



**United Nations Trust Fund
for Human Security**

Sierra Leone

Enhanced Resiliency and Living Conditions
for Vulnerable Communities Addressing
Economic, Health, and Food Security
Challenges due to Impacts of COVID-19 in
Sierra Leone

Background information

The surge in COVID-19 cases in Sierra Leone at the onset of 2021, accompanied by necessary movement restrictions to contain the spread of the virus, exacerbated existing challenges, notably food insecurity and disrupted livelihoods for those reliant on unstable income sources. This situation disproportionately affected women, youth, and individuals already living in poverty, leading to further income reductions. Border communities, heavily reliant on cross-border trade with neighboring countries, faced significant economic downturns due to travel restrictions and border closures. This strain underscores the urgent need to prioritize interventions that ensure the safety and well-being of communities affected by complex crises. Therefore, it is crucial to strengthen the human security of these communities to alleviate short-term needs while bolstering their capacity to withstand and recover from present and future challenges.

Goals and objectives

The programme aims to strengthen the capacity of the government and enhance community resilience to prevent and mitigate health, food, and economic insecurity. To this end, the specific objectives are to: (i) improve the capacities of vulnerable communities to prevent and respond to crises, including skills and tools to control emerging public health risks; (ii) enhance livelihood skills and opportunities in the agricultural and fisheries sector that enable more sustainable food security and income generation; and (iii) build the capacity of the fisheries sector to meet the food and nutritional needs of vulnerable communities through strengthened governance and a resilient trade environment.



DURATION

March 2022 – September 2023



UN IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

IOM, UNODC



OTHER KEY PARTNERS

Ministries of Health & Sanitation, Agriculture & Forestry, and Fisheries & Marine Resources; National COVID-19 Emergency Response Centre; Joint Maritime Committee; Sierra Leone Judiciary; Sierra Leone Anti-Corruption Commission; National Disaster Management Agency; and local NGOs and partners.



BENEFICIARIES

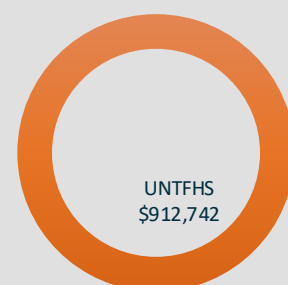
Over 44,000 individuals, government and non-governmental entities directly and indirectly.



TOTAL BUDGET

US\$ 912,742

POOLING OF RESOURCES



Beneficiaries

The programme empowers and builds the capacities of health personnel, displaced persons, vulnerable households, farmers, farmer-based organizations, and national authorities by providing training in health skills, sustainable agriculture, and food sector employment. A total of 44,778 community members in the Western Rural, Bonthe, Moyamba, Karene, Pujehun, Falaba, Kailahun, Kambia, and Kenema districts benefit from better agriculture, job diversification, enhanced sanitation centers, and reduced crimes and corruption.

Applying the Human Security approach

Amid multidimensional humanitarian crises affecting health, economic stability, and food security along Sierra Leone's border, a comprehensive response that addresses the gaps between humanitarian and development interventions is imperative. Guided by the human security approach, the programme strategically allocated resources to address pressing needs while laying the groundwork for sustainable development, focusing on both immediate relief and long-term resilience. Through targeted interventions, such as the distribution of WASH supplies and Non-Food Items (NFI) for flood relief, the programme addressed the immediate challenges facing vulnerable populations. In parallel, initiatives like water embankments and agricultural enhancements bolstered livelihoods and food supply, mitigating the impact of future disasters and promoting self-sufficiency.

This overall goal was further enhanced by combining protection mechanisms with community empowerment, one of the core pillars of human security. Capacity-building workshops were delivered to healthcare personnel and government officials in crucial areas such as sustainable agriculture, health system fortification, and corruption and crimes in the fisheries sector. Simultaneously, community members, including displaced persons, were empowered to combat diseases and cultivate sustainable livelihoods in the food sector, taking active leadership roles in driving development within their communities.

Guided by context-specific methodologies and in close collaboration with the Sierra Leonean government, represented by the Ministries of Fisheries, Health, and Agriculture, the programme tailored interventions to local realities, ensuring relevance and efficacy. The assessments of key health facilities at local and regional levels, rapid food value chain assessment, rapid rural appraisal, and corruption risk assessment were led by government officials and conducted at the beginning of each intervention to guide the formulation of solutions and risk mitigation strategies that were responsive to local needs. As a result, the programme captured the changing dynamics of these sectors to adjust interventions and foster local ownership. By championing integration and partnership, the programme navigated the complex landscape of humanitarian challenges with resilience and adaptability, paving the way for a more secure and prosperous future for border communities in Sierra Leone.

Achievements

- The programme successfully strengthened the resilience of vulnerable communities to mitigate and respond to crises. It enhanced the capacity of health institutions in critical areas such as health screenings, disease surveillance, infection prevention, and COVID-19 risk communication. Notable achievements include training of 100 health workers, improving hygiene conditions at nine points of entry with WASH supplies, and delivering health skills training to 2,500 individuals. In response to the August 2022 floods in Bo-Jong, the programme provided essential non-food items to 57 affected households, indirectly supporting 500 individuals. These interventions equipped communities with the tools and knowledge needed to effectively manage public health risks and crises.
- In addition to public health improvements, the programme advanced livelihood skills and opportunities through targeted training in sustainable agriculture and fisheries practices for community members and government officials. By providing agricultural supplies and training to eight communities, the programme facilitated value chain development, bolstering food security and creating sustainable income sources for approximately 27,383 indirect beneficiaries.
- The programme also made significant strides in strengthening Sierra Leone's fisheries sector. It addressed systemic corruption, enhanced inter-agency coordination, and improved maritime law enforcement capabilities, laying the groundwork for a more sustainable and accountable fisheries industry.



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