

STRENGTHENING OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

OF THE WASH SECTOR
IN TWO RURAL DISTRICTS
OF SIERRA LEONE

Project Donor Partners

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

TERRA TECH

Project Implementing Partners

SEND
SIERRA LEONE

PROJECT DETAILS

Strengthening of the Civil Society Participation for Climate Change Adaptation of the WASH sector in Two Rural Districts of Sierra Leone

Project Details

Project Name: Strengthening of the Civil Society Participation for Climate Change Adaptation of the WASH sector in Two Rural Districts of Sierra Leone

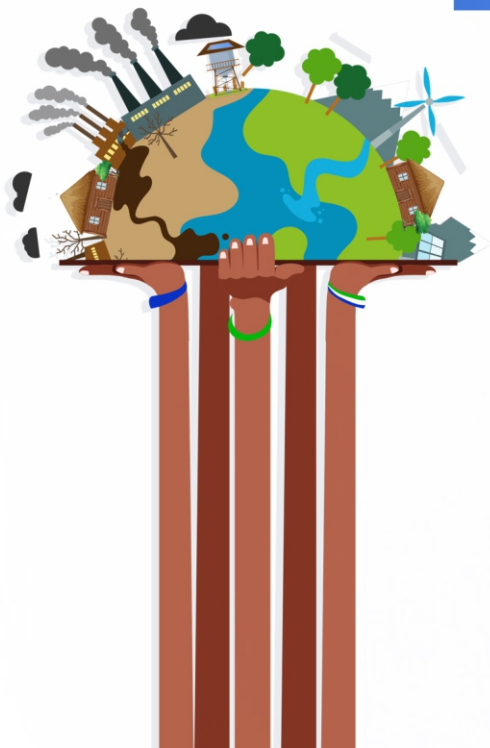
Project Donor Partners:

- German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development,
- TERRA TECH Fördeprojekte e.V

Project Implementing Partners:

- SEND Sierra Leone

Project Budget: 730,546.68 Euros
Project Duration: 01/09/2023-31/05/2026
Project Location: Kenema and Pujehun districts



PROJECT BACKGROUND

Overview

Sierra Leone, positioned on the west coast of Africa, confronts heightened vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change due to its geographical location and socio-economic conditions. The nation grapples with a range of climate-related challenges, including more frequent and intense extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, and storms. These events significantly impact water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)

Climate Vulnerability

Sierra Leone's susceptibility to climate change is underscored by its geographical exposure and vulnerability to extreme weather events. According to the Global Climate Risk Index 2021, Sierra Leone ranked as the 2nd most vulnerable country globally to climate change impacts between 2000 and 2019. The devastating mudslide in Freetown in August 2017, resulting in over 1,000 deaths and extensive infrastructure damage, serve as a stark illustration of this vulnerability (Germanwatch Global Climate Risk Index 2021).





WASH CHALLENGES

Sierra Leone faces formidable challenges in the WASH sector, further compounded by climate change. Inadequate access to safe water sources and sanitation facilities poses significant health risks. Approximately 63% of the population has access to improved water sources, with rural areas experiencing lower rates at around 44%. It is becoming increasingly prevalent to find water sources such as water wells in rural areas running dry during the dry season further exacerbating the vulnerability of communities. Similarly, only 14% of the population has access to improved sanitation facilities, with rural areas facing even lower rates at around 7%. This results in a higher risk of rural residents been susceptible to water-borne and hygiene related diseases such as cholera, dysentery, amongst others.

GENDER INEQUALITY



Gender inequality intersects with WASH challenges, disproportionately affecting women and girls. Women and girls, especially in rural areas, bear the primary responsibility for water collection, facing long and often unsafe journeys. This negatively impacts their education, health, and productivity. Limited access to menstrual hygiene management (MHM) resources and facilities further hampers the health, dignity, and educational opportunities of women and girls.

IMPACT ON VULNERABLE GROUPS



Climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable groups, including women, children, the elderly, and impoverished people. Limited resources and increased exposure to health risks associated with inadequate WASH services pose significant challenges for these populations. Women and girls may face heightened risks of gender-based violence and limited access to MHM resources without proper sanitation facilities.

GENDER-RESPONSIVE INTERVENTIONS

Addressing gender inequality is imperative for effective climate change and WASH interventions in Sierra Leone. Active involvement of women and girls in decision-making processes, equal access to resources and opportunities, and empowerment through training on hygiene practices and menstrual health management are essential components of sustainable solutions.





FINANCIAL CHALLENGES





Access to finance stands as another significant challenge in addressing climate change and WASH in Sierra Leone. Mobilizing additional financial resources is crucial to enhancing the capacity of communities and locals to support robust climate actions and WASH initiatives.

FOCUS AREAS:

KENEMA AND PUJEHUN DISTRICTS

Kenema and Pujehun districts, mirroring challenges faced across Sierra Leone, grapple with increased climate-related vulnerabilities. These challenges include heightened frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, resulting in low water resources, inadequate sanitation systems, and compromised hygiene practices. Rural areas in these districts often rely on unsafe water sources, contributing to health risks and waterborne diseases.





OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH

The Civil Society Participation for Climate Change Adaptation of the WASH sector in Two Rural Districts of Sierra Leone project will undertake a comprehensive and integrated approach in addressing the vulnerabilities of the WASH sector whiles empowering the communities to create sustainable and adaptive solutions to the climate-related challenges within the Kailahun and Pujehun districts.



1. Robust Climate Adaptation Initiative Mainstreaming

Our strategy of Robust Climate Adaptation Initiative Mainstreaming is designed. To seamlessly integrate climate adaptation considerations into every aspect of project planning and execution. The project will commence with comprehensive climate vulnerability assessments, facilitating a deep understanding of the specific challenges faced by the communities. Subsequently, tailored adaptation strategies will be developed, ensuring a targeted and effective response to identified vulnerabilities. The implementation phase will involve the incorporation of climate-resilient technologies into Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure projects, with a focus on innovation and sustainability. This is expected to enhance resilience of communities, improve adaptability to the dynamic conditions imposed by climate change, and the realization of sustainable, long-term benefits that fortify the communities against future environmental challenges.



2. Strategic Service Delivery

(Improved Climate Robust Infrastructures and Private Sector Engagement):

This strategic approach aims to optimize service delivery by not only enhancing the climate resilience of WASH infrastructure but also fostering collaboration with the private sector. The objective is to ensure efficient and sustainable service delivery. the project will engage in strategic partnerships with private sector entities to expand the design and construction of climate-resilient WASH infrastructure in rural communities. This ensures there is improved WASH infrastructure reliability, increased efficiency in service delivery, and broader community access to climate-resilient WASH facilities.





3. Gender Transformative Approach:

The Gender Transformative Approach represents a commitment to addressing the intertwined challenges of gender inequalities and WASH constraints within rural households. With a focus on empowerment and inclusivity, the project will conduct thorough gender-sensitive needs assessments and design interventions that actively empower women and girls. Implementation will include the training of households on the Gender Model Family approach and the integration of gender-responsive indicators into project activities including target beneficiary participation,project monitoring and evaluation processes. This will heighten gender equality, increased participation of women and girls in decision-making processes, and equitable distribution of WASH responsibilities and practices within households.

4. Resource Mobilization Through the VSLA Approach to WASH Infrastructure Development and Maintenance:

This strategy centers on mobilizing resources for sustainable WASH infrastructure development and maintenance by utilizing the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) approach. Implementation will involve the establishment and strengthening of VSLAs, linking them to WASH infrastructure projects, and empowering communities to take ownership of maintenance through pooled resources. This will ensure financial sustainability, enhance community ownership, and improve maintenance of WASH infrastructure.





5

Multi-Stakeholders Engagement in Climate Robust WASH

To ensure comprehensive and effective delivery of this climate-resilient WASH intervention, this project will emphasize the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement. Through structures such as the WASHCord in each district, all relevantstakeholders will be engaged to ensure coordinated efforts, increased efficiency, and a holistic approach to climate-resilient WASH initiatives.

6

Organization and Capacity Building of Civil Society (Community Approach):

The strategy involves the organization of communities to develop community-based organisations and the capacity building of those organisations to enhance community engagement and participation. Through training, mentorship, and capacity building programs, local organizations and community leaders will be empowered to actively participate in project activities. This will strengthen community-based organizations, increase community participation, and ensure the sustainable implementation of the project.





7

INFLUENCING NATIONAL POLICY MAKING:

This strategy seeks to influence national policy-making by advocating and presentingcommunity-leveldata and citizen-driven climate adaptation initiatives. The project will collect empiric evidence showcasing successful community-driven climate adaptation efforts, engage in policy dialogues, and collaborate with policymakers to integrate community perspectives into national policies. Anticipated outcomes involve informed policy decisions, improved national frameworks for climate adaptation, and increased alignment of policies with the needs and experiences of local communities.

TARGET GROUPS

Direct Target Groups

The project will be implemented in 25 communities across Kenema and Pujehun districts. These communities were strategically chosen based on criteria such as access to potable water, climate vulnerability, and accessibility. These communities, representing diverse demographic and geographic profiles, have been selected in collaboration with local authorities and SEND. The total population of the direct target group is estimated to be 8,568 individuals. Special attention is dedicated to gender balance, with a commitment to ensuring that at least 50% of the beneficiaries are female. These communities will serve as focal points for the project's interventions, receiving tailored climate-resilient WASH initiatives address specific WASH challenges prevalent in these areas.

Indirect Target Groups:

Beyond the 25 selected communities, the indirect target group of the project extends to approximately 630,012 people, encompassing 609,891 individuals in Kenema District and 20,121 in Pujehun District. The positive outcomes of the project, including enhanced community resilience, improved health, and increased access to sustainable climate-resilient WASH services, will have a ripple effect, positively impacting neighboring regions and contributing to the broader well-being of the districts. The indirect target group emphasizes the project's potential to create a lasting and far-reaching impact beyond the immediate project location.

Measure	People reached
Project Launch	60
Sensitisation	750
Training WASH Committee	390
Special training WASH technical committee	150
VSLA training	750
Original GMF	50
Trainings GMF	6.000
Capacity Building Private Sector Providers (PSPs)	50
Training district actors National Adaptation Plan	100
Training Officers District Action Plan	100
Participants National Climate Conference "Climate Resilience of WASH	150
Capacity Building for SEND	18
Total	**8.568**

Our Solution

Overall Objective
Improving the quality of life and health of vulnerable communities by providing reliable and sustainable WASH services that can withstand the impacts of climate change.

Project Goal
Community members in the target region have gender equitable access to sustainably managed and protected water supply systems and hygiene and sanitation facilities and adopt safe WASH practices.

Sub-Objectives
- Enhanced access to improved and sustainable WASH services
- Strengthened WASH structures enable the implementation of climate-resilient and gender-equitable WASH interventions at the district level and raise awareness of the importance of climate-resilient WASH services.
- District WASH Committees strengthen networking, lobbying and influencing national policy on WASH issues.

IMPACT MATRIX

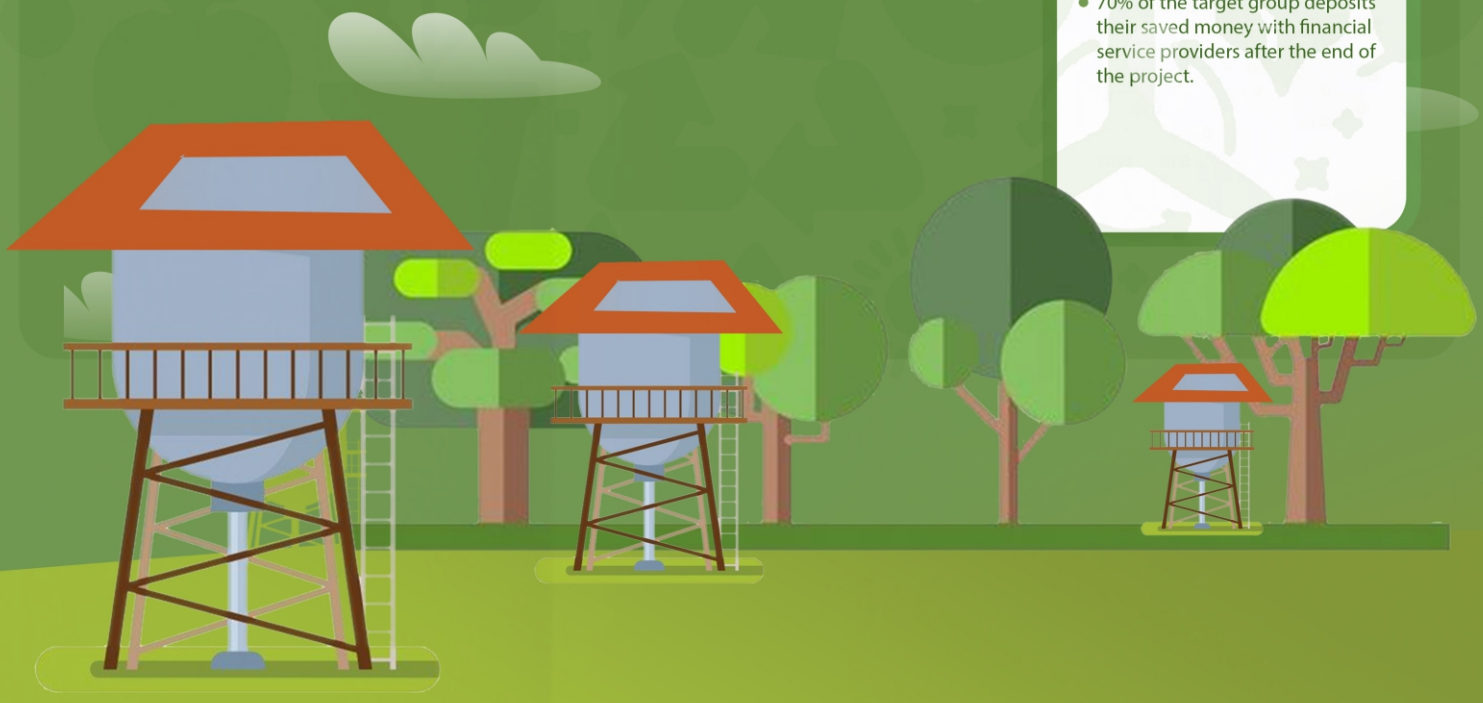
Overall Objective	Indicators	
	Initial value (actual) (quantitative and qualitative)	**Target value (target)** (quantitative and qualitative)
Improving the quality of life and health of vulnerable communities by providing reliable and sustainable WASH services that can withstand the impacts of climate change.	• Limited climate-resilient WASH infrastructures in the target communities. • There is a lack of WASH infrastructure and the target group often has to invest time and capital into acquiring clean water.	• The prevalence of waterborne diseases in the target communities has been reduced by at least 30%. (The necessary data will be gathered during field visits in the form of surveys of the personnel at health care stations)

Project Goals

Community members in the target region have gender equitable access to sustainably managed and protected water supply systems and hygiene and sanitation facilities and adopt safe WASH practices.

Indicators

Initial value (actual) (quantitative and qualitative)	Target value (target) (quantitative and qualitative)
WASH	**WASH**
• no access to sustainably operated and protected water supply systems and hygiene and sanitation facilities	• 100% of the target group has access to sustainable and protected infrastructure
• limited application of safe hygiene and sanitation practices.	• 80% of the target group use safe hygiene and sanitation s (dump sites, cloth-lines, sinks, and dish-racks) which is reflected in the community image.
	• Due to changed role expectations at least 50% of the members for administration/ maintenance of the WASH facilities and of the WASH committees are women.
Financial services	**Financial services**
• Extremely low income	• 80% of the target group for VSLA report increased income and/or savings
• Lack of or poor access to the market, consequently poor income generation	• 70% of the target group deposits their saved money with financial service providers after the end of the project.



SUB TARGETS

Indicators

	Initial value (actual) (quantitative and qualitative)	Target value (target) (quantitative and qualitative)
By the end of the project period access to improved and sustainable WASH services have been ensured.	• No climate-resilient WASH infrastructure in the selected communities • Poor WASH services in the target communities	• 25 climate-resilient WASH infrastructures in 25 communities are built and functional • 90% of households in the target communities have improved access to WASH facilities. • Committee for WASH facility management /maintenance and hygiene committees have been established in 25 communities. • 50% of households heads in target communities are engaged in VSLA programs.
Strengthened WASH structures enable the implementation of climate-resilient and gender-equitable WASH interventions at the district level and raise awareness of the importance of climate-resilient WASH services.	• Low capacity of municipal WASH structures to actively participate in the planning and implementation of climate-resilient WASH measures at the district level. • Limited awareness among target communities of the importance of climate-resilient WASH services	• 75% of household heads organized in VSLA programs are actively mobilizing their resources and allocate 30% for WASH investments the target communities • 60% of private service providers at the project site are certified for climate-resilient WASH solutions/infrastructure.
District WASH Committees strengthen networking and lobbying and influencing national policy on WASH issues.	• The target group has limited resources to invest in climate-resilient WASH infrastructure • Entrenched gender inequalities within families constrain them in investing in and maintaining WASH infrastructure • Private service providers have little knowledge for climate resilient WASH infrastructure • low commitment of district actors to the implementation of national policies regarding water and sanitary facilities. • Limited impact of national policy implementation on WASH and climate change.	• one conference per year is held by the District WASH Committees during which topics such as climate adaptation and mitigation in the WASH sector are discussed and at least 5 agreed action points are implemented. • DWASH meets regularly (quarterly) and exchanges experiences and problems of the 2 districts. • 60% of the district action plan which has been developed in accordance with the NAP have been implemented • Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR) and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) used the lessons learned during the project to revise the NAP, which will be included in the NAP as “best practices”



Schedule of Project Implementation

Measures	2023		2024				2025				2026	
Preparatory measures	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
District project launch	x											
Kick-off event at community level	x											
Measures for IP 1												
Awareness raising for climate resilient WASH infrastructure in 25 communities		x	x	x	x	x						
Mobilise community contributions for the development of climate-resilient WASH infrastructure and maintenance plans in 25 communities.			x	x	x							
Preparation of tender documents for the development of climate-resilient WASH infrastructure in 25 municipalities			x									
Recruitment of a local consultant for the construction of climate relevant WASH infrastructure in 25 communities			x	x								
Construction of 25 climate-resilient WASH infrastructures in 25 communities		x	x				x	x				
Official certification and handover of the climate-resilient WASH infrastructure					x			x				
Measures for IP 2												
Raising awareness of the GMF approach among target communities, selection and training of GMFs			x	x								
Measures to promote the introduction of GMF training for up to 1,350 additional households					x	x	x	x				
Raise awareness of the VSLA approach to WASH infrastructure development and maintenance.				x	x	x	x	x	x			
Training of VSLA leaders in microfinance management and establishment of a WASH maintenance fund.		x	x		x							
Provision of VSLA equipment for 25 VSLA groups					x	x						
Disbursement of micro-credits to VSLA groups for business development and expansion for WASH development and maintenance				x	x							
Training of borrowers in business management, accounting and marketing		x	x									
Monitoring loan repayments				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
National VSLA/ Sanitary Marketing Conference						x						

Establishment and training of WASH management committees for the maintenance of WASH infrastructure in 25 communities.				x	x	x						
Networking of WASH committees with private sector providers				x	x			x	x			
Training of private service providers in the project communities to maintain WASH infrastructure.				x	x	x	x	x	x			
Measures for IP 3												
Training of district actors on the NAP and the national WASH policy		x										
Seminar on the Development of the District Action Plan for the Implementation of the NAP and the National WASH Policy			x									
Organise a quarterly meeting of the district steering committee to coordinate WASH and climate change stakeholders.			x			x		x			x	
Annual evaluation of the District Action Plan		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Organising a quarterly radio campaign on WASH and climate change		x			x			x			x	
Documentation and dissemination of good practices from the communities in social media				x				x				x
(articles/publications in newspapers, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.)												
National Conference on Climate Adaptation and Mitigation in the WASH Sector						x						
Accompanying measures												
Project management meetings			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Evaluation					x				x			x
TERRA TECH project management trip	x					x						

SUSTAINABILITY

In our implementation, SEND develops and implements comprehensive sustainability measures thatfocus on structural, economic, social, and ecological impact. This ensures the intervention creates lasting impacts beyond the project's duration. Grounded in empowerment and resilience, the measures not only provide immediate relief but also lay the groundwork for transformative change in the lives of the beneficiaries, their households and target communities and districts.



Structural Sustainability

The project's structural sustainability measures focus on capacity building within community structures, district WASH and climate committees, aligning with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP). This ensures that the established structures will endure beyond the project's conclusion. By concentrating on building and expanding WASH capacities, organizational forms, and training, the project creates lasting and independent value. The intervention not only enhances WASH technology, access, and quality assurance but also strengthens organizational structures, civil society awareness of WASH and climate, and gender issues. Collaboration with established organizations like Engineers Without Borders Denmark (EWB-DK) ensures ongoing access to expert advice, contributing to sustained project impact in the long term.



Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability is promoted through the planned payment of user fees for WASH structures in each community, even post-project. This approach fosters basic self-sufficiency within the communities, crucial in Sierra Leone where state-provided infrastructural services are limited. Past projects have shown that improved access to clean water, coupled with enhanced administrative and organizational capacities, has led to communities investing in income-generating activities, such as agriculture and solar charging systems. The acquired knowledge and establishment of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) further enable sustainable economic investments. The project also focuses on developing the technical capacity of the private sector, creating new job opportunities and contributing to a sustained improvement in the economic situation in the 25 communities.



Social Sustainability

Addressing vulnerabilities in water quality and availability due to climate impacts, the project contributes to social sustainability. Knowledge dissemination about the WASH sector and improved hygiene standards results in sustainable improvements in health and nutritional status. The network formed through committees, meetings, and outreach enhances community unity. Interpersonal networking, collective engagement in climate, WASH, and gender issues, along with celebrations like International Water Day/Earth Day, fosters a sense of shared responsibility. Economic improvements also positively impact the social fabric, allowing communities to focus on new challenges and further positive social changes.



Environmental Sustainability

In the medium term, the project enhances the capacity of stakeholders to plan and implement climate-resilient community initiatives. Through community trainings, stakeholders gain practical experience and knowledge regarding climate adaptation in the WASH sector. This empowers them to take environmentally conscious actions at the community or household level. In the long term, the project aspires to influence national policy-making, advocating for ecological approaches. Supporting the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), the project aims to integrate climate adaptation into national WASH sector planning. Raising awareness on climate-related measures and climate change issues supports the government's Sierra Leone Low Emission Climate Resilient Strategy, facilitating a transition to a sustainable green economy. The project's adaptation measures strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities to climate change, directly contributing to sustainable development.