



## Fast Facts

**Country:** Sierra Leone

**Duration:** July 2002 to December 2007

**Implementing UN Agencies:** UNDP

**Other Implementing Partners:** Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; National Commission for Resettlement, Repatriation and Reintegration; National Commission for Social Action; local authorities

**Budget:** \$3,090,000

**Key Words:** Ex-combatants; capacity-building; livelihoods; post-conflict peace building; community reconciliation

## BACKGROUND

The decade-long civil conflict that broke out in Sierra Leone in 1991 had a devastating impact on the country's overall social and economic fabric. As hostilities came to an end in 2000, the conflict-affected districts of Kono, Kailahun and Koinadugu, located along the border with Liberia and Guinea, faced tremendous obstacles in overcoming the multifaceted challenges in rebuilding their societies. In the wake of the conflict, 80 per cent of the houses were destroyed; public services such as hospitals, health clinics and schools were non-functional; water wells were wrecked and local governance had seized

to operate. Apart from the hazardous work in the diamond fields, economic opportunities were hard to come by and the arrival of large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees from conflict-ridden Liberia placed further strain on the already overburdened communities of Sierra Leone. Demobilised ex-combatants, who were in need of assistance towards a smooth transition to civilian life, were a particularly high-risk segment of the population and the longer it took to reintegrate these ex-combatants, the more risk there was to the peace and reconciliation process.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The project sought to contribute to the reintegration and resettlement of ex-combatants in Kono, Kailahun and Koinadugu and support their host communities in the provision of sustainable economic and educational opportunities. In order to achieve this goal, the project (i) provided vocational training and formal education to ex-combatants and other vulnerable persons; (ii)

supported self-employment opportunities to skilled ex-combatants; (iii) created short-term job opportunities and enabled skills acquisition for ex-combatants and others through community reconstruction projects and agricultural work; and (iv) promoted community reconciliation and social harmony through trainings and capacity building of community members.

### BENEFICIARIES

Overall, the project provided 13,432 people with job opportunities in agriculture, small-scale infrastructure construction projects, shelter rehabilitation, as well as microenterprise support and vocational training. In addition, ex-combatants were enrolled in trainings on

carpentry, masonry, welding, metal work, mechanics, tailoring and blacksmithing. Lastly, ex-combatants and other vulnerable persons benefited from job placement services and on-the-job training.