



Supporting Sierra Leone A Joint Vision of the United Nations' Family

I. Developing a Joint Vision

We, the UN organizations, agencies and programmes working in Sierra Leone recognize our joint responsibility for a fully integrated peacebuilding mission as called for by the UN Security Council and agree to combine our efforts and resources behind this Joint Vision in support of the Government and the people of this country. In this Joint Vision for Sierra Leone, we define the common priorities that will guide our activities and outline a set of underlying criteria and comparative advantages which will shape our programmes and projects through a conflict sensitive approach. In this Joint Vision we set out a number of joint planning, implementation and coordination mechanisms with the aim of enhancing the impact of the United Nations' assistance as part of the international communities' efforts of consolidating peace and promoting sustainable development in Sierra Leone.

The Joint Vision defines our contribution to implementing the Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy, accomplishing the mandate given to us by the Security Council and supporting the goals and work of the UN Peacebuilding Commission. With the Joint Vision, we intend to put into practice the main principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness under the leadership of the Government. In parallel to the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Joint Vision will cover the initial period from 2009 to 2012.

This Joint Vision establishes the general framework for our cooperation; more details for each of the joint priorities and implementation mechanisms are described in the ANNEXES to this document.

II. Working together: One & Four Priorities

We, the UN family agree to combine our efforts behind one overall priority to further the **consolidation of peace** in this country and four programmatic priorities: the **economic integration of rural areas**, the **economic and social integration of the youth**, an **equitable access to health services** and an **accessible and credible public service**. These one & four priorities were chosen in order to maximize the UN family's contribution to the Government's second Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) within our respective organizational mandates, specialization and expertise. As we are part of a wider international group of development partners, we selected these priorities in view of building our joint programmes on the comparative advantages that the UN family possesses in Sierra Leone.

Our one & four priorities are not all inclusive; each UN agency or programme may continue to pursue additional activities according to their specific mandates but outside the priority areas. However, these priorities represent a set of common goals behind which we will join forces and will rally our resources and programme activities in order to ensure a greater and more tangible impact of our combined actions.

1. Consolidation of peace and prosperity

Our overall aim is to work together with the Government and other national and international stakeholders in consolidating the peace that has been achieved over the



last six years and in advancing prosperity and opportunities to all Sierra Leoneans. More specifically, we will continue to support multi-party dialogue and other forums for conflict prevention and resolution aimed at enhancing political and ethnic tolerance, promoting national cohesion and the observance of human rights. In so doing, we will build on the exceptional religious tolerance that exists in this country, on the achievements in promoting democratic processes, on traditional forms of social solidarity as well as on the progress made in establishing modern government institutions.

We will continue promoting the rule of law, the rights of marginalized groups, women and children, and assist in the review of Sierra Leone's Constitution. We will support a number of core democratic institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Decentralization Secretariat and the national media. In particular, we intend to help create one of the first independent public radio stations in Africa with a national coverage.

We realize that international drug trafficking has become an increasing external threat to the peace and stability of this country. We will therefore enhance our support to the Sierra Leonean police and other law enforcement agencies in their fight against illicit drug trafficking and international crime. In addition, we will continue supporting capacity building of Sierra Leone's national security agencies, especially the Sierra Leone Police in highly specialized policing areas, such as airport and border security, human trafficking, gender based violence and crime investigation and related fields.

2. Integrating rural areas into the national economy

The continuing gap between the urban and rural society of Sierra Leone remains worrying. Rural marginalization, urban migration and in particular the divide between Freetown and Sierra Leone's provinces are all contributing factors to a deteriorating social climate. However, with its abundant water and land resources and with about 70% of the population living in rural areas, Sierra Leone has all the preconditions not only to become self-sufficient in food production but also to become a regional food exporter. We, the UN family, support therefore enthusiastically the President's national priority of developing the agriculture sector.

We want to contribute to helping increase access by the rural poor to markets and social services in an effort to widen their economic and social opportunities. We intend to conduct a variety of programmes and projects that are designed to increase local food production and better integrated farming methods including the use of improved seeds and better marketing. We also want to facilitate the introduction of appropriate technologies for food processing through rural growth centers and rural youth education and training.

3. Economic and social integration of the youth

The marginalization of the youth, and in particular the rural youth, has been a key factor contributing to the civil war. That sense of marginalization has changed much with over 60% of the youth being unemployed and many roaming the streets of Sierra Leone's cities, much remains to be done to overcome this festering calamity. The arrival of illicit hard drugs in West Africa, particularly cocaine, poses a serious threat to the youth, and ultimately the security of the nation, underlying the urgency to take tangible actions for their economic and social integration.



We realize that the magnitude of the youth problem may require large-scale and non-bureaucratic solutions for and the masses of uneducated and unemployed youth. Unorthodox solutions must also be found for the increasing numbers of unemployed educated youth. We, the UN family will work with the Government and other development partners to develop and implement innovative solutions and programmes. Inter alia, we want to contribute the promotion of quick-impact public works that employ many of the youth, through the introduction of new labor-intensive methods in agricultural services, through more adequate vocational training schemes and small-credits, to help youth increase their self-employment opportunities. We also want to support educational opportunities for those youth that have the potential to take up the medium level managerial positions and to become local leaders.

4. Equitable and affordable access to health

Sierra Leone has one of the weakest health services in the world which has resulted in low coverage of quality care, inequitable access and unaffordable to the majority of people. We must enable the government to ensure sustainable delivery of priority health interventions. To this effect, we, the UN family, will work together to strengthen national health systems by improving human resources development and management, planning and budgeting, management of health financing, procurement and supply chain management, health management and information system, monitoring and evaluation and operational research.

In order to ensure that the priority health interventions are implemented, we the UN family have agreed to pull our resources together to improve organization of health services and maximize the use of our resources. As an entry point, we will support priority health interventions through Reproductive and Child Health and nutrition programmes to reduce maternal and child mortality rates, and other Health MDGs. We will also continue to help national authorities in fighting HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major communicable diseases. This means that we will work together to improve primary health care facilities throughout the country to develop the national human capacities development for doctors with selective specializations, midwives, nurses, disease prevention and control officers and administrators and reinforce health support systems.

5. Accessible and credible public services

Good governance is a fundamental pre-condition for peace consolidation; it lays the ground for economic development and future prosperity. We, the UN family want, therefore, to support Government's efforts, through concrete programmes and projects, in public sector reform process and in improving public accountability. In particular, we will support the President's efforts to root-out corruption. We will support the decentralization process and the reform and capacity building of key national institutions such as the Parliament, the electoral institutions including the National Electoral Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the justice sector, local district councils and the new Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation. We will work together to strengthen the Sierra Leone's law enforcement organizations in fighting international crime and in maintaining their high level policing standards.

All our programmes and projects that are designed to improve good governance would be closely linked to our support to political facilitation and our technical assistance to policy development, especially in the areas of constitutional reform, elections, the parliament, the police, anti-corruption and decentralization.



All the five priority areas of this Joint Vision are designed to be mutually reinforcing. For example, the training of rural-based health workers will contribute to increasing the coverage of health services, to rural integration and even to enhancing aspects of good governance. Similarly, a programme designed to develop rural growth centers will contribute to engaging the youth as well as to integrating rural areas; or a programme for school feeding that procures much of its food from local farmers will not only contribute to the education of the youth but also help promote the economic integration of rural areas.

The four programmatic priorities will add credibility by among Sierra Leoneans in the work of the UN family and hence contribute to our activities in peace consolidation. They will further provide sound technical inputs into UN sponsored multi-party talks and its other conflict prevention activities. On the other hand, the peace consolidation work of the UN family will provide the political analysis and political outreach that in turn will help strengthen development programmes. In order to maximize the integration of our activities, all existing programmes and projects of UN family will be reviewed and new programmes and projects will be designed to advance one or more of the five priorities.

III. Maximizing Synergies: Cross-Cutting Issues

Furthermore, additional substantive synergies of our activities will be achieved through five underlying programmatic issues and special considerations:

o Capacity building

The central task of the UN's political and development mandates is to build national human capacities, systems and institutions. On the other hand, capital and infrastructural investments into the three main areas of the PRS: energy, transport and agricultural is best left to international financial institutions, major international donors and private sector inventors. The UN family's main contribution to the Government's second PRS will be to help strengthen the underlying human development and national capacity dimensions that are required for a sustainable development.

o Millennium Development Goals

The Government is determined to move the country away from the bottom of the Human Development Index. Our support in the one plus four priority areas will contribute to the achievement of the MDGs and respective programmes and projects will be assessed in light of their contribution to reaching the MDGs.

o Human rights protection

Fortunately, Sierra Leone has overcome the massif human rights abuses that had gripped the country during the years of the civil war. But the past must be a warning for the future and all efforts must be made to consolidate these human rights gains. Today's human rights concerns are more social and economic in nature and we are hence committed to include human rights based principles in our programmes and projects.

o Poverty reduction

It is estimated that about 70 % of Sierra Leoneans live below the poverty line of \$ 1.25 per day and under the Global Hunger Index, Sierra Leone is classified as "extremely alarming". It is therefore, of particular importance, that the reduction of poverty and hunger are an integral part of all our programmes and projects and respective programmes and projects will be assessed in light of their contribution to reaching the MDGs.



- Sub-regional cooperation

Lasting peace and sustainable development in Sierra Leone is closely intertwined with developments in the sub-region, especially in the country's immediate neighbors. With an enhanced and effective sub-regional cooperation and integration, the potential of each country in the above priority areas could be harnessed to meet the common challenges facing the countries of the sub-region. The UN in Sierra Leone will therefore intensify its support through collaboration with the UNCTs in the Mano River Union (MRU) countries and the MRU Secretariat based in Freetown.

IV. Building on Comparative Advantages

The UN family in Sierra Leone is part of a much larger community of bilateral and multilateral development partners and, in order to maximize the impact of our contribution to peace and prosperity of Sierra Leone, we will focus on maximizing our comparative advantages in designing and implementing our programmes and projects:

- Linking political and development mandates

The UN Security Council has given the integrated peacebuilding mission in Sierra Leone both a political and a development mandate. It is this combination of political and development issues that gives the UN family a unique advantage. For example, decentralization raises development as well as political issues. Similarly, the integration of the youth has a development as well as political side and will therefore be part of UNIPSIL's supported multi-party talks and other forums for conflict prevention and resolution. Strengthening Sierra Leone's security forces in facing the threat of international organized crime has both a capacity-building as well as a wider political aspect. We, the UN family are therefore committed to working with the Government in dealing with the political as well as with the development aspects of existing problems.

- Wide range of expertise

The UN family consists, in addition to UNIPSIL, of 14 UN agencies and programmes as well as of the World Bank, the IMF and the African Development Bank (AfDB). Together, we have the largest number of professional staff working in Sierra Leone with the widest range of expertise among all development partners. For these reasons, we will give preference to programme and project activities that are more labor and risk intensive and that, if proven viable could later be replicated in larger investment projects by other donors.

- Provincial outreach

Except for some international NGOs, the UN family is the only international development partner that maintains a permanent presence outside of Freetown. We agree to four joint regional field offices and four sub-regional field offices throughout the country. As we also have the logistical support through our helicopters to reach the provinces easily, we plan to open our regional and sub-regional offices to all development partners and provide them with office facilities, logistic support and local contacts. We invite them to use our field structures as platforms for their missions and activities in the provinces.

- Social outreach

Among international development partners the UN family has also the largest number of national professionals who are deployed throughout the country. They possess a deeper knowledge of local traditions, values and customs and hence, have a unique insight into the thinking and preoccupations of local communities. For these reasons, we will concentrate on programmes and projects that require greater harmonization with and social penetration into, local communities. In an effort to increase our outreach, we will



invite the Sierra Leone Association of Non- Governmental Organizations (SLANGO) to open regional office within the four UN regional offices and provide them meeting place with internet access to local NGOs.

V. Joining Forces for Implementation

With the view of increasing aid efficiency, we have agreed to combine a number of important implementation systems and manage them jointly:

o Sharing of responsibilities

We agree on an internal division of responsibilities, whereby UNIPSIL will focus on political facilitation and outreach with local political stakeholders, promotion and advocacy of international standards as well as in developing assessments, reviews and evaluations of issues of common concern. The UN agencies will engage in the operational and programmatic activities. For this reason, UNIPSIL will not implement its own programmes but make use of its in-house expertise to support UN agencies in developing and implementing their respective programme activities.

o Joint funding mechanism

In furthering the priorities of this Joint Vision, we agree to establish a joint multi-donor trust fund (MDTF). The fund will be administrated by UNDP and its resources will be made available to all UN agencies. The MDTF will be designed to particularly attract donors who have no representation in Sierra Leone and who want to use the infrastructure of the UN family for their support. It would hence help widen the donor base for this country at a time of global resource constraints. In order to increase the funds transparency and acceptability, the MDTF will follow a set of common, unified and simplified procedures for selection and approval of projects. It will also lay down a common approach to project implementation, monitoring, financial and substantive reporting and evaluations. All procedures for the MDTF will be established jointly by the UN family and in agreement with the Government and international development partners.

o Joint programming and evaluations

Together with Government, we intend to conduct joint programming missions in each of the four programmatic priority areas in order to create a joint framework for developing and implementing respective agency programmes and projects. Similarly, we will put in place a joint system of monitoring, reporting and evaluating the progress made in reaching common objectives in each of the joint programme priority areas. Other development partners will be invited to join our programming and evaluation exercises.

o Joint regional office

The joint regional and sub-regional offices will serve as our principal conduit for our interaction with provincial, local and traditional authorities. Through our network of regional and sub-regional offices, we will strive to foster a greater integration of our respective programmes and activities at the local level with the aim of increasing the impact of our interventions and aid efficiency.

o Joint operational infrastructure

Programme integration will be supported by an increase in operational integration. For this purpose, we all have signed up to a joint Memorandum of Understanding for the management of our joint field offices, to a joint UN security service, a joint medical clinic, a joint vehicle repair facility and the joint use of UNIPSIL's air assets.



VI. Reaching Out to Sierra Leoneans

It is important to reach all sections of Sierra Leone's population, especially Sierra Leone's rural and urban poor population. For this reason, we will make greater efforts in developing partnerships with a wide range of Sierra Leonean organizations and institutions. In addition to our network of field offices, we will work with the local media and Sierra Leone's Association for Journalists. In particular we will help in transferring the UN radio with its national outreach into one of the first independent public broadcaster in Africa. We will also seek closer cooperation with national and international NGOs and civil societies as well as with Sierra Leone's Inter-faith Council and the First Lady's WISH initiative. They will help us to carry messages of tolerance and peace as well as to promote specific normative issues, such as observing universal human rights, protecting the rights of women and children, promoting the millennium development goals, addressing the HIV and AIDS threat or fighting against the spread of illicit drugs. This outreach would also be important for maintaining a national debate about the review of Sierra Leone's constitution and for increasing the acceptance of Sierra Leone's new security forces.

VII. Helping Coordinate International Assistance

We will continue to strengthen our internal coordination through our weekly UN Country Team (UNCT) meetings that bring together all heads of UN agencies, the World Bank and the African Development Bank under the chairmanship of the ERSG. In addition, the UNCT will form four sub-teams, for each of the programmatic priority areas. Furthermore, we will continue to form ad-hoc theme groups dealing with specific issues such as human rights, gender or programme management harmonization.

We will be a constructive and supportive partner in the coordination of international aid to Sierra Leone and look forward to the Government to take the lead. The ERSG and the representative of the World Bank will continue to co-chair with the Minister of Finance the regular Development Partnership Committee (DEPAC) meetings. The ERSG and the representative of the World Bank will also co-chair monthly informal meetings that bring together all international development partners. For both, the DEPAC and the informal development partners' meetings a number of theme groups will be formed and chaired by respective substantive donor or UN agency.

The following UN organizations, agencies and programmes agree to the Joint Vision for Sierra Leone:

FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNIFEM, UNDP, UNODC, WFP, WHO as well as UNIPSIL

The following organizations associate themselves to the Joint Vision for Sierra Leone:

The WB, the IMF and the AfDB

Freetown, the 1st of December 2008



ANNEXES

A Joint Vision of the UN Family for Sierra Leone

The Joint UN Vision for Sierra Leone will be accompanied by ten Annexes: five dealing with joint programme priorities, four dealing with joint operational issues and one annex dealing with overall financial issues. Each annex will have about three to four pages and provide more programmatic and operational details on respective programmes, managerial principles, outputs and success criteria.

I. Joint Programme Priorities:

1. Consolidation of Peace and Prosperity
2. Integration of Rural Areas into the National Economy
3. Economic and Social Integration of the Youth
4. Equitable and affordable Access to Health Services
5. Accessible and credible Public Services

II. Joint Operational Mechanisms:

6. Joint Funding Mechanism (MDTF)
7. Joint Programming and Programme Evaluation
8. Joint Regional and Sub-regional Offices
9. Joint Operational Infrastructure

III. Financial Information

10. Overview of financial requirements
 - Agencies' core funding
 - Agencies' implementation of donor funding
 - Expected additional funding (MDTF)