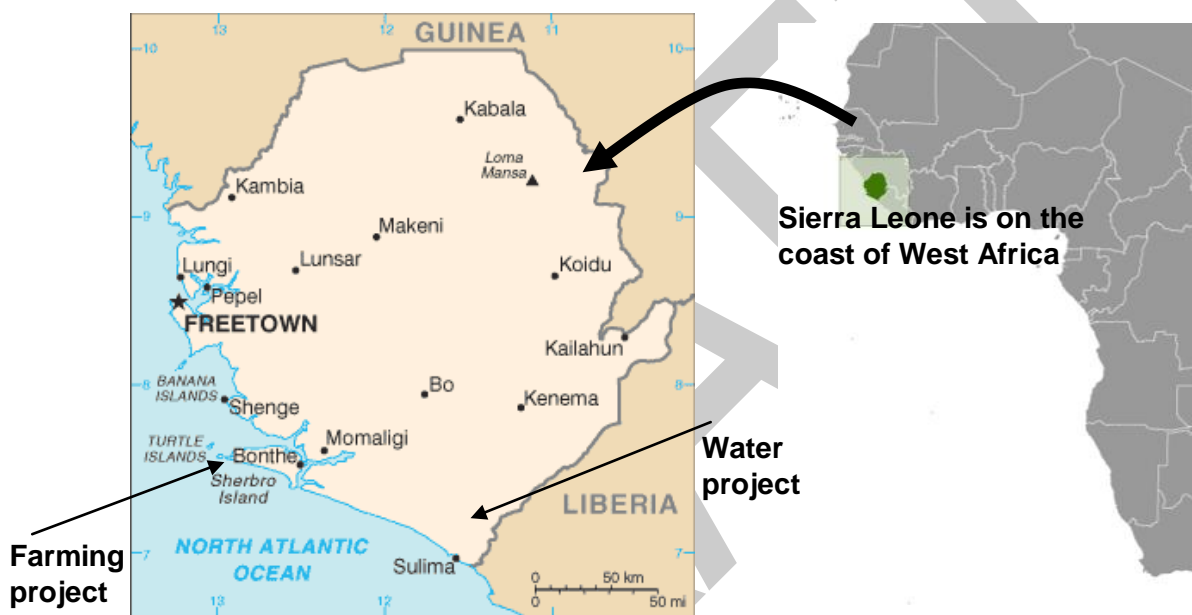


Good food and clean water: changing lives in Sierra Leone

Most people in Sierra Leone are dependent on farming, but for virtually all of them, this is 'subsistence' agriculture: just about enough is grown to feed the family a very basic diet. Our Sierra Leone partnership gives groups in the UK the chance to support two projects in the south of the country, tackling the most important needs in two different communities: good food and clean water. Your gifts to this vital work, in a desperately poor country, will transform people's lives.



However it is defined, Sierra Leone is one of the poorest, if not the very poorest, country in the world:

- Almost three-quarters of people live below the national poverty line
- One quarter are living in 'extreme poverty'
- Almost one in three children die before the age of five
- Two out of five people do not have access to safe drinking water (in rural areas, less than half the people have safe water)
- 20,000 children under the age of five die every year in Sierra Leone from dirty water and hygiene-related illness

The projects we are inviting you to support are helping people to grow more plentiful and more varied food in the western coastal region and providing clean safe water in the far south. Good food and clean water are such basic things that we take them for granted, but for the people this project will reach, they could literally mean the difference between life and death.

Your gifts (at least £5,000 from your group) will be matched 3.5:1 by the EU, making your £5,000 worth almost £21,000.¹

Your gifts need to be with Christian Aid by 31st October 2012.

Good food: Farming in Bonthe District

Bonthe District is made up of a number of small islands (and part of the mainland) a few miles off the south-west coast of Sierra Leone. The largest of these, Sherbro Island, is about the size of the Isle of Man (or half as big again as the Isle of Wight). Dependent on a mixture of farming and fishing, people in this district suffer worse than anyone else in the country from food shortages – most people only have one meal a day¹. Some of the villages this project are working with are so remote that they can only be reached by boat and have rarely had any support from the outside world.

The main problems people here face are:

1. **Low productivity and not enough variety** in the crops grown, leading to seasonal food shortages (as the stored food from one harvest is not enough to last until the next). This particularly affects women.
2. The food that farmers manage to sell at market (to individuals or to intermediaries) **doesn't fetch a good enough price**.
3. A quarter of families in Bonthe **fish**, but **lack the knowledge and skills** to make the most of this resource.
4. **Poor knowledge about nutrition, sanitation and clean water**, leading to high levels of illness.
5. A **lack of support structures** such as village development committees, which would otherwise be able to spread knowledge, skills and resources.

The project will tackle these problems in a number of ways:

1. **Increasing** food production and variety by introducing new crops, helping people to grow a wider variety of vegetables, introducing other activities such as bee-keeping.
2. Helping people (especially women) **diversify** their sources of income, such as through oil palm and groundnut (peanut) processing and marketing and fish smoking.
3. **Teaching** people **better farming and fishing techniques**, teaching about **nutrition and sanitation**.
4. Setting up **local support groups** and **supplying these** with good quality seeds, tools, fertilisers, irrigation systems and fishing equipment, as well as processing and marketing facilities and equipment. **Using these to pass on training** in improved and environment friendly production, processing and marketing techniques.
5. Other activities will include digging new **wells** and repairing / rehabilitating existing ones, carrying out **road repairs** and giving additional **training and resources to local health centre staff**.

Good food: a big impact

- Directly helping 23,000 people (and indirectly 130,000).
- 4 year project (started April 2009).
- Total project £1.6million

A trusted partner

The project is being carried out by the **Methodist Church of Sierra Leone (MCSL)**, who Christian Aid has worked with for more than 20 years. Their mission is to eradicate poverty in Sierra Leone and they are experienced in working in similar situations elsewhere in the country.



Christian Aid/Annabel Davis

MCSL encourages people to form groups to work together. By giving them seeds and tools to set up joint agricultural initiatives such as this groundnut field they not only earn more but also build up their community

¹ On average, 1.3 meals per day for adults and 1.4 meals per day for children – from a survey in 2007.

Clean water: sanitation and water supplies in Pujehun District

In the more remote parts of rural southern Sierra Leone, very few people have access to clean water and hygienic sanitation. Across the entire Pujehun district, with almost 300,000 inhabitants, there are currently only 446 water pumps, 258 wells and 386 VIP toiletsⁱⁱ.

This project will dramatically improve quality of life for these poor and marginalized rural communities and will be a significant step towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Water, Sanitation and Health. The project will enable sustainable improvements in water, sanitation and health for rural people in 78 communities in Sorobeima and Makpele chiefdoms in the District.



Christian Aid/Annabel Davis

Christian Aid has worked with NMJD for a number of years in Sierra Leone. They have repeatedly proven that they can have a big impact, such as through this anti-AIDS rally

Clean water: a big impact

- Directly helping 27,000 people (and indirectly 287,000).
- 3 year project (started February 2010).
- Total project £651,000

Trusted partners

The project is being carried out by the **Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD)** and **Rehabilitation and Development Agency in Sierra Leone (RADA)**, who Christian Aid has worked with many years.

At the moment, women and girls have to walk long distances to rivers and swamps to fetch water and face the risk of assault whilst walking alone in the bush. The same water sources are used for toileting, washing, cooking and drinking, which causes health problems such as diarrhoea, worms and scabies and is a major cause of death in babies and young children. Through rainwater collection systems, new wells and many other activities, the project will make women's and girls' lives safer, will improve the health of people across the region and will save children's lives.

ⁱ Detailed breakdown of the value of your gift: £500 (10%) of your £5,000 will be used to support our work around the world. The remaining £4,500 will be split equally between the two projects. The farming project is matched at 4:1 so your contribution would be worth (4 x £2,250 =) £9,000 of matching + your original gift of £2,250. The water project is matched at 3:1 so your contribution would be worth (3 x £2,250 =) £6,750 of matching + your gift of £2,250. Total value = £500 + £9,000 + £2,250 + £6,750 + £2,250 = £20,750.

ⁱⁱ A 'VIP' toilet is a 'Ventilated Improved Pit Latrine', a sustainable, hygienic, low-maintenance form of sanitation ideally suited to these areas. There is more information online at www.unep.or.jp/ietc/Publications/TechPublications/TechPub-15/2-4/4-1-1.asp