



# »» Project Information

Implemented by:



## Promoting Employment – Sierra Leone

### Work for young people

Sierra Leone was battered by a brutal eleven-year long civil war before peace returned to the west African country in 2002. Since then the country has started to recover economically, and the political situation has further stabilised after the elections in November 2012. Nevertheless, Sierra Leone is still one of the world's poorest countries. Most people live below the poverty line. The many young people (35 percent of the population are between 15 and 35) have scarcely any prospects. 70 percent of the population are jobless or underemployed. Weak state institutions face the huge challenge of creating peaceful structures for the long term. As part of the "Pro-poor Growth for Peace Consolidation" programme, the reconstruction of the economic infrastructure in rural areas has been promoted since 2005. This is resulting in income and employment opportunities for the local population. Local economic cycles are stimulated.

### Context

Today Sierra Leone still bears the wounds of long years of civil war. The economic and social infrastructures were largely destroyed. Unemployment is a very serious problem. During the war, many young people were unable to attend school and now have to work as unskilled labourers to sustain themselves. The large number of young people without prospects is regarded as the main risk to the consolidation of peace and the country's stability.

### Project approach

The project addresses this risk factor by focusing on the

mainly young and generally unemployed population. KfW together with the state project partner, the National Commission for Social Action, designed a programme that specifically promotes value chains able to open up economic prospects for large parts of the population.

The construction of the infrastructure itself is designed to provide as many people as possible with employment in the programme regions so that they can earn a living in the short term. Along selected agricultural value chains, access roads are being repaired, and markets, storehouses and wells built.

In the north, for example, support is given to livestock farmers and traders. To that end, trade routes are made

<b>Project name</b>	Pro-poor Growth for Peace Consolidation (GPC)
<b>Commissioned by</b>	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
<b>Country/Region</b>	Sierra Leone / West Africa
<b>Lead executing agency</b>	National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA)





Labour-intensive construction of a storehouse in the district of Kailahun.  
Source: NaCSA

serviceable and livestock markets built. On market days, herds can be accommodated in the fenced-in stalls, and the community receives additional income via the fee charged. Cocoa cultivation dominates agricultural production in the east of the country. The programme has provided start-up financing by not only rehabilitating access roads but by also funding community based cocoa processing centres. These are intended to help the cocoa farmers living in the villages to obtain fair prices for their cocoa beans. Opportunities for employment of different kinds are thus created in rural areas.

Another important concern of the programme is that the rural communities and state authorities are supported in independently planning and implementing the operation and maintenance of the promoted infrastructure. To that end, local user committees are established and trained. These foster the potential for self-help among the population. The district councils are involved closely in planning and execution of maintenance activities. Good governance is thus also supported at the local level.

## Impact

Improvements in the road network are a precondition for the socioeconomic development in the remote areas of the project region. As part of the programme, over 550 kilometres of rural roads have already been improved, and more than 75 different facilities such as storehouses, markets and wells constructed.

The new livestock markets are actively used by the population and help to revive the municipalities' econo-

mies. Furthermore, fencing-in means fewer livestock thefts. Previously, these repeatedly caused conflict between herdsmen and villagers. Additional wells reduce the potential for conflict surrounding drinking water for the local population and the herdsmen with their cattle.

A survey was conducted among the people living in the programme regions. This confirmed that the general and security situations have improved markedly during the last years. State partners are assisted in providing basic services for people living on the land. Better structures in the areas of transport, agriculture and commerce make a contribution to sustainable economic growth in the rural regions. This also enhances employment and income opportunities in the medium and long term. A peace dividend in the form of perceptibly enhanced living conditions is becoming tangible for the population.

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