressing Migration Challenges	0	0	0	0	0	0
CLUSTER 7: ADDRESSING VULNERABILITIES AND BUILDING RESILIENCE						
Building National Environmental Resilience	3.70	2.63	3.13	4.44	5.23	19.13
Forestry Management and Wetland Conservation	0.18	0.19	0.21	0.23	0.28	1.09
Disaster Management Governance	2.31	2.43	2.55	2.58	2.71	12.59
CLUSTER 8: MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION						
National Plan Implementation	1.75	2.31	3.84	2.68	2.95	13.52
Coordinating Financing of National Development Plan	24.36	26.69	29.36	36.31	39.94	156.66
Monitoring and Evaluation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthening Statistical Systems	0.92	1.01	1.11	1.49	1.57	6.10
Development Communication	1.19	1.30	1.43	1.77	1.91	7.60
GRAND TOTAL	256.07	296.29	349.72	403.28	439.23	1,744.60

Policy Clusters/Sub-clusters	Development estimate, foreign					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
CLUSTER 1: HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT						
Free Quality Basic and Secondary Education	7.49	6.10	4.98	0	0	18.56
Tertiary and Higher Education	5.96	2.84	0.40			9.21
Health-care Improvement	36.77	35.21	26.23	0	0	98.21
Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene	1.37	0	0	0	0	1.37
Strengthening Social Protection	6.38	4.55	7.09	0	0	18.02
Lands and Housing	1.52	6.52	1.89	14.48	0	24.40
CLUSTER 2: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY AND PROMOTING GROWTH						
Increasing Productivity and Commercialization of Agriculture Sector	15.18	10.55	16.46	0	0	42.20
Increasing Sustainable Management of Fisheries and Marine Resources	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revitalizing the Tourism Sector	3.52	3.35	1.83	0	0	8.71
Manufacturing and Services						0
Managing Natural Resources, including Minerals, Petroleum, and Gas						0
Promoting an Inclusive Rural Economy	3.20	6.40	6.20	1.20	1.0	18.0
CLUSTER 3: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS						
Energy	18.20	32.20	41.23	0	0	91.63
Water Resources	16.20	23.86	22.20	6.50	7.90	76.66
Transport System	23.45	35.21	35.10	0	0	93.76
Water Management	1.50	7.33	7.50	2	2	20.33
Information and Communications	0	0	0	0	0	0
Presidential Infrastructure Initiatives	5.0	25.0	32.0	13.0	15.0	90.0
Fostering Private Sector Growth	0.15	0.15	0	0	0	0.30
CLUSTER 4: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS						
Political Development for National Cohesion						0
Fighting Corruption and Illicit Financial Flows						0
Strengthening Public Financial Management						0
Strengthening Audit Service	0.57	0.04	0	0	0	0.61
Inclusive and Accountable Justice	0.28	0.02	0	0	0	0.30
Improving Public Trust in State Institutions	0	0.24	0	0	0	0.24
Strengthening Public Service Delivery	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthening Decentralization, Local Government and Rural Development	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthening Security Institutions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthening External Relations for Integration	0.10	0.50	10.90	0.20	0.30	17.0
CLUSTER 5: EMPOWERING WOMEN, CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS, AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES						
Empowering Women	1.52	1.22	0	0	0	2.74
Empowering Children and Adolescents	0	0	0	0	0	0
Empowering Persons with Disabilities	0	0	0	0	0	0
CLUSTER 6: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, SPORTS, AND MIGRATION						
Youth Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Addressing Migration Challenges	0	0	0	0	0	0
CLUSTER 7: ADDRESSING VULNERABILITIES AND BUILDING RESILIENCE						
Building National Environmental Resilience	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forestry Management and Wetland Conservation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disaster Management Governance	0	0	0	0	0	0
CLUSTER 8: MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION						
National Plan Implementation	0.98	1.47	1.22	0	0	3.67
Coordinating Financing of National Development Plan	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monitoring and Evaluation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthening Statistical Systems	2.26	0	0	0	0	2.26
Development Communication	0	0	0	0	0	0
GRAND TOTAL	151.61	207.78	215.23	37.38	26.20	638.19

Policy Clusters/Sub-clusters	Development estimate, domestic					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
CLUSTER 1: HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT						
Free Quality Basic and Secondary Education	4.11	3.75	5.37	74.87	80.68	168.77
Tertiary and Higher Education	2.77	1.28	1.40	32.07	37.65	75.17
Health-care Improvement	6.52	6.58	4.64	51.91	61.15	130.80
Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene	0.15	0	0.21	1.89	0.30	2.55
Strengthening Social Protection	3.14	3.72	5.24	10.48	18.05	40.63
Lands and Housing	0.30	0.36	0.98	26.04	4.20	31.88
CLUSTER 2: DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY AND PROMOTING GROWTH						
Increasing Productivity and Commercialization of Agriculture Sector	7.30	3.66	4.59	28.06	24.49	68.10
Increasing Sustainable Management of Fisheries and Marine Resources	0.68	0.86	0.99	1.89	6.23	10.65
Revitalizing the Tourism Sector	1.77	2.08	4.02	4.0	10.80	22.67
Manufacturing and Services	0.76	0.53	0.70	5.79	1.05	8.83
Managing Natural Resources, including Minerals, Petroleum, and Gas	0	0	0	0	0	0
Promoting an Inclusive Rural Economy	2.0	2.0	1.50	2.30	2.20	10.0
CLUSTER 3: INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS						
Energy	13.50	20.13	24.30	42.85	74.43	175.21
Water Resources	9.20	21.34	23.40	63.45	57.20	174.59
Transport System	11.20	19.54	38.10	66.41	70.13	205.37
Water Management	2.0	5.0	5.0	1.78	1.99	15.77
Information and Communications	0.82	0.80	1.10	1.89	1.61	6.22
Presidential Infrastructure Initiatives	7.0	13.0	12.30	13.0	20.0	65.30
Fostering Private Sector Growth	0.49	0.59	1.05	4.68	1.54	8.34
CLUSTER 4: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESULTS						
Political Development for National Cohesion						0
Fighting Corruption and Illicit Financial Flows						0
Strengthening Public Financial Management	1.99	2.24	3.10	5.75	10.63	23.71
Strengthening Audit Service	1.28	1.61	1.83	3.0	14.20	21.92
Inclusive and Accountable Justice	0.64	0.81	0.91	11.22	1.30	14.88
Improving Public Trust in State Institutions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthening Public Service Delivery	6.21	5.27	4.74	12.92	6.16	35.31
Strengthening Decentralization, Local Government and Rural Development	2.80	5.35	10.22	3.0	9.20	30.58
Strengthening Security Institutions	13.20	19.10	22.33	9.0	14.0	77.63
Strengthening External Relations for Integration	0.50	0.70	1.20	1.20	0.40	4.0
CLUSTER 5: EMPOWERING WOMEN, CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS, AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES						
Empowering Women	0.20	0.18	0.61	1.45	0.69	3.13
Empowering Children and Adolescents	0	0	0	0	0	0
Empowering Persons with Disabilities	0	0	0	0	0	0
CLUSTER 6: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, SPORTS, AND MIGRATION						
Youth Employment	1.50	0.91	3.66	10.22	5.59	21.87
Sports	0	0	0	0	0	0
Addressing Migration Challenges	0	0	0	0	0	0
CLUSTER 7: ADDRESSING VULNERABILITIES AND BUILDING RESILIENCE						
Building National Environmental Resilience	0.46	0.66	1.27	1.90	1.65	5.93
Forestry Management and Wetland Conservation	0.24	0.27	0.49	2.38	0.08	3.47
Disaster Management Governance	0.55	0.73	0.52	0.75	0.75	3.30
CLUSTER 8: MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION						
National Plan Implementation	0.98	1.14	0.76	3.95	1.56	8.39
Coordinating Financing of National Development Plan	4.42	7.18	18.23	16.41	33.05	79.29
Monitoring and Evaluation	0.49	0.45	0.37	0.47	0.42	2.20
Strengthening Statistical Systems	0.61	0.09	0.12	0	0	0.82
Development Communication	0.12	0.15	0.18	0.23	0.21	0.89
GRAND TOTAL	109.90	152.07	205.44	517.21	573.57	1,558.19

Table 8.3: Year-by-year financing gap analysis of the National Development Plan (US\$m)

Particulars	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2019-23
Total Projected Expenditures	1,164.21	1,334.76	1,471.44	2,208.61	1,974.66	8,153.67
National Development Plan Incremental Costs	646.63	723.96	766.51	1,116.71	958.88	4,212.68
Direct Project-Related Costs	155.27	183.26	211.48	593.37	408.67	1,552.04
Administrative and Statutory Costs	491.36	540.70	555.03	523.34	550.21	2,660.64
Current Committed Expenditures	517.58	610.80	704.93	1,091.90	1,015.78	3,940.99
Non-salary, non-interest recurrent	256.07	296.29	349.72	363.27	399.25	1,664.60
Domestic Capital	109.90	152.07	205.44	696.45	590.33	1,754.19
Foreign Capital	151.61	162.44	149.77	32.18	26.20	522.20
Total Projected Resources	1,008.95	1,196.85	1,325.42	1,481.21	1,589.21	6,601.64
Domestic Revenue	690.59	817.65	1,016.96	1,206.92	1,332.37	5,064.49
Grants	129.74	142.41	99.92	92.28	89.80	554.15
External Budgetary Support	46.55	61.55	35.00	40.00	40.00	223.10
Projects	79.86	80.86	64.92	52.28	49.80	327.72
Others	3.33	-	-	-	-	3.33
Domestic Financing	101.25	111.56	59.69	68.97	56.14	397.61
Bank	97.93	107.98	56.83	66.30	53.97	383.02
Non-Bank	3.32	3.58	2.86	2.67	2.17	14.60
Loans	87.37	125.22	148.85	113.04	110.91	585.38
Programme	15.61	43.64	64.00	18.84	18.48	160.57
Projects	71.76	81.58	84.85	94.20	92.42	424.81
Financing Gap	(155.26)	(137.91)	(146.02)	(727.40)	(385.45)	(1,552.04)

Table 8.4: Projected available resources to finance the National Development Plan 2019–2023 (US\$m)

Particulars	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2019-23
Total Projected Resources	1,008.95	1,196.85	1,325.42	1,481.21	1,589.21	6,601.64
Domestic Revenue	690.59	817.65	1,016.96	1,206.92	1,332.37	5,064.49
Grants	129.74	142.41	99.92	92.28	89.80	554.15
<i>External Budgetary Support</i>	46.55	61.55	35.00	40.00	40.00	223.10
<i>Projects</i>	79.86	80.86	64.92	52.28	49.80	327.72
<i>Others</i>	3.33	-	-	-	-	3.33
Domestic Financing	101.25	111.56	59.69	68.97	56.14	397.61
<i>Bank</i>	97.93	107.98	56.83	66.30	53.97	383.02
<i>Non-bank</i>	3.32	3.58	2.86	2.67	2.17	14.60
Loans	87.37	125.22	148.85	113.04	110.91	585.38
<i>Programme</i>	15.61	43.64	64.00	18.84	18.48	160.57
<i>Projects</i>	71.76	81.58	84.85	94.20	92.42	424.81
Less:						
Total Statutory Expenditures	491.36	540.70	555.03	523.34	550.21	2,660.63
Wages and Salaries	292.72	310.78	351.46	318.34	336.83	1,610.12
Debt Service Payments	182.99	175.35	183.76	192.71	201.36	936.18
<i>Domestic Interest</i>	114.23	120.95	128.28	135.06	141.22	639.74
<i>Foreign Interest</i>	11.94	11.90	11.77	11.39	12.14	59.14
<i>External Debt Amortization</i>	56.83	42.50	43.71	46.27	48.00	237.30
Repayment of Arrears	0.99	6.34	6.19	-	-	13.52
Contingency Expenditures	3.67	13.95	13.62	12.29	12.02	55.55
Clearance of previous year's unpaid cheques	10.98	34.29	-	-	-	45.27
Available discretionary resources to finance the National Development Plan	517.58	656.15	770.40	957.87	1,039.01	3,941.00

8.3 Donor resource flow

Table 8.5 presents trends in donor disbursement performance during 2012–2017 towards different national development programmes, amounting to US\$3.87 billion. Most of this came during the Ebola virus disease outbreak period (2014–2016). Total bilateral and multilateral disbursements during this period are contained in Tables 8.6 and 8.7, amounting to US\$2 billion and US\$1.56 billion, at a share of 56 percent and 47 percent, respectively.

8.4 Resource mobilization strategy

The context in which the MTNDP is being established is one in which public finance and development assistance continue to dominate the financing landscape, while private finance remains nascent.

Domestic revenues have grown in recent years, but have not kept pace with rising spending; public debt levels meanwhile have risen. In absolute terms, fiscal space remains low – tax revenues equate to just 1 million leones (US\$120) per person. As such, although public finance remains the largest resource in the financing landscape, there is limited space for a significant increase in investment in line with the new MTNDP. Increasing domestic revenue mobilization is a high priority, and the government has shown strong commitment to reforms, including steps to modernize tax collection and remove costly tax exemptions.

The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to fiscal consolidation to ensure that domestic revenue mobilization increases from 14 percent of GDP to 20 percent of GDP by 2023. It is in this direction that the government has

improved on automated tax collection processes and procedures through the adoption of the Integrated Tax Administration Systems, the Automated System for Customs Data, electronic cash registers for Government Service Tax, and the Automated Payment Gateway and Reconciliation Systems. These are starting to bear fruit, and the Development Finance Assessment emphasizes the importance of establishing these reforms well, while also highlighting further steps such as the creation of a tax lottery system, which can be considered within the overall push to boost tax revenue.

As in many fragile and post-conflict contexts, private sector development in Sierra Leone remains nascent, though there is potential for growth in a number of sectors. This includes agriculture, fisheries, and tourism. The scale and nature of investment in these sectors will play an important driving role, not only in the economic aspects of the MTNDP, but also in the wider social and environmental objectives via the direct and indirect impacts of private sector growth in these areas.

There are a number of instruments and policy tools that government would use to promote growth in private sector investment in line with the overall objectives of the MTNDP. The non-availability of long-term finance remains a key constraint to private sector growth, and the government will take steps to promote the development of this aspect of financial markets and adjust its own approach to borrowing to reduce the crowding out of private actors from debt markets. Recent studies suggest that significant improvement in private sector performance and expansion is possible through eliminating administrative and bureaucratic bottlenecks, updating and reconciling laws and policies affecting private sector operations, and maintaining fiscal stability. Another initiative that would facilitate the entry of foreign direct

Table 8.5: Donor disbursement by sector

Sector	Disbursed (US\$ million)					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Public financial management	28.20	30.64	29.03	53.53	16.55	34.09
Transparency and democracy	28.46	22.53	23.01	35.32	11.74	16.74
Capacity building of government agencies	24.75	26.70	10.50	49.45	36.96	23.54
Security sector	2.13	2.87	2.89	4.91	2.00	0.26
Decentralization	20.75	11.79	1.03	8.82	2.75	1.63
Justice sector development	3.01	4.37	3.43	2.85	2.73	2.05
Private sector development	18.53	11.27	30.36	25.69	13.82	21.91
Youth development	7.64	5.63	3.56	2.70	3.45	17.80
Agriculture, rural development, and food security	44.77	56.27	43.28	56.59	39.41	36.18
Infrastructure	0.55	7.64	9.77	31.03	17.65	4.61
Macroeconomic management	16.68	15.57	32.20	113.56	29.63	21.94
Housing	1.38	0.76	0.00	0.18	0.00	0.53
Energy and power	22.13	12.04	15.16	22.42	34.60	18.76
Road network	34.11	67.43	26.72	43.26	60.12	33.99
Transport	4.81	7.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Health	68.03	93.43	172.12	130.34	116.05	153.29
HIV/AIDS	1.58	0.24	0.00	0.38	0.37	0.25
Education	21.31	23.16	17.97	37.78	41.67	53.11
Water and sanitation	30.93	35.88	35.38	30.50	27.65	38.55
Environment	6.31	3.72	1.55	3.54	2.62	13.21
Social welfare	0.00	0.00	3.07	15.30	1.77	3.49
Gender	0.00	0.00	4.00	2.16	4.55	0.68
Mineral resources and mining	0.32	0.25	2.76	9.28	1.56	1.13
Information and communications technology	9.95	2.65	6.83	0.41	0.76	1.82
Ebola response	0.00	0.00	446.60	373.89	54.65	29.72
TOTAL	396.32	442.63	921.24	1,053.90	523.06	529.28

Table 8.6: Bilateral disbursement

Sector	Disbursed (US\$ million)					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Public financial management	7.3	21.1	23.7	19.9	6.5	1.2
Transparency and democracy	21.2	10	8.2	2.3	4.2	13.7
Capacity building of government agencies	3.3	2.6	1.2	5.2	24.1	14.1
Security sector	2	2.8	2.7	2.1	1.5	0.2
Decentralization	3	1.9	0.8	0.2	1.1	1.3
Justice sector development	1.6	2.2	2.6	1.6	1.4	1.6
Private sector development	0.5	2.7	3.9	7.4	8.7	20.7
Youth development	0.8	2	1.1	1.1	3.1	16.9
Agriculture, rural development, and food security	17.6	17.1	13.3	11	7.4	5.9
Infrastructure	0	3	7.9	4.1	9.9	1.5
Macroeconomic management	15.7	0	0	0	0	0
Energy and power	6.2	6.7	3.9	12.6	22.2	8.4
Road network	4.9	2.1	5.2	3.2	14.7	14.4
Health	53.4	62.8	98.2	76.6	95.3	98.6
HIV/AIDS	1	0	0	0	0	0
Education	8.9	16.3	10	27.9	25.4	20
Water and sanitation	28.1	30.5	28	19.3	11.4	20.8
Environment	0.5	0	0.5	0.7	2.4	0
Social welfare	0	0	2	12.2	0	1.5
Gender	0	0	4	2.2	4.2	0.4
Information and communication Technology	0	0	0	0.1	0	0.1
Ebola response	0	0	353.2	307.4	43.6	28.8
Total	176	183.8	570.5	517	287.1	270.3

Table 8.7: Multilateral disbursement

Sector	Disbursed (US\$ million)					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Public financial management	20.9	9.5	5.3	33.6	10	32.9
Transparency and democracy	6.4	12.1	14	32.1	7.4	2.8
Capacity building of government agencies	17.2	19.6	6.4	36.6	7.6	2.9
Security sector	0	0	0	0.1	0	0
Decentralization	16.3	7	0	8.6	1.7	0.3
Justice sector development	0.2	1.6	0.4	0.4	1.3	0.3
Private sector development	17.5	8.5	26.1	15.1	5	1
Youth development	4.7	2.4	1.5	0.7	0	0.1
Agriculture, rural development, and food security	13.1	28.9	10.8	31.8	13.9	18.6
Infrastructure	0.6	4.7	1.9	27	7.8	3.1
Macroeconomic management	0.4	15	31.5	113	29.5	21.4
Housing	0.8	0.6	0	0.2	0	0.5
Energy and power	15.9	5.1	11.1	8.8	12.4	10.4
Road network	29.2	65.3	21.5	40.1	45.4	19.6
Transport	4.8	7.8	0	0	0	0
Health	12.1	22.9	40.9	34.6	15.4	27.5
HIV/AIDS	0	0	0	0	0	0
Education	7.5	3.6	3.9	7.5	13.1	28
Water and sanitation	2.5	4.9	6.9	10.1	15	8.4
Environment	5.3	3.3	0.6	2.1	0.2	10.3
Social welfare	0	0	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.9
Gender	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.1
Mineral resources and mining	0.3	0.2	2.8	9.3	1.6	1.1
Information and communication technology	10	2.7	6.8	0	0.5	1.4
Ebola response	0	0	85.2	61.6	11	0.8
Total	185.7	225.6	278.6	474.1	200	192.4

investment is the project to establish sovereign ratings for the country. In sum, a dynamic and expanding private sector will be an important source of financing for some aspects of the MTNDP.

Alongside private investment in key sectors, there is potential for mobilizing private participation in strategic public investments. Expanded use of public–private partnership mechanisms is being considered and offers one route for funding investment in infrastructure and other sectors. There are capacity challenges and risks associated with such partnerships, which would need to be managed to ensure that it becomes an effective tool. Potential exists in other areas too, such as reforms to unlock the participation of pension funds in longer-term developmental objectives.

Official development assistance and south–south cooperation are significant within the financing landscape. Development partners account for an important proportion of new investment, particularly in key social sectors. Development partners will continue to have an important role to play in these sectors, though there may be opportunities for the government to work with them as well as south–south cooperation partners to broaden the focus of development assistance into economic sectors that can help to promote new sources of financing in the future. Some of Sierra Leone's largest development partners have had success in their other country programmes, including in other fragile states, promoting models such as development impact bonds and impact investment, which could be piloted in Sierra Leone.

There is potential to mobilize new sources of development funds through enhanced engagement with Sierra Leone's significant overseas diaspora. Many members of Sierra Leone's

overseas diaspora are actively interested in national development, and there are opportunities for deeper engagement, with the potential use of diaspora bonds as well as diaspora efforts to promote commercial investment in Sierra Leone. Diaspora bonds have been used in similar contexts to provide longer-term, lower-cost financing for strategic development projects and, in the most successful instances, regular issuances have provided a repeat source of financing over time. The government can take steps to scope and lay the groundwork for the creation of a diaspora bond programme that provides a new source of financing for investment in the MTNDP.

While increasing fiscal space will be critical for investing in the new MTNDP, the quality of spending remains as important as the quantity. There are opportunities to build on earlier budget reforms, which are now well established and enhance the outcome basis of the budget. Systems would also be put in place to manage the government's investments in prominent cross-cutting areas of the MTNDP, such as gender equality, women's empowerment, and climate and environment. These reforms, combined with a stronger results framework for the MTNDP, would strengthen the integration of public planning and budgeting and boost the efficiency with which government invests its resources in the national agenda.

Table 8.8 summarizes the potential areas the government would consider exploring to generate revenue to reduce the financing gap for the implementation of the MTNDP. It is estimated that over a three-year period, at least US\$500 million could be mobilized from these sources.

Table 8.8: Potential areas for resource mobilization to finance the MTNDP (2019–2023)

Initiative	Description	Area(s) of the new MTNDP it would support	Potential impact	Complexity
PUBLIC FINANCE				
<i>Introduce a Goods and Services Tax lottery</i>	Incorporate the design of a lottery into the planned rollout of electronic cash registers. This would strengthen incentives for taxpayers to demand that their purchases are formally logged with the National Revenue Authority.	Increased GST receipts would boost fiscal space overall	High: GST accounts for over one-fifth of total revenue, although compliance rates are thought to be low	Medium: introducing a lottery is technically complex
<i>Boost large taxpayer auditing capacity</i>	Work with Tax Inspectors without Borders to strengthen the National Revenue Authority's capacity to audit large companies.	Increased company tax receipts would boost fiscal space overall	High: corporate income tax has stagnated, and corporate tax compliance is thought to be low	Low: Tax Inspectors without Borders offer capacity building in large taxpayer audits that have been successful elsewhere
<i>Revise levies and departmental charges</i>	Update the levies charged by MDAs to ensure costs are covered and to align to regional and international standards.	Increased levies and departmental receipts would boost fiscal space overall	Medium to high: levies account for 8% of total revenue and many are out of date	Low: potential quick win
<i>Build outcome information into the budget process</i>	Require MDAs to establish targets in their strategic plans; incorporate outcome information and a narrative for each MTNDP cluster within annual budget publications. These would be aligned to the targets specified within the results framework for the MTNDP.	A stronger results focus and alignment between the budget and MTNDP would help government invest more effectively	Significant over the medium to long term: building more results-oriented systems takes time, though it can yield significant efficiencies	Medium
<i>Create systems to track public spending on gender and climate</i>	Establish systems within IFMIS to track budgetary allocations and expenditure on cross-cutting pillars of the MTNDP, notably gender equality and climate resilience, which are partially monitorable under current systems.	Gender equality and women's empowerment; climate vulnerability and resilience	Significant within these sectors	Low/medium
<i>Publish tax expenditure reporting</i>	Publish estimates of revenue foregone through each individual tax exemption scheme; periodically review the costs and benefits of each scheme with respect to the objectives of the MTNDP.	Increased fiscal space and more strategic promotion of private investment	Medium: the impact would be over the medium- to long-term as exemptions are used more strategically and efficiently	Low

Initiative	Description	Area(s) of the new MTNDP it would support	Potential impact	Complexity
PRIVATE PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC INVESTMENTS				
<i>Establish a diaspora bond</i>	Put in place the systems to issue and manage a diaspora bond that draws on the financial resources of Sierra Leoneans overseas to fund strategic developmental investments.	Likely specific investments in areas of interest to the diaspora	High: there is high engagement from the diaspora in national development	Medium/high: diaspora bonds require careful design and management to succeed
<i>Promote the investment of pension assets in infrastructure</i>	Establish mechanisms that promote the allocation of a proportion of pension assets in strategic long-term investments in infrastructure.	Investments in infrastructure	High: there are significant gaps in long-term finance for infrastructure that could be matched with pension assets	Medium/high
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION				
<i>Engage SSC providers</i>	Develop a strategy that leverages the strengths and focus of cooperation from different providers of assistance.	Potential for increased assistance in economic sectors from SSC providers	Medium	Low
<i>Access Millennium Challenge Corporation funding</i>	The corporation offers significant five-year grants through its compact programmes, which are established on a competitive basis among countries. Sierra Leone is very close to meeting the criteria and a concerted push on key indicators could make the country eligible.	Compact programmes offer significant five-year grants focused on economic growth and poverty reduction	High; neighbouring countries have established five-year programmes with a value between US\$250 and 550 million	Low
<i>Development impact bonds</i>	Work with development partners to trial the use of development impact bonds to advance the outcomes of the new MTNDP in key sectors.	These bonds have been used elsewhere in areas such as education, health, and employment creation	Significant within the area of focus	Medium: it can take a couple of years to set up
<i>Access support from untapped thematic funds</i>	There are a few thematic funds that Sierra Leone is yet to tap into, particularly in climate finance. Green Climate Funds and Climate Investment Funds offer the potential to support projects related to the climate objectives of the new MTNDP.	Funding for climate vulnerability and resilience	High within these thematic priorities	Low

Initiative	Description	Area(s) of the new MTNDP it would support	Potential impact	Complexity
PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT AND FINANCIAL SERVICES				
<i>Promote longer-term lending to businesses with financial sector reforms</i>	Consider changes to regulation of lending to businesses as well as the scale and maturities of public debt, which promote short-termism and crowd out private sector actors. Consider restructuring the stock exchange.	Economic growth and diversification; job creation and other areas	High	Medium
<i>Encourage public sector banks to increase private sector lending</i>	Establish mechanisms that encourage publicly owned banks to limit purchases of public debt and allocate a higher proportion of lending to small and medium-sized enterprises or businesses in sectors that are strategically important for the new MTNDP.	Economic growth and diversification; job creation and other areas	Medium	Low
<i>Promote investment by the diaspora</i>	Consider measures such as the creation of a one-stop shop for diaspora investment, the creation of diaspora bank accounts, and the relaxation of capital controls for diaspora businesses, to promote commercial investment by the diaspora in Sierra Leone.	Economic growth and diversification; job creation and other areas	Medium	Medium
<i>Establish a platform for public-private dialogue</i>	Establish a mechanism for systematic public-private dialogue on how to mobilize inclusive, sustainable private investment and as a forum for consultation on the design of business-related reforms.	Economic growth and diversification; job creation and other areas	High, if well-established over the long term	Low
<i>Reduce the cost of sending remittances</i>	Review the tax on remittances within the larger package of engagement with the diaspora. The promotion of digital and mobile financial services and greater interoperability can also contribute to lower transaction and remittance sending costs.	Lowering the cost of remittances may boost spending in areas such as education and health	These steps could significantly reduce the high cost of sending remittances to Sierra Leone	Reviewing tax: low Promoting fintech and interoperability: medium
<i>Reduce illicit financial flows</i>	Take steps to boost the capacity of anti-corruption and auditing bodies, enhance detection functions in customs and strengthen international cooperation on illicit finance detection and asset recovery.	Reducing illicit finance would contribute towards increased government revenues	Medium	High

8.5 Risks and mitigating strategies

The following risks have been identified as a potential threat to the successful implementation of this plan.

Susceptibility of the economy to external shocks and dependence on aid: The prices of Sierra Leone's export commodities are set within the framework of international liberal market forces of supply and demand. As was evident in the slump of iron ore prices in 2014, changes in commodity prices at the international level often have a direct impact on the country's economy. Sometimes these shocks have an untold impact on the country's capacity to implement development programmes and projects such as those outlined in this plan.

Another conundrum that compounds Sierra Leone's financial instability is the country's reliance on donor support to implement core development programmes. Thus, potential donor fatigue means that key development programmes run the risk of being abandoned halfway through implementation.

These risks can be mitigated through the effective implementation of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) macroeconomic policies; increasing capacity for domestic resource mobilization; boosting domestic revenue mobilization through the introduction of a lottery system to encourage greater compliance by taxpayers; strengthening auditing of large taxpayers; revising and updating levies to cover costs and reflect international standards; putting in place structures to issue and manage diaspora bonds; and evaluating the potential to invest pension fund assets in infrastructure.

Data and information availability: Access to credible and reliable sources of data and information, and its sustainable production, is a huge challenge in the country. Data and information are fragmented across various sectors and it is often difficult to ascertain their credibility and relevance. Currently, the various actors pursue their individual data and information needs entirely by themselves.

Strengthening and capacitating Statistics Sierra Leone will mitigate this risk, helping it respond to the data and information needs of the country through a coordinated and concerted approach with the various stakeholders, thereby fulfilling its statutory mandate.

Inadequate capacity of MDAs: The capacity within and across MDAs is weak and underdeveloped. The situation is such that the expected outputs of the institutions are very low, below expected standards. This is delaying the completion of tasks and affecting the quality of service delivery.

An ideal way to mitigate this is to build the capacity of the MDAs beyond the normal civil service system. Recruitment needs to be open and flexible for bespoke positions, especially in the professional and evolving ICT fields.

Governance architecture: The current government inherited a bloated governance system of parallel structures with overlapping functions. The legal instruments, especially the acts that created the MDAs, are conflicting, cumbersome, and full of gaps, thereby creating rivalry and unhealthy competition for resources and attention.

A streamlined structure will help to mitigate this; it will clearly define roles and responsibilities and create synergy among the actors. This

can be done through a review of those acts and laws that create confusion and conflict among MDAs. However, addressing some of the root causes of incongruity in the current governance infrastructure will require extensive studies and consultation, which are envisaged as part of the background work for the 20-year plan. These include how best to exploit regional opportunities to overcome the constraints of size; how best to fuse the parallel systems inherited from the colonial era and convert them to support the developmental state model underlying the plan; and how best to undertake a comprehensive reform of the tax system to bring it in line with evolving subregional and national trends.

8.6 Monitoring and evaluation

Effective monitoring and evaluation is paramount for ensuring that the results and impacts of programmes and projects are assessed periodically. This was a key lesson learned in the implementation of the Agenda for Prosperity. Currently, there are M&E units in MDAs as well as M&E officers at the various district councils. However, there is no national monitoring system that links MDAs and councils and also conducts periodic monitoring of key projects. To ensure effective implementation of the MTNDP, the government will establish a robust monitoring and evaluation system that will do the following:

- Reinforce the institutional arrangements with adequate capacity to support and sustain effective monitoring and evaluation.
- Strengthen, harmonize, and effectively coordinate existing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of public sector service delivery.

- Develop an efficient system for generating relevant, reliable, and timely quantitative and qualitative gender-disaggregated information.
- Manage an effective feedback mechanism that makes statistical information available in useable form to the government, private sector, development partners, and civil society.
- Ensure a holistic approach to M&E that would include monitoring of inputs (including resource allocation and use) as well as processes and outputs, in addition to evaluating the outcomes.
- Foster participatory M&E.
- Improve coordination between central management agencies and MDAs to strengthen demand for M&E.
- Build the technical capacity for M&E at all levels.

Against this background, the government will establish a Monitoring and Evaluation Department within the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development mandated to do the following:

- Lead the monitoring and evaluation of all public-sector programmes and projects, including donor-funded projects.
- Design and implement a national monitoring and evaluation system, including manuals and guidelines, that link the MDAs, local councils, MoPED, and the Office of the President to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation.
- Establish and maintain a database on projects and prepare periodic reports on all projects under the MTNDP.

Figure 8.2: Chain of development results and monitoring and evaluation

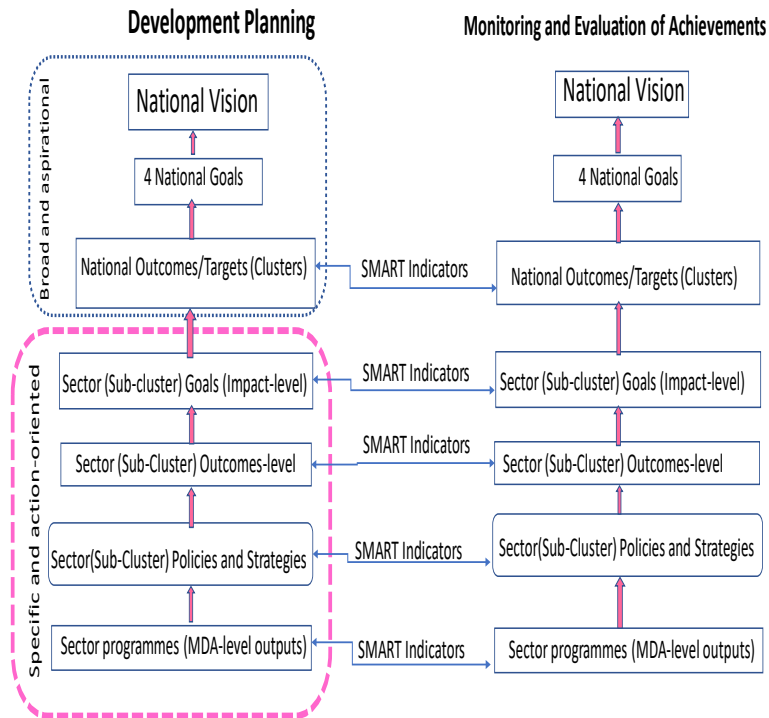
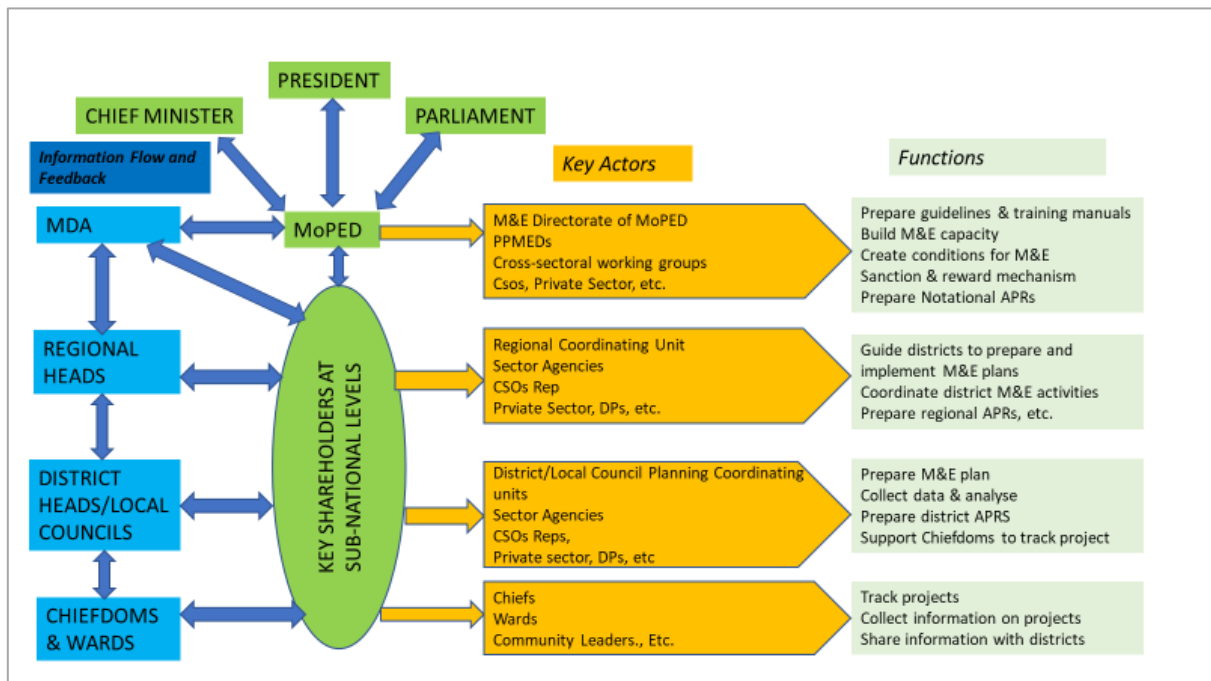


Figure 8.3: Institutional monitoring and evaluation arrangement under the MTNDP



- Conduct evaluation studies as well as baseline and mid-term review reports on all projects and programmes.

Monitoring and evaluation institutional arrangements under the National Development Plan

The M&E framework will link the national and central government with the local council level of the implementation of the MTNDP.

At the national level, the Office of the President, MoPED, and the Ministry of Finance will provide leadership and policy guidance to the process. A ministerial M&E committee will be set up to perform that function.

At the central level, the M&E department in MoPED will lead on all the technical work relating to monitoring and evaluating the MTNDP. This will include, but will not be limited to, establishing sector or cluster working groups for MDAs.

At the district level, working groups will be set up by the M&E department in MoPED, in close collaboration with the district councils.

Reinforcing institutional arrangements is key to the attainment of the long-term objective of institutionalizing M&E and statistics for effective public policy management at all levels. MoPED is mandated to coordinate the decentralized M&E system, and Statistics Sierra Leone is responsible for the production of statistics. Figure 8.3 presents the national M&E system as a proposed framework for effective

monitoring and evaluation. This specifies the M&E functions of all stakeholders, from the national level to the local level.

The Office of the President provides strategic leadership at both national and local levels. The Office of the President performs the critical role of providing direction in terms of coordination and monitoring the performance of the MDAs in meeting the objectives of the plan. The Chief Minister in the Office of the President serves as the Chair of the Core Technical Team, which comprises MDAs and development partners.

Parliament, as one of the three arms of government, plays an important role in monitoring government policies and programmes. Parliamentary Select Committees (on Finance, etc.) have the oversight responsibility of making recommendations on national development to the entire Parliament for approval. A committee may influence government policies on development priorities through the annual budget and regular interaction with civil society organizations. Members of Parliament are key players in disseminating government policies, programmes, and projects, as well as using the outcomes of M&E to influence government policies.

The Ministry of Planning and Economic Development plays the lead role in coordinating all MDAs, regions, and districts in monitoring and evaluating the MTNDP to ensure the efficient and effective utilization of resources. The ministry also provides oversight in the implementation of activities in line with national priorities. MoPED therefore serves as an interface between the government and other stakeholders. It shall coordinate intra-governmental activities relating to national development and shall develop a database (by

sector and region) of all support and interventions (from development partners, the private sector, and civil society organizations).

To enable the implementation of the MTNDP, an indicator framework and a policy/programme matrix have been developed as part of a second volume of the MTNDP document.

The Medium-term National Development Plan and performance management

Setting goals and targets is not enough. Therefore, in furtherance of planning, increasing accountability in governance, and improving the pace and quality of the execution of government programmes, performance management will be directly linked with the MTNDP. It is important to understand the effectiveness and efficiency of teams, recognize their competence, and assess their development needs.

The Office of the President will be supported by MoPED in implementing performance contracts with government institutions and line ministries.

The effectiveness of programmes will be measured against an agreed set of indicators (governance, economic, and social), mostly informed by the results framework set out in the MTNDP. Rewards or corrective actions will be taken accordingly.

Performance management elaborates planning beyond target setting, instead providing for accountability. Performance of government institutions and senior policymakers will be discussed annually. Outcomes from the

discussions will inform contracting, planning, and the review of targets where possible. It therefore ensures strong alignment of the public sector performance management system to the implementation of the MTNDP and provides periodic analysis and reporting of the performance of MDAs and state-owned enterprises in the delivery of strategic results from the MTNDP.

Against this background, the government is establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation Department and a Performance Management Programme Unit within the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development.

8.7 Strengthening statistical systems

Sierra Leone's National Statistical System (NSS) is the body responsible for the generation of micro and macro data, as well as survey and administrative data. This type of data is critical for the development, review, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of successful development plans all over the world. The National Statistical System is coordinated by Statistics Sierra Leone.

Statistics Sierra Leone was created by the Statistics Act 2002 as a semi-autonomous corporate institution with the statutory mandate to coordinate, collect, process, and disseminate official statistics in the country. According to the Act, Statistics Sierra Leone is to serve as the hub (and clearing house) of official statistics, which are collected, compiled, and disseminated by MDAs and other institutions. It is an important element in the information system of the country, serving the government, researchers, and the general public with data

on the economic, demographic, social, and environmental situation.

In order to enhance the effective coordination of statistical activities, Statistics Sierra Leone, together with MDAs and with support from the World Bank, developed the first National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, covering the period 2008–2012. The second strategy was developed and launched in 2016 to cover the period 2016–2021; a mid-term review of this strategy has just been completed. The National Strategy for the Development of Statistics provides the road map for the effective functioning of the NSS in the production, analysis, and dissemination of official statistics in the country.

The need for a well-coordinated NSS to produce credible statistics cannot be overemphasized, given the expanding demand by diverse users for better and more credible statistics. This expanding demand has come about, on the one hand, because of the heightened need for data to monitor the progress made in the implementation of international agendas such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 of the African Union, and on the other hand, because of the need to domesticate such international agendas by developing national development plans. There is now an increasing awareness at the national level of the need for better data to assess problems, to set priorities, and to monitor progress in the achievement of such goals. Evidence-based planning is nowadays the hallmark of our MTNDP processes, especially in the context of democracy, accountability, and the rule of law.

The NSS, coordinated by Statistics Sierra Leone, comprises Statistics Sierra Leone and all other ministries, departments, agencies, and local councils, plus non-governmental

organizations, private firms, and universities, which generate data during the course of carrying out their daily tasks and mandates. Such data is all encompassing, ranging from agricultural inputs distributed, vehicles licensed, and number of schools in a district to revenue generated, money supply, consumer price indices, foreign trade statistics, hospital beds, number of teachers, school enrolment numbers, and survey-related data such as infant mortality rates and poverty rates. Statistical coordination is at all levels, from the design of the statistical activities to the fieldwork, from the data analysis to the report writing and dissemination. This coordination will involve various formats, including the signing of memorandums of understanding, the provision of methodology guides, and the issuing of accreditation certificates by Statistics Sierra Leone to partners. The major users are the government, parliamentarians, development partners, researchers, and the general public.

Official statistics therefore provide the information, the evidence, and the basis for the formulation and implementation of government policy and programmes; and the evidence of the impact of such policies and programmes on communities, organizations, and the general population. In addition, in a globalized world where national economies are becoming increasingly inter-dependent, official statistics provide a basis for understanding how a country interacts with the rest of the world and how local conditions compare with those elsewhere (including over time).

Some efforts were made over the last five years to address the need for a stronger and well-coordinated statistical system in the country. For example, the second National Strategy for the Development of Statistics was launched in 2016. This five-year road map aims at

providing an official platform for the coordination of all statistical activities carried out in Sierra Leone. In this regard, Statistics Sierra Leone, which is at the centre of the NSS, was able to sign memoranda of understanding with some MDAs, and thereafter deployed staff in nine MDAs to strengthen their data collection systems and procedures.

Certain key challenges do exist, such as weak governance structures and institutional coordination among MDAs in the NSS. The legal and policy framework is weak, which affects the coordination of statistical activities. The Statistics Act of 2002 is inadequate; there is no accreditation policy for official statistics in the country. As a result, different MDAs are producing and disseminating different statistics on the same indicator, which undermines the credibility of national statistics.

There is inadequate physical building infrastructure for Statistics Sierra Leone; many MDAs have no viable statistical units, equipment is inadequate; and paper-based instruments for data collection are still used. This affects the production and dissemination of credible statistics.

There is a skills gap within the NSS, as there are few trained staff to support statistical activities. Funds allocated to Statistics Sierra Leone and indeed to the statistical activities in the NSS are grossly inadequate, and the disbursement is very irregular and untimely. This thus affects the calendar of statistics production. Conditions for staff at Statistics Sierra Leone still remain a challenge.

Advocacy and publicity have been done over the years by Statistics Sierra Leone and NSS to raise awareness among policymakers regarding

statistical activities undertaken and the role of statistics in development. Many policymakers still have limited knowledge regarding the importance of statistics in policymaking and implementation, which in turn affects the demand for statistics. Low donor confidence in Statistics Sierra Leone and NSS has impacted negatively on donor funding for statistical activities in the country.

However, opportunities do exist for the development of the statistical sector to enhance the evaluation and monitoring of development results. Given the need to monitor the progress of the implementation of national and international development agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals, there is now high demand for data among all categories of users, which opens the door to more statistics for various indicators.

There is political and donor goodwill to support statistical activities, which are critical for the monitoring of progress in the implementation of the SDGs and the MTNDP. There is now widely available ICT equipment that could be used in the collection, processing, and dissemination of high-quality statistics to support evidence-based policy.

Strategic objectives

- Credible statistics in policy design, monitoring, and evaluation produced and disseminated in a well-coordinated environment by well-trained and motivated staff.
- Transformation of the data collection, processing, and dissemination infrastructure from a paper-based system to a modern ICT infrastructure-based system that supports large-scale surveys and administrative

data collection from MDAs and routine activities for the timely delivery of quality statistics.

- Expansion of the range, coverage, and frequency of high-quality statistics and statistical activities to monitor the performance of the economy and the implementation of the MTNDP and SDGs for better service delivery.

Key targets

- Strengthen the legal framework and infrastructural capacity of the NSS for the coordination of statistical activities to support evidence-based policy design and implementation.
- Build modern ICT and geographic information system infrastructure for the harmonization and delivery of statistical methods, products, and services.
- Conduct more frequent and relevant statistical activities to provide credible data for monitoring economic, health, social, and demographic indicators of the MTNDP.

Policy actions

1. Review the Statistics Act 2002 to strengthen the mandate of Statistics Sierra Leone to coordinate the entire NSS.
2. Construct a six-storey Statistics Sierra Leone headquarters building plus district offices to enhance statistical coordination at the local council level in the regions.
3. Strengthen MDAs and local councils to establish viable statistical units and develop

statistical plans to guide the compilation of administrative statistics.

4. Develop and implement the third National Strategy for the Development of Statistics through a bottom-up approach.
5. Develop a data certification and data access policy.
6. Strengthen the staffing, skills capacity, and emoluments of personnel at Statistics Sierra Leone, MDAs, and local councils to collect, analyse, and disseminate high-quality data required for the monitoring of the MTNDP.
7. Provide a basket fund to be managed by both the government and development partners to support sustained statistical activities in the country in terms of finance, training, material, and equipment.
8. Migrate data collection methods and procedures from paper-based systems to ICT-based systems.
9. Develop a national database that integrates all MDA/local council databases.
10. Use geographic information system and spatial technology for data collection and dissemination.
11. Expand the range, coverage, and frequency of high-quality statistics and statistical activities by undertaking the following:
 - Rebasing consumer price index and national accounts to a more recent year (e.g. 2018)
 - Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey 2021
 - Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 7 2022

- Demographic Health Survey 2023
- Labour Force and Employment Surveys 2020
- Agricultural census in 2020
- Business Establishments Census 2019
- Other socio-economic data collection activities needed to monitor the economic and social impact of policy

8.8 Indicator framework and policy/programme matrix

To ensure the prudent implementation of the MTNDP, an indicator framework and a policy/programme matrix have been developed. These two come in another volume of the MTNDP document called the 'Implementation Plan'. The two frameworks are well aligned to the targets and indicators of the SDGs and the African Union Agenda 2063.

8.9 Communication for development

To keep citizens and all other stakeholders well informed about the implementation of the MTNDP and other activities of government, there is a need to have a comprehensive communication strategy in place. This would engage stakeholders, apprise them of the work being done, and provide opportunity for feedback to the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development and the government as a whole. Therefore, MoPED will develop and implement a communication strategy for development results.

MoPED will engage a communication specialist to develop an official website and social media accounts, which would ensure interaction with the general population and other stakeholders. The communication specialist staff member would also serve as the Public Relations Officer for the ministry.

The communication strategy is aimed at promoting awareness through continuous dialogue and feedback on the MTNDP; enhancing development communication across the public sector and policy space; strengthening the national capacity for development communication; and strengthening communication channels among MDAs, districts, Parliament, and civil society.

The target population for the communication strategy is the totality of government, civil actors, and the general public. This includes the Cabinet, the Judiciary, the Parliament, Ministers of State and their Deputies, the administrative and technical heads of MDAs, regional administrations, districts, chiefdoms, and councils. Other targeted groups are political parties, the private sector, professional bodies and associations, international partners, traditional authorities, the media, academia, research institutions, think-tanks, non-governmental organizations, students, farmer-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and women's groups, as well as the general public.

FIRST PERSON

'For the first time in developing national plans, the districts, especially the grass-roots, were given the opportunity to express their felt needs for inclusion in the document. Prioritization of their development needs was done at the district level and later validated.'

—Mohamed M. Robinson, Deputy Mayor, Bonthe Municipal Council

'The United States is formulating a 200-year development plan . . . We need long-term planning to enhance national development focus and ensure that our aspirations capture those yet unborn.'

—Representative from Sierra Leone Human Rights Commission

CONCLUSION

The Sierra Leone economy after the conflict had commenced steady and positive growth until recently, when internal and external factors changed the positive trajectory. This Medium-term National Development Plan attempts to re-launch the economy by incorporating the lessons from the past and recognizing that dramatic results can only emerge after laying solid foundations capable of sustaining the vision of becoming a middle-income country by 2035.

Guided by disciplined leadership and the efficient and effective management of resources, it sets the stage for inclusive growth that 'leaves no one behind', particularly women and children, and a transformed economy where citizens can enjoy access to free education and job opportunities, all within the protection of the rule of law. The flagship programme and the four goals (a diversified, resilient green economy; a nation with educated, empowered, and healthy citizens capable of realizing their fullest potential; a society that is peaceful, cohesive, secure, and just; and a competitive economy with a

well-developed infrastructure) are designed to keep the country on the development trajectory for increased welfare for all.

A key feature of the plan is its conception within a longer plan period of 20 years, which in turn is prepared in tandem with the first 12 months of the former's implementation. The strong political leadership also ensures that its guiding principles underlie all activities, guaranteeing consistency and coherence in planned activities. The determination for local ownership and discipline is already demonstrated by the strict fiscal management of the economy displayed so far by the new administration. We are mindful of the need to have a mid-term review of this plan, given that new issues will emerge in the first years of implementation. It is critical that lessons learned in the first phase of implementation and emerging needs are identified and incorporated into the process. Thus, a review of this plan is envisaged in 2021.

