German-Sierra Leonean Cooperation
A Snapshot
A river cuts through a rice plantation
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A Snapshot
01
Handing over of sports facility in Grafton
© Horst Gruner

02
German Embassy in Freetown
© German Embassy

03
German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas in a meeting with women's rights activists
© Horst Gruner

04
Documents establishing diplomatic relations in 1961
© Auswärtiges Amt
Germany and Sierra Leone share a long history of bilateral relations and cooperation. Right after independence in 1961, both countries established diplomatic relations. Germany soon provided support to the development of this new nation through technical assistance and the provision of equipment and infrastructure. Since the beginning of bilateral development cooperation Germany in total committed more than 400 Mio. Euro.

Over the past decades the German-Sierra Leonean development cooperation diversified and helped to fortify the ties between our countries and our people. The many students that graduated from German universities, the many citizens who spent parts of their professional career or personal life in either country as well as the numerous family ties between Germans and Sierra Leoneans are proof to this special, deep-rooted relationship.

While the war brought our bilateral cooperation and diplomatic relations to a stand-still, Germany reopened its Embassy and revived its development projects in 2003. The various visits by German politicians to Sierra Leone are the most visible sign of a renewed and intensified cooperation. Immediately after the fighting ended, Germany invested heavily in peace building as well as in bringing those responsible to justice. In this context the former President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Horst Köhler, made a visit to this beautiful country. Others followed him, such as the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development in 2012 as well as the Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2019.

Throughout the years – and even more so after the devastating Ebola crisis – our message has been clear: Germany will stand by the Sierra Leonean people; we are here to support the country’s genuine efforts to bring about broad-based, sustainable socio-economic development.

Beyond Germany’s bilateral assistance through the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the German Development Bank (KfW), many initiatives and activities by civil society organizations, churches and individuals, are a clear expression of solidarity and proof of the depth of the partnership between our countries.

The Ebola epidemic put this partnership to the ultimate test. The result is encouraging: We further increased funding for development programs, tailored them to the most urgent needs and sent experts as well as military and logistical support in order to stop the spread of the virus and make Sierra Leone more resilient to similar threats. Today, our bilateral cooperation focusses on supporting the implementation of the structural changes necessary for a long-term, sustainable development – through investments in infrastructure and capacity development. We are active in a variety of areas such as employment promotion, construction of rural infrastructure, epidemic prevention, reproductive health, renewable energy as well as resource governance.

I am very delighted to present to you this “Snapshot of German-Sierra Leonean Cooperation”. It highlights the various achievements of this intensive and successful collaboration and what to be expected for the years to come.

Horst Gruner
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Sierra Leone
Bilateral Development Cooperation

All bilateral development projects and programmes are agreed upon with the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and funded by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). They are executed either through Germany’s Agency for International Cooperation “Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit” (GIZ) or financed by the German Development Bank “Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau” (KfW) in partnership with the Ministries and Agencies of the Republic of Sierra Leone responsible for the respective sectors of intervention.

Pro-Poor Growth for Peace Consolidation Programme

Unemployment and underemployment are major issues in Sierra Leone, affecting far more than half of the labour force. The large number of young people with limited prospects remains to date one of the main challenges for the country’s long-term stability.

Therefore, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) provides support to fighting un- and underemployment by promoting employment and income generation, particularly for the young generation, under the Pro-Poor Growth for Peace Consolidation Programme (GPC). The programme is funded through KfW, and implemented by the Sierra-Leonean National Commission for Social Action. It covers the rural areas of the districts Falaba, Koinadugu, Kono and Kailahun, alongside the Employment Promotion Programme (EPP) of Germany’s Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ).

The GPC programme specifically invests in infrastructure along agricultural value chains that are able to open up economic prospects. In this context, access roads are rehabilitated, and storehouses as well as wells are built. In addition, the rehabilitation and construction works are designed to provide as many local people as possible with short-term employment and income. Furthermore, the programme supports the rural communities and district authorities in ensuring operation and maintenance of the infrastructure. Local user committees foster the self-help potential among the population.

To empower rice farmers and reduce post-harvest losses, storehouses are being built. In addition to their main purpose, these storehouses often become a center of village life due to their large terraces, available electricity from solar panels and charging stations for mobile phones, which are particularly popular. By supporting further business ideas of the user committees under this cooperation programme, the storehouses can develop into additional sources of income and contribute to the local economic development.

To foster rice, cocoa and coffee cultivation, the programme finances the rehabilitation of key access roads to markets for local production centers. A survey conducted, confirmed that programme roads become passable during the rainy season consequently, and farmers benefit from reduced travel times and lower transportation cost. As a result markets are vitalized and higher volumes of transported produce recorded, enhancing economic opportunities in the medium and long term.
15 250 young people earn adequate income
01
A man cutting a cocoa pod from a tree
© GIZ

02
A man breaking apart cocoa pods
© GIZ

03
‘B-Loop’ trained farmer spreading cassava root over a hand-built toaster
© GIZ
Sierra Leone’s economy is affected by the pandemics and long-term repercussions of the civil war and is only slowly recovering. 60% of the current labour force continue to be unemployed or underemployed, particularly youth. The main reasons are the lack of available jobs due to low economic growth rates and a mismatch between supply of and demand for skills.

Germany’s Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) is working with Sierra Leone’s Ministry of Labour and Social Security in implementing the Employment Promotion Programme (EPP). The programme supports the Government of Sierra Leone in its efforts to reduce the un- and underemployment of young people in the rural areas of Falaba, Koinadugu, Kono and Kailahun in Eastern Sierra Leone alongside KfW’s Pro-Poor Growth for Peace Consolidation Programme (GPC).

The third phase of the EPP implements a diverse approach, ranging from policy advice on employment strategies to supporting individual smallholder farmers. In particular, the programme provides assistance to innovative business ideas, promoting young entrepreneurs, training farmers and supporting the valorisation of their farms as well as improving the skills and knowledge of young jobseekers.

The programme includes trainings in relevant life and business skills, agro-processing and entrepreneurship skills for rural youth. This enhances their competencies for finding employment but also provides them with the knowledge to create their own businesses. Other activities help businesses to increase their resilience and make them more profitable. Dedicated small and micro entrepreneurs benefit from trainings and intensive one-to-one coaching sessions. Innovative, promising business ideas are refined and put into practice with the support of in-kind grants.

In the agricultural sector new approaches help to simplify trade chains, improve the quality of agricultural produce and allow compliance with international trade rules to safeguard export and revenue. Combined with the training of farmers and the vast rehabilitation of neglected cocoa and coffee plantations as well as run down water structures of paddy fields this has created numerous opportunities to enhance sustainable livelihoods. Overall, since its start the programme had a positive impact on the lives of almost 14% of the population in the target districts.
Health Systems Strengthening and Epidemic Prevention

The Ebola outbreak from 2014 to 2016 severely affected and overburdened the health sector in Sierra Leone. Germany supports the country in its efforts to create a stronger, more resilient health system and to improve the nutritional, health and hygiene status of the population.

Together with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Germany’s Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) implements a project to strengthen the health system and prevent epidemic outbreaks. The focus is on supporting decentralization and the introduction of a digital epidemic surveillance reporting system (eIDSR) which will help improving the long-term health care of the Sierra Leonean population. The project also targets mainstreaming health financing strategies for human resource development in the health care system and process development towards a Social Health Insurance. Furthermore, GIZ gives technical support to strengthen human resources in health management, including the enhancement of management and teaching methods at two midwifery schools.

Epidemic prevention is also at the core of the KfW cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, which has led to the establishment of an epidemiological control system, while simultaneously strengthening peripheral health facilities and distributing seed vouchers to over 10,000 farmers to alleviate the negative effects of the epidemic and increase their resilience. An additional focus lies on HIV prevention and reproductive health. The National Aids Secretariat, together with the Sierra Leone Social Marketing and Development Agency established through funding from the Federal Republic of Germany, has strongly contributed to the decrease of the HIV prevalence rate and the reduction of the stigmatization of HIV/Aids. Furthermore, the creation of the Impact Mitigation Fund enables local and community-based organizations to carry out social protection measures and women empowerment initiatives, which have inter alia led to community-level agreements to ban sexual violence and genital mutilation of girls.
01
Microscopy by a laboratory technician
© GIZ

02
Community health workers are getting trained on Cholera detection and prevention
© GIZ

03
Health workers examining a patient
© GIZ

04
Laboratory technicians analysing results
© GIZ
Regional Resource Governance in West Africa

Natural resources in Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone present an enormous opportunity. Unfortunately, institutional challenges persist, while the social and environmental costs of mining contribute to discontent and contention. These are factors of fragility that GIZ’s Regional Resource Governance Programme aims to change. The programme advises key stakeholders in government, civil society and the private sector on the efficient and sustainable management of mineral resources. Partners benefit from continued regional exchange and peer-learning opportunities.

Since October 2017 to date, GIZ has supported the Extractive Industry Revenue Unit of the National Revenue Authority of Sierra Leone by providing technical support to planning, management and delivery of extractive industry company audits through the budget strengthening initiative project of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

As a result of this support, the National Revenue Authority has been able to assess over USD 16.5 million in tax revenues from auditing 4 (four) mining companies. A further USD 20 million has been secured in potential future tax revenues as a result of disallowing tax losses of these companies during the audit exercise.

Support to the collection, administration as well as transparency of licensing fees and processes has also been a core area of intervention. In cooperation with the Norwegian Revenue Development Foundation (RDF), an electronic cadastre system has been developed for administering mining licenses at the National Mineral Agency, providing oversight and simplifying a significant number of processes.

Combatting smuggling of precious minerals and metals has been undertaken together with the Mano River Union Secretariat, under a co-funding agreement with the European Union. Tripartite structures consisting of government, civil society and industry work on traceability, legal compliance and community benefits.
Energizing Development - Mano River Union

In Sierra Leone, very few people have access to electricity – approximately 12% of the urban and 2% of the rural population. The country has significant potential for the use of solar and hydro power. In 2014, GIZ started Energizing Development (EnDev) in Sierra Leone in order to strengthen the renewable energy sector. The activities are carried out on a regional level, together with teams in the neighbouring countries Liberia and Guinea. The project is financed by Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom and Switzerland. EnDev cooperates with Government, donors, NGOs and the private sector. For instance, the project provides technical advice, organizes trainings for installers and assists with the electrification of social institutions. EnDev thinks renewable energy in a wider context: it has developed improved cook stoves, supports cocoa farmers with solar dryers, runs a solar repair hotline and smartphone app for more sustainability and connects the sector via the renewables-salone.info website.

PPP Fund for Cooperation with Countries of the Mano River Union

The Public Private Partnerships (PPP) Fund was created to initiate development partnerships with the private sector in the Mano River Union countries Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d’Ivoire, and Guinea. The PPP Fund aims to foster decent employment, increase income and improve working conditions for the local population. PPP’s combine business interests with development objectives and are jointly planned, financed and implemented by GIZ and private companies with the aim of creating 10,000 additional decent jobs within 10 years. Youths and women represent a major target group, constituting a large share of the underemployed population within the Mano River Union countries. In Sierra Leone the PPP Fund currently implements a development partnership in the mining sector as well as a European Union co-funded project on technical and vocational education and training.

25,800 people connected to solar systems

30 mini grids received technical support
01 Energy development students testing configurations for a home lighting setup © GIZ

02 Energy development students testing configurations for a solar lighting setup © GIZ

03 Energy development student prepares to install a solar panel © GIZ

04 Installation of a solar panel atop a roof © GIZ
01 A student at the St Joseph Vocational Training Institute in Lunsar examines a student-built rice mill © GIZ

02 A student uses a power sander to buff imperfections out of an iron gate © GIZ

03 Student of carpentry skills development program at St Joseph Vocational Institute © GIZ

04 Building blacksmithing skills at St Joseph Vocational Institute © GIZ
Technical and Vocational Education and Training

With its National Development Plan (2019-2039) ‘Education for Development’ the Government of Sierra Leone has made education the highest priority – including Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET). For a good reason: Sierra Leone has high levels of un- and underemployment, affecting especially young people aged 15 to 35. Many economic sectors urgently need qualified workers, but applicants often lack the requisite skills.

The overall objective of German Cooperation in Sierra Leone for vocational education and training is to improve the skills and employability of TVET graduates. This shall be achieved by turning relevant institutions into demand-driven and practice-oriented training centres and establishing the TVET-system as a reputable and expedient education path.

On behalf of the German Government, GIZ implements several TVET-related projects in Sierra Leone together with the Sierra Leone government, other international partners like the European Union and very importantly the private sector – thus combining business interests with development objectives in order to promote economic growth and social recovery. In Sierra Leone, GIZ cooperates with Sierra Rutile Ltd., a mining company, and JADA Technical Institute, a technical training institution. With funding from Germany and the European Union and in partnership with the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, GIZ aims at creating marketable skills for graduates and at preparing them to enter the job market immediately upon graduation.

In cooperation with the National Council for Technical Vocational and other Academic Awards, GIZ has developed several curricula based on the Competency-based Education and Training (CBET) concept. Due to its practical and modular approach, CBET enables illiterate Sierra Leoneans to acquire a certificate and can easily be adapted to changing teaching requirements.

In close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, agricultural training centres and agricultural value chains have been selected to conduct trainings using this modular approach. Additionally, gender-sensitive and competency-based curricula will be developed along selected agricultural value chains.

GIZ also provides support through trainings for solar technicians and installers in collaboration with the private sector and NGOs with a specific focus on the empowerment of women in the renewable energy sector.

13 800 people supported with improved cook stoves
Support to Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society

Germany puts special emphasis on supporting the work of civil society organization and private initiatives as they contribute significantly to intensifying knowledge exchange and dialogue, thus playing a major role in development processes. This is why working with and through non-state actors constitutes an important pillar of our cooperation with Sierra Leone. The variety of these projects is a reflection of the diversity of our partners and the needs of the population.

German NGO Welthungerhilfe since 2003 supports communities to improve their food and nutrition security through a variety of projects. The Civil Peace Service, through AGIAMONDO – Joining forces for ONE WORLD and Bread for the World (“Brot für die Welt”), aims to decrease potential for new conflict and to reduce vulnerabilities of the population. It works jointly with local partners to improve access to information related to land use and mining contracts and to strengthened public participation in resource governance. It also helps to strengthen dialogue and tolerance between conflicting parties thereby reducing violence. CPS enables especially young women and men to advocate peacefully for their interests and rights and to campaign for an increased access to justice.

Church-based organizations provide additional support in various areas such as promoting human rights, reducing harmful practices, enhancing democratic participation of local populations and natural resource governance.

The German Government also funds a variety of partnerships between German and Sierra Leonian non-profit organizations. Such projects cover a wide range of topics reaching from activities to protect the sexual and reproductive rights of girls, the establishment of a midwifery school as well as health and sanitation issues to technical and vocational training and food security matters. Particular focus is on the most vulnerable parts of society: disabled people, youth, women and girls as well as victims of the Ebola and Corona epidemics.

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The Embassy’s "Micro Projects’ Fund" allows for quick ad hoc support of local non-governmental partners trying to alleviate pressing on-the-ground challenges. Recent activities include the rehabilitation of the Isolation and Treatment Centre at the District Hospital Kailahun, the rehabilitation of the remand homes for juvenile detainees in Bo and Freetown, the provision of locally made face masks, hot meals and community engagement in the Covid-19 Response in the Tombo community, reconstruction of a community Health Post for Patebana Masimbo and 12 surrounding villages, Flooding-Landslide Crisis Intervention at the New Don Bosco Fambul Therapy Centre, Provision of protective materials against Covid-19 for 368 children and youth for SOS children’s village in Freetown, provision of essential paediatric and neonatal emergency and critical care during the Covid-19 pandemic for the Magbenteh Hospital in Makeni, provision of Chimp Care Food, Health Care Operation and Maintenance of the Tacaguma Chimpanzee Sanctuary or the restoration of basic livelihoods, safety and dignity of women and girls worst affected by Covid-19 in the Pujehun district.
German doctors supporting hospital in Serabu, Sierra Leone © dpa/picture alliance

Medical treatment in hospital in Serabu © dpa/picture alliance

Preparation for surgery © dpa/picture alliance
German Cooperation also supports partnerships between Sierra Leonean and German institutions to foster exchange of knowledge between health professionals and researchers. The Institute of Tropical Medicine and International Health at the Charité university hospital Berlin partners with the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital in Sierra Leone as well as the Holy Family Virika Hospital in Uganda. Together they work to train midwives and nurses in infection prevention and control as well as to enhance knowledge sharing about obstetric emergency care. In addition, the institutions did a joint research about the use of mHealth-approaches in Sierra Leone, in particular the use of a mobile app for safe deliveries.

Partnerships with the Private Sector

German Development Finance Institution DEG currently supports two private sector activities in Sierra Leone through its developpp.de programme as well as its up-scaling programme. In the former case, DEG provides partial funding to a joint venture that pilots and demonstrates the viability of operating a small-scale containerized digester and generator in Freetown. Beyond the supply of electric and thermal power, the project helps to reduce deposits on the city’s landfill and improve collection of organic waste. In a second project, funding is provided for an upgrade of Sierra Leone’s only shipyard for the maintenance and repair of sea vessels which provides jobs for both skilled and unskilled labour.

The German Savings Banks Foundation for International Cooperation is actively partnering with Sierra Leone’s National Co-operative Credit Unions Association in a project to enhance financial inclusion of disadvantaged groups of population through improved financial services. The project aims particularly at strengthening associations of credit unions to provide better and more tailored services to their members.
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