



Sierra Leone

Strengthening Human Security in the Remote Chiefdoms of Gbense, Soa, and Kamara in Kono District of Sierra Leone

Background information

While progress has been made to promote stability and inclusive development in Sierra Leone, significant obstacles remain in realizing the SDGs. In the Kono District, interconnected challenges including civil instability, a non-diversified economy with limited opportunities for income generation, unsustainable mining practices, destructive forestry activities, low agricultural productivity, and inadequate governance systems for community decision-making negatively impact the lives, livelihoods and opportunities of the residents, and undermine advancement of the SDGs.

The programme builds upon an initiative supported by the UNTFHS in 2019 to strengthen the application of human security towards accelerating the achievement of the SDGs at the local level in West Africa.

Goals and objectives

The key objectives of the programme are to: (i) ensure that the community enjoys economic, political and community security, with expanded social cohesion, all of which promote and sustain peace; and (ii) ensure that community farmers realize improved livelihoods, higher incomes, and reduced vulnerability to climate, economic and other shocks through sustainable farming that also improves the nutrition status of all community residents.



DURATION

January 2021 – December 2023



UN IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

UNDP, FAO, UNRCO



OTHER KEY PARTNERS

African Development Bank, IFAD, World Bank, Government and Community Partners



BENEFICIARIES

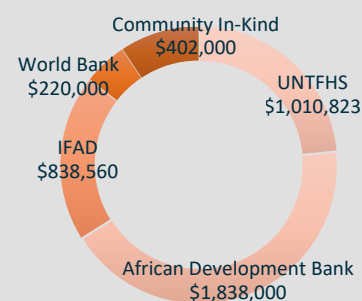
85,358 people in Kamara, Gbense and Soa



TOTAL BUDGET

US\$ 4,309,383

POOLING OF RESOURCES



Beneficiaries

The programme benefits a total of 85,358 people in the chiefdoms of Kamara, Gbense and Soa, among which 2,346 are direct beneficiaries (women, youth, local NGOs, and authorities).

Applying the Human Security approach

The multifaceted nature of the programme is in keeping with the human security approach and fosters a community that is more resilient to internal and external shocks, whether political, economic, or natural. The programme is designed in a way that on the one hand ensures transformational community governance through empowerment, knowledge, and diverse input to decision-making, whilst enabling sustainable agriculture, food security, livelihood, economic diversity, and resilience. Together, these mutually reinforcing protection and empowerment initiatives support the community's cohesiveness, livelihood, and dignity. A comprehensive approach is used to address the root causes of threats both within and across chiefdoms and to advance a multisectoral, multi-stakeholder response, refraining from a silo- or supply-driven response.

Community governance is strengthened by the increased inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups, in community planning and decision-making. Through support for registration and the provision of seed funds, microcredit, and loan schemes to youth-led cooperatives, the programme enhances bottom-up community empowerment and brings concrete, sustainable benefits. Enhancing the economic role of youth is mutually supportive of the other activities designed to increase the role of youth in community decision-making. By comprehensively enabling both top-down protection measures, such as the district code-of-conduct monitoring groups, and bottom-up empowerment measures, such as youth-led cooperatives, the programme advances the people-centered, comprehensive, prevention-oriented features of the human security approach.

Achievements

- The programme laid a strong foundation for a diversified economy by establishing and supporting youth-led cooperatives, which enhanced economic activities for over 2,400 members, 70% of whom are women. It provided vital training and loans to transform community members into small entrepreneurs, shifting them from household work to business operations. The programme also promoted agricultural diversification by rehabilitating degraded lands, constructing infrastructure such as drying floors and three rice mills, and training 600 Village Savings and Loan Association members in agricultural value chains. These efforts collectively improved local agricultural practices and fostered sustainable livelihoods across targeted communities.
- The programme significantly enhanced market linkages by constructing and renovating key infrastructure, which improved access for 40% of target beneficiaries in Kono District. Additionally, training in business enterprise development and market linkages for over 60 farmer-based organizations, along with interactive sessions with local buyers, helped farmers better understand market demands and optimize their sales strategies. These initiatives strengthened the connections between local producers and broader market opportunities, fostering local economic growth and sustainability of the intervention.
- The programme effectively reduced political tensions and improved social cohesion by conducting a needs assessment for the District Multi-Party Forum and providing targeted training in mediation, conflict management, and political inclusivity. It engaged 360 Peace Ambassadors in conflict detection and peace monitoring and facilitated community events like peace caravans and football galas, reaching over 750 participants with messages of tolerance and non-violence. Additionally, it established 11 Grievance Redress Committees and trained women Peace Mothers and youth in early conflict resolution techniques, contributing to a culture of non-violence and enhanced social cohesion in the lead-up to the 2023 elections.



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