



SEND
SIERRA LEONE
Working to promote good governance and
equality of men and women in Sierra Leone



PROMOTING

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN
AND YOUTH IN BONTHE AND FALABA DISTRICTS

Strengthening Human Security for Local Economic Development

PROJECT FACTSHEET

PROJECT TITLE

Promoting Employment Opportunities for Women and Youth in the Bonthe and Falaba districts.

PROJECT DONOR PARTNERS

- United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security
- African Development Bank
- International Fund for Agricultural Development
- The World Bank

PROJECT IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- SEND Sierra Leone

PROJECT LOCATION

- Bonthe District
- Falaba District

PROJECT BUDGET

\$254,295

PROJECT DURATION

MARCH 2023-SEPTEMBER 2023

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Problems

Bonthe and Falaba districts record some of the highest multidimensional challenges ranging from high poverty, gender inequalities to environmental damage.

Sierra Leone is a West African coastal country with approximately 7.1 million people divided into 16 districts. Since the end of the civil conflict in 2002, Sierra Leone has made significant progress in building peace and strengthening state institutions. However, development challenges remain substantial, and the country ranks low on the Global Human Development Index. Gender inequality is also a significant issue.

With **56.8%** of the Sierra Leonean population living in poverty, **12.9%** of the population living under extreme poverty and the food poverty rate standing at **54.5%**, Sierra Leone faces considerable challenges in been able to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. The country ranks **182** out of 189 in the 2020 Global Human Development Index with a Human Development Index of **0.452** and life expectancy **54.7** years.

The Bonthe and Falaba districts face multiple interconnected developmental challenges, including high poverty, gender inequalities, unsustainable mining practices, destructive forestry activities, wildfire burning, and illegal fishing. These targeted districts are considered conflict hotspots due to regionalized party politics, particularly during elections.

The high dependence on fishing and cattle rearing as the main source of livelihood for most families due to lack of capital to invest into micro-enterprises, diversify agricultural activities through value addition further puts most families victims of livelihood and food insecurity.

The poverty rate in these districts is alarmingly high, with more than 70% of the population living below the national poverty line. This is further exacerbated by the low literacy and high unemployment rates existing amongst the youth.



Key Problems



High incidence of livelihood, food and income security in households



Lack of access to finance for women and youth



Lack of social cohesion in fostering community development and peace



Low business and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills amongst women and youth

SDGs targeted by the Intervention



The Solution

The project is focused on supporting and empowering youth and women entrepreneurs in the target districts by providing them with resources and assistance to help them succeed in their businesses.

The project aims to shift resources and mindsets from fishing and cattle rearing alone to agriculture and other means of economic growth, while promoting overall social cohesion and a culture of non-violence among youth.

It will enhance community capacities to address insecurities and livelihood challenges. Community governance will be elevated by including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups in community planning and decision-making. SEND's experience in resource mobilization, capacity building, livelihood, and the promotion of gender-transformative practices will complement achieving the proposed action's objectives.

Main Outcome

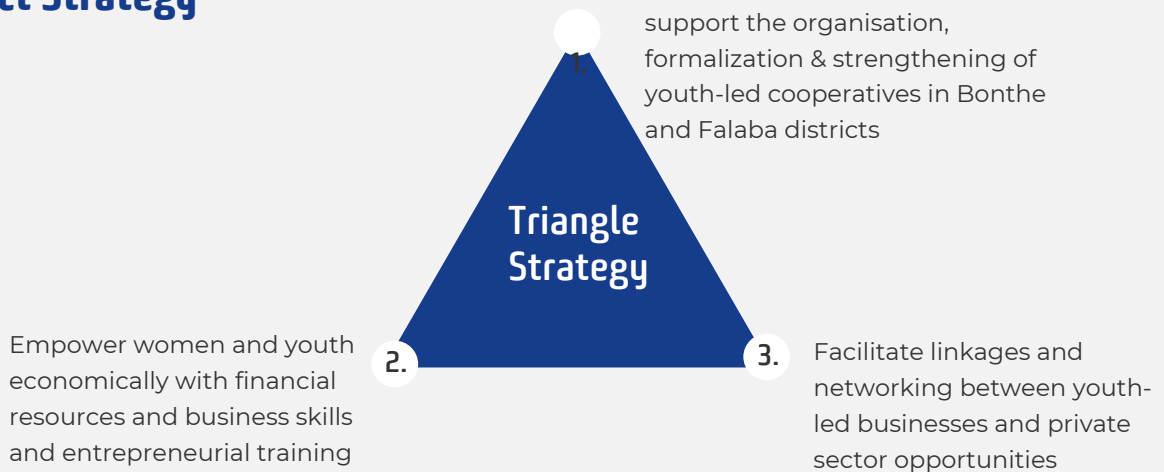
The target group has made significant progress in economic, political, and community security through the project intervention. A stable economy gives residents better job opportunities and higher income levels, improving living standards. The communities maintain political stability through democratic processes and promote transparency in governance. Residents from diverse backgrounds are united in social cohesion and participate in community activities. Improved access to healthcare, education, and social services has enhanced the community's overall well-being. Affordable housing, safe public spaces, and effective transportation systems have contributed to a higher quality of life. The community thrives due to the project's commitment to improving living conditions and promoting social cohesion.

Specific Objective



A diversified economy provides sustainable economic benefits for all. By expanding industries and sectors, communities can reduce dependence on a single income source vulnerable to fluctuations. Diversification can lead to employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, economic resilience, and stability. Promoting innovation can foster new industries and services for long-term benefits, leading to sustainable economic growth and development.

Project Strategy



Key Intervention Activities

Action 1: Support the formalization of 30 youth-led cooperatives for crafts, food processing, etc., that are legally registered and established adequately with governance structures; provide seed funding, microcredit and loan schemes, along with skills transfer for managing funds in Falaba and Bonthe Districts



Formation and strengthening of 30 youth-led cooperatives for craft and food processing



Support for legalising youth cooperatives and structures



Resources mobilization training for youth-led cooperatives



Provision of logistics for resource mobilisation through the VSLA scheme



Micro-grant for promising youth cooperatives to support food processing



Training of youth-led cooperatives on fund management

Action 2: Provide youth and women entrepreneurs/businesses with skills in business development, marketing, branding, etc. and connect them with youth innovators who have additional skills to support the scale-up of the businesses. in Falaba and Bonthe District



Capacity building for youth and women entrepreneurs/businesses with business development, marketing and branding skills



CEFE training



Collaboration with the UNDP SDG Accelerator Lab to support linkage of business entities to young innovators in the locality or surrounding districts



Gender transformative training



Support to produce locally-led tools and equipment for farming activities



Provision of appropriate equipment for locally developed products



Training local entrepreneurs on repairing locally developed tools

Key Intervention Activities

Action 3: Complete the mapping of private sector businesses in the district and help to arrange apprenticeships for youths with these businesses, working with local leaders who will be positioned to continue the initiative permanently in Falaba and Bonthe districts



Mapping private sector businesses in twelve districts



Coordination with the National Youth Service Commission



Support for apprenticeship for youth with relevant business skills

Action 4: Provide guidance and resources to the community to refurbish existing marketplace grounds for selling various agricultural products and chiefdom trade fairs



Assessment of Community Marketplaces in four Chiefdoms



Refurbishment of Existing Community Marketplaces



Handover of Community Marketplaces



Target

In Bonthe and Falaba districts, more than 1,200 women and youth will benefit directly from this intervention. PWDs and other vulnerable groups such as widows will also benefit from this action.

The action will focus on building the individual entrepreneurial capacities of beneficiaries, forming and strengthening cooperatives and savings groups to provide finance to women and youth

The project will directly impact the following:

- **1,200 women & youth**
- **40 youth-led businesses**
- **60 VSLA groups**
- **30 youth-led cooperatives**
- **40 women-led businesses**

Contributing Activities

- Project Steering Committee Coordination meetings
- Project Monitoring activities
- Project Visibility activities
- Project Management meetings



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