

EBOLA RECOVERY IN SIERRA LEONE

STRENGTHENING SECURITY, JUSTICE AND SOCIAL COHESION IN BORDER COMMUNITIES



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Over 1 year, the project will enhance the safety and security of the men, women and children who were most affected by the Ebola crisis in 3750 remote border communities.

Border communities in 7 border districts will improve community security, early warning systems and communications to prevent infectious disease outbreaks and other health and security threats.

Expected results:

Better security, cohesion and access to justice in remote border communities. Better, community-led early warning systems will prevent Ebola and other disease outbreaks and boost community cohesion. Awareness raising activities will be delivered on access to formal justice and improving its coordination with informal justice.

Improved cross border coordination between neighbouring communities. Community policing will increase information sharing and build relationships between security agencies and community members.

Improved livelihoods and social protection. 250 people that were hit uniquely hard by the Ebola crisis will get social protection. Conditional cash transfers, will help 500 young people get back on track, and generate 10,000 days worth of employment. 350 people will benefit from capacity building support.

The project will be led by UNDP in cooperation with the Mano River Union, the Office of National Security, the Sierra Leone Police and health, justice and immigration partners – supporting both the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Why it matters:

Remote border communities were often more vulnerable to Ebola, and were hit uniquely hard by the effects of Sierra Leone's emergency response actions.



Porous, regularly travelled borders make cross-border Ebola transmission a big danger. Poor transport and communication infrastructure makes prevention and effective response to cases harder to manage.

Restrictions on border crossings, quarantines, curfews and the isolation of communities has crippled livelihoods and prevented people in border communities from trading, and accessing health, education and other services. Consumer prices have risen, the planting cycle has been disrupted and efforts aimed at improving water, sanitation and other basic needs where diverted.

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Access to livelihood opportunities for women was also further reduced by the closure of markets and border crossing points. Sierra Leone is ranked 139th out of 149 in the Gender Inequality Index for 2013.

Before Ebola, the Government Security Sector Review Report of 2012 stated that border insecurity “poses a direct and significant threat to the fragile peace, security and development of Sierra Leone”. The effects of the Ebola crisis have made this worse.

Sierra Leone’s security agencies do not have the resources or capacity to protect the border communities on their own, so support is needed to help communities help themselves by:

- strengthening existing community security structures,
- improving early warning mechanisms,
- boosting their access to formal justice, and its coordination with informal processes,
- improving cross border collaboration (in line with the Mano River Unions revised 15th protocol),
- enhancing trust and confidence in the police; and,
- enabling small businesses to recommence trade, with a particular focus on youth and women’s economic growth.

Project activities

The project is a key element in supporting the government’s efforts to address the socio-economic impact of the Ebola crisis and to preserve peace, as outlined in the National Ebola Recovery Plan.

The project will cover 7 border districts, bordering both Guinea and Liberia (Kambia, Bombali, Kono, Koinadugu, Kenema, Kailahun and Pujehun). 87 chiefdoms (7 in Kambia, 13 in Bombali, 14, Kono, 11, Koinadugu, 16, Kenema, 14, Kailahun and 12 in Pujehun) and 3,750 villages.

- **Baseline and periodic community satisfaction and perception surveys in target border communities.** These will measure the effectiveness of initiatives and assess existing community security structures, local community policing structures, needs and perceptions at the outset of activities and periodically throughout the work period. The surveys will measure effectiveness from a gender perspective throughout.
- **Improve the effectiveness and collaboration between border communities and local security structures.** This will be achieved by reviewing existing community security structures, strengthening local conflict resolution processes, identifying good practices during the Ebola crisis (including in Liberia and Guinea), strengthening community and police relationships by enhancing information sharing between existing community structures with policing services, and ensuring women can participate in and influence community security priorities.
- **Strengthening the provision of essential justice services in remote and border communities.** The project will support communities in accessing formal justice in a timely manner by raising awareness on services like mobile courts. Project staff will engage key opinion formers including traditional leaders, women’s groups, police and court personnel. Particular attention will be paid to traditional justice systems and to victims of sexual or gender based crime to ensure processes are aligned, fair, victim focused, confidential and timely.
- **Particular focus on community policing and enhancing the visibility, accountability and information sharing between police and border communities.** The project will review the challenges of community policing in

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remote areas and identify good practice and initiatives to address the gaps. A recent inspection of the Independent Police Partnership Boards will be reviewed to ensure that their effectiveness is maximized. A community policing pilot in one district (Kambia) has been funded by Japan. The results will inform countrywide implementation of identified best practice.

- **Enhance command and control by the Sierra Leone Police, including boosting relationships and information sharing with community structures.** Building on an earlier assessment, the project will focus on developing and implementing command and control reforms in the Sierra Leone police, including border officials. This will include a review of lessons learnt from the Ebola crisis, consultations with all relevant security partners, the identification and establishment of improved and sustainable structures and training and awareness raising to fully implement the changes.
- **Provide livelihood and enterprise recovery support and improved social protection for the most vulnerable.** The main target beneficiaries will be 250 people who were hit uniquely hard by the Ebola crisis and you are not yet able to sustain themselves. Social protection will be enhanced by cash for work programmes that will generate 10,000 days-worth of employment and help rehabilitate and improve public infrastructure. Conditional cash transfers will support the livelihoods and economic recovery for 500 young people. It will also provide a variety of training and skill development opportunities for about 350 people.

Budget

Overall \$2,700,000 (surveys, consultation and research \$500,000, sensitization and awareness raising \$200,000, community policing \$500,000, command and control \$500,000, livelihoods \$1,000,000

Why UNDP?

UNDP's Security Sector Reform program was built to fill the void left by the departure of the UN mission in Sierra Leone in 2013.

UNDP has built up a strong working relationship with the security agencies and in particular, the Sierra Leone Police (SLP). A number of programs are ongoing including those relating to HR, Asset Management, Command and Control and Gender Mainstreaming.

Police specialists from the UN Standing Police Capacity have further strengthened the Rule of Law team. UNDP is actively involved in establishing the Independent Police Complaints Board and reviewing the 1964 Police Act which will further legitimize the SLP as the main agency responsible for internal security in the country.

UNDP has placed a particular focus on border management and oversight and accountability of the national services. Complementary cross-border initiatives with Guinea and Liberia are essential therefore, UNDP are working closely with the Mano River Union to support border communities on both sides of the border and with UNDP Country Offices to ensure cross border engagements are complementary, strengthen border security and empower border communities

UNDP has an excellent working relationship with the Office of National Security who are the agency responsible for coordinating border security in Sierra Leone. UNDP provided technical support to development of the Sierra Leone Internal Security Strategy including their first Border Management Strategy in December 2014 and UNDP has conducted joint border assessments over the last 18 months.