

# Sierra Leone

## National progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2009-2011)

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## Outcomes for 2007-2009

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### Area 1

*The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction.*

#### **Outcomes:**

Significant progress made on this. However efforts to sustain this are generally hampered by the lukewarm commitment of some stakeholders, limited resources etc.

For example, some programmes have been introduced in the course of the year to stop and reverse the trend of deforestation in the country, but particularly so in the forest reserves.

Demolition of illegal settlements, particularly so in disaster prone areas is also currently on-going, with an objective to reduce the vulnerability of inhabitants to risks.,

### Area 2

*The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards.*

#### **Outcomes:**

The establishment of disaster management committees in every province and in all twelve districts in the country. At chiefdom level, the process has also started and so far 17 out of the 151 in the country now have functional disaster management committees .

To compliment the efforts of Disaster Management Committees, community based volunteers have been trained at both provincial and district levels. In the Capital City Freetown, which has suffered very serious urbanization as a result of migration from the rural areas, we have just concluded the training of three-hundred (300) community-based volunteers to consolidate our efforts in empowering communities , thereby reducing vulnerabilities and increasing local capacity to address local emergencies. The capacity building programme have been conducted in collaboration with key stake holder institutions. Our schools Outreach programme has also now been expanded to include 103 schools across Sierra Leone. It is hoped that this will help to strengthen our case for the inclusion of DRR into the national curriculum.

The replication of disaster management structures across the country has also provided an opportunity for a more inclusive and participatory approach to addressing the problems of vulnerability, risk management and response to disasters.

### Area 3

*The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.*

#### **Outcomes:**

Disaster Risk Reduction, has to a very large extent been integrated into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes.

Massive Urbanization in many cities across the country, and especially so in the capital city Freetown has resulted to a growing number of people living in slums and other disaster prone areas. As a result, there has been an over-exploitation of natural resources leading to uncontrolled deforestation and hence its subsequent problems, including that of increasing frequencies and severity of disasters .

Also the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), an institution established to address post war recovery, resettlement and reintegration programmes now has a new mandate with a focus on development. For this reason (further compounded by the absence of a national emergency funds) has made post disaster response and recovery effort rather slow. .

However, to correct this, a timetable has been for the launch of thenational emergency funds. In the meantime though, government donations, UN Agencies, and that of other international and private institutions continue to provide support to disaster victims wheever possible.

# Strategic goals

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## Area 1

*The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction.*

### **Strategic Goal Statement 2011-2013:**

Integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming to be a continuous and on-going process at all levels. Also strengthen our collaboration with enforcement agencies with a view to encouraging & promoting the enforcement of laws, the review of laws that are obsolete etc.

Spreading knowledge, education and encourage the adoption of best practices on DRR across the sub-region. The objective here is to empower communities to build resilience at all levels.

Encourage and ensure mainstreaming of DRR into sectoral plans and everyday life with a view to reducing the vulnerabilities of communities

## Area 2

*The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards.*

### **Strategic Goal Statement 2011-2013:**

Communities to play a role in address local risk reduction issues/hazards.

Enhance knowledge, education and innovation of communiites and ensure that communiites are proactive in addressing risk redeuction & mitigation

## Area 3

*The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.*

### **Strategic Goal Statement 2011-2013:**

To enhance the involvement and participation of all stakeholders, including residents of the affected communiities in the identification, and assessment of risk .

Ensure that they are part of the decision-making process during the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.

Integrating risk reduction approaches to achieve community resilience into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.

Embark on a programee to relocate residents from disaster-prone areas and/or develop systematic programmes.

Ensure that new settlements are constructed risk reduction & mitigation benefits in mind. .

## Priority for action 1

*Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.*

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### Priority for action 1: Core indicator 1

*National policy and legal framework for disaster risk reduction exists with decentralised responsibilities and capacities at all levels.*

#### **Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

#### **Means of verification:**

- \* Is DRR included in development plans and strategies? No
- \* No: National development plan
- \* No: Sector strategies and plans
- \* No: Climate change policy and strategy
- \* Yes: Poverty reduction strategy papers
- \* No: Common Country Assessments (CCA)/ UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)

#### **Description:**

There is a draft national disaster preparedness and response plan. The purpose of the National Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan (NDPRP) is to establish a comprehensive all-hazard approach to national incident management spectrum of activities including preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response and recovery. The plan incorporates best practices as shown in other regions of the world. It has been reviewed recently by stakeholders. The same applies to the national DM Policy. These two documents have been submitted to cabinet for onwards transmission to parliament for enactment into law by the Minister for Presidential and Public Affairs.

The draft Disaster Management Policy. The disaster management Policy is a comprehensive approach that enhances increased political commitment to disaster risk management thereby encouraging government agencies to take the lead with support from non-governmental organisations. It also promotes public awareness and the incorporation of disaster risk management into development planning. The policy highlights the sources of funding and the reduction of bureaucracies in accessing such funds for effective disaster coordination.

Current Status: It has been submitted to the Ministry of Presidential Affairs and extensively discussed by cabinet, and the following conclusions have been reached.

- a) There is a dire need to have a DM Policy
- b) The content of the policy is in line with current global and local trends in Disaster Management
- c) There is thus the need for the policy to be submitted to parliament for the necessary legal backing

Launching of the DM Fund: Responding to disasters in a timely manner when they occur in many parts

of the country has often been a herculean challenge for government. Mindful of this, government must put in place workable mechanisms to intervene or respond expeditiously when disasters occur be they man-made or natural.

Hopefully, this could be realised by december 2010.

#### **Context & Constraints:**

DRR has not been fully integrated in development plans and strategies Ministries, Department and Agencies in Sierra Leone. However, substantial gains have been made in that direction. For instance, the draft Policy on DRR and response has been discussed and approved by Cabinet. The Policy document emphasizes the following:

vEnsure the integration of disaster risk management into sustainable development programmes and policies to ensure a holistic approach to disaster management.

vEnsure priority and requisite institutional capacities for disaster risk reduction at all levels

vEnhance the use of knowledge, education, training, innovation and information sharing to build safe and resilient societies

vImprove the identification, assessment, monitoring and early warning of risks

vImprove effectiveness of response through stronger disaster preparedness

It is hoped that once the DM Policy is ratified by Parliament, the integration of Disaster Risk Reduction into our development policy and plans would be formalised.

Another significant step in the integration process, can be seen in the fact that some Local Government Councils are now mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction into their development plans.

In addition to the above, the National Disaster Management Department also holds regular stakeholder consultations with key government ministries, departments and agencies.

In spite of the above, the following:

Disaster Risk Reduction is considered as a relatively new phenomenon. It used to be an NGO led issue, until the end of the country's civil war.

There is no legal framework that will enable government ministries, agencies and departments to mainstream disaster risk reduction into their activities. The country has a draft disaster management policy and a draft preparedness and response plan. However central government bureaucracy and other bottlenecks are slowing the process. It is hoped that with the ratification of the Disaster management policy and DM Plan, the integration process will be official, hopefully by the December

#### **Priority for action 1: Core indicator 2**

*Dedicated and adequate resources are available to implement disaster risk reduction plans and activities at all administrative levels*

#### **Level of Progress achieved:**

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

#### **Means of verification:**



- \* Is there a specific allocation of budget for DRR in the national budget?
- \* 0 % allocated from national budget
- \* 0 USD allocated from overseas development assistance fund
- \* 0 USD allocated to hazard proofing sectoral development investments (e.g transport, agriculture, infrastructure)
- \* 0 USD allocated to stand alone DRR investments (e.g. DRR institutions, risk assessments, early warning systems)
- \* 0 USD allocated to disaster proofing post disaster reconstruction

**Description:**

There is no specific allocation of budget for Disaster Risk Reduction in the national budget. Most DRR activities at the national level are supported by our partners such as the UNDP and some NGOs.

Also important to note is that unlike other countries, Sierra Leone does not have an autonomous Disaster Management unit/agency. what exist is a Disaster Management Department within the Office of National Security, with mandate to coordinate DRR activities. As such, budget allocations are made for the activities of the Office of National Security. And like all other departments within the Office of National Security, some of the department's activities are not adequately funded

**Context & Constraints:**

One main reason for the non-availability of specific funds is the fact that DRR is not given the same attention as other everyday issues. Like any other developing country, Sierra Leone is faced with budgetary constraints, and there are a lot of development areas that requires urget government intervention.

Another challenge is that Sierra Leone those not have an autonomous disaster management agency, and therefore no funds on its own.

As a way forward government should expediate the ratification of the Draft Disaster Management Policy, and ensure that an outonomous agency charged with disaster management is established.

**Priority for action 1: Core indicator 3**

*Community Participation and decentralisation is ensured through the delegation of authority and resources to local levels*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

- \* Do local governments have legal responsibility and budget allocations for DRR? No
- \* No: Legislation

\* No: Budget allocations for DRR to local government

### **Description:**

Decentralisation in the real sense of the word is a recent development, and therefore an on-going process. Like any other democratic local governance system, local councils in Sierra Leone perform some of the following: They deliver essential services to their citizens which include, health, education, transport,

water, sanitation, etc.

Most often local councils are in charge of some vital developmental activities, which are important to reducing disaster risks in vulnerable communities, such as:

1. Land use planning
2. Urban development planning
3. Public works
4. Construction roads and licensing
5. Social services and responding to the need of the poor and the under-privileged
6. Implementation and the strengthening of the decentralization process etc.

It is therefore reasonable to say that though it may appear that Local Councils in Sierra Leone do not have legal responsibility and budget allocations for Disaster Risk Reduction, some of their activities do have direct bearing on risk reduction and disaster management as a whole. In fact the Freetown City Council, which is the largest and most powerful municipality in Sierra Leone, now has a functional Disaster Management Committee, with some resources allocated to it. Other Local Councils are also in the process of emulating the Freetown City Council.

It is also interesting to note that the National Disaster Management Department has Disaster Management Committees in each of the twelve districts of the country. Each of these District DM Committees are chaired by the Chief Administrators of the District Councils. These Committees among many other functions, perform duties related to disaster risk reduction within their jurisdictions. The successes of these committees are largely due to the collaborative efforts of local government councils and other stakeholders that constitute the Committees.

On the whole, the legal integration of DRR into local government activities is in progress.

### **Context & Constraints:**

From the above, it can be realised that although local government councils do not have legal responsibility and budget allocation for Disaster Risk Reduction in the real sense of the word, most of their activities over the years have direct impact on issues related to disaster management. As a result of that, substantial achievement has been attained, but with recognized limitations in key areas, such as the legal backing, financial resources, operational capacities etc.

As stated earlier, a key challenge faced by the national Disaster Management Department, Local government councils and other agencies whose activities relate to disaster risk reduction in Sierra Leone, is the slow progress in the ratification of the draft national disaster management policy. The lack of a legally binding legislation on DRR is largely responsible for the inadequate commitment by some key stakeholders. The draft policy among many other key issues emphasizes the following:

1. The integration of disaster risk management into sustainable development programmes and policies to ensure a holistic approach to disaster management.
2. Ensure priority and requisite institutional capacities for disaster risk reduction at all levels
3. The integration of Disaster Risk Reduction into the development plan of activities of local councils in Sierra Leone.
4. It also make provision for the allocation of special funds for disaster risk reduction.

As a way forward, government must ensure that the draft policy document is finally passed into law. This

will clearly spell out central government's commitment to disaster risk reduction and response. In addition, local councils and stakeholders will increase their commitment, thereby enhancing the resilience of communities at the local levels

### **Priority for action 1: Core indicator 4**

*A national multi sectoral platform for disaster risk reduction is functioning.*

#### **Level of Progress achieved:**

1: Minor progress with few signs of forward action in plans or policy

#### **Means of verification:**

\* Are civil society organisations, national planning institutions, key economic and development sector organisations represented in the national platform? -- not complete --

\* 0 civil society members (specify absolute number)

\* 0 sectoral organisations (specify absolute number)

\* 0 women's organisations participating in national platform (specify absolute number)

#### **Description:**

Sierra Leone is yet to launch its national platform. What exists Disaster Management Department within the Office of National Security, that coordinates DRR issues.

At the national level a stakeholder coordination meeting is held once in every month. At the local levels, District Disaster management Committees meet once in a week. It is important to note that membership of these institutions is drawn from Government Ministry, Departments and Agencies, Civil Society Organisations, sectoral organisations, UN Specialised agencies, Local government councils, traditional leaders, youth groups, women's organisations, the Sierra Leone Red Cross Organisation etc.

#### **Context & Constraints:**

A key challenge is that because of the lack of a national platform commitment from some organisations is not always there.

A way forward will be to expediate the establishment of a national platform

## Priority for action 2

*Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.*

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### Priority for action 2: Core indicator 1

*National and local risk assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available and include risk assessments for key sectors.*

#### **Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

#### **Means of verification:**

\* Is there a national multi-hazard risk assessment available to inform planning and development decisions? Yes

\* No: Multi-hazard risk assessment

\* 0 % of schools and hospitals assessed

\* 0 schools not safe from disasters (specify absolute number)

\* No: Gender disaggregated vulnerability and capacity assessments

\* No: Agreed national standards for multi hazard risk assessments

#### **Description:**

A detailed study of the national and local risk assessments are readily available and include risk assessments for key sectors within the country. The hazard data and vulnerability information covers that of all the communities nationwide. In addition to the National Hazard Profile that ensures decision makers and communities to fully understand their exposure to various hazards and the social, economic, environmental and physical vulnerabilities that they may face; a nationwide vulnerability and capacity assessment on the hazards and risks as per community also makes room to sensitise communities on the vulnerabilities that they may face and the capacities at their disposal to tackle them. The National Hazard Profile also allows communities to take effective action to reduce disaster and environmental risks. The department is in the process of reviewing the national hazard profile to reflect emerging hazards across the country. For this purpose, all twelve District Disaster Management Committees have been tasked to develop district hazard profiles.

#### **Context & Constraints:**

Context & Constraints:

Some District DM Committees have sent in hazard profiles of their districts, while others are on the process. As such there is a lack of resources. This, thus calls for capacity building for some of our disaster management committees. There is also the need to compile chiefdom hazard profiles.

### Priority for action 2: Core indicator 2

*Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on key hazards and vulnerabilities*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

- \* Are disaster losses systematically reported, monitored and analysed? Yes
- \* No: Disaster loss database
- \* No: Reports generated and used in planning

**Description:**

Much progress has been made in this domain. Hazards and vulnerabilities are monitored and information is shared with communities. Hazard profile is continually being reviewed to include new vulnerabilities based on the changing times and circumstances. This information is shared in the disaster management committees nationwide which in turn disseminate the information to the people for an effective disaster management system. Total loss of disasters is also being monitored, reported and analysed by the department in collaboration with key stakeholders.

**Context & Constraints:**

One of the major constraints is that of accessibility to some remote areas in the country.

**Priority for action 2: Core indicator 3**

*Early warning systems are in place for all major hazards, with outreach to communities.*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

- \* Do risk prone communities receive timely and understandable warnings of impending hazard events?  
No
- \* No: Early warnings acted on effectively
- \* No: Local level preparedness
- \* No: Communication systems and protocols
- \* No: Active involvement of media in early warning dissemination

**Description:**

There is some progress made in this area. This is seen in the fact that though the main provider of early warning for natural disasters, the national meteorological services got vandalized during the war, efforts are being made to restructure the whole system. With regards to man-made emergencies, the services of local radio stations are normally requested for since the disaster management department don't have a designated channel of its own.

**Context & Constraints:**

Re-equipping the meteorological station, recruiting and training of more personnel plus an improved communications network/information channel to be provided for the coordinating institution.

**Priority for action 2: Core indicator 4**

*National and local risk assessments take account of regional / trans boundary risks, with a view to regional cooperation on risk reduction.*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

- \* Does your country participate in regional or sub-regional DRR programmes or projects? Yes
- \* No: Programmes and projects addressing trans-boundary issues
- \* No: Regional and sub-regional strategies and frameworks
- \* No: Regional or sub-regional monitoring and reporting mechanisms
- \* No: Action plans addressing trans-boundary issues

**Description:**

National policies have been developed, in collaboration with key partners. Because many of these partners have contributed to the process of developing such policies, ownership and a clear knowledge of institutional /departmental etc roles and responsibilities during disasters has been made possible. Sub-regional meetings are also held on a regular basis to develop sub-regional hazard/vulnerability/risk assessments with sub-regional response plans. These resources, both human and material are designed in such a way that they could be requested for at very short notice by any member country as and when the need arises. For localised disasters/risks that have the propensity to become sub-regional, meetings have also been done at various levels to map out contingency plans to address this. One challenge encountered here though is that not all of Sierra Leone's immediate neighbours have conducted national hazard/risk/vulnerability profiles. Thus writing out contingency plans hasn't always been reflective of the real issues facing those countries. An example could be cited of recent flooding that swept across from Sierra Leone to Liberia. is flooding in a border town near any of the neighbouring countries. Thus, Sierra Leone is part of the Mano-River and the ECOWAS (sub-regional and regional bodies) that have strong cooperation in terms of risk assessments and reduction activities. Contingencies plans are in place to cover inter-regional disasters and funds and stockpiles are readily available to support those plans. Sierra Leone is currently represented in the ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT). The country is also participating in ECOWAS's effort to integrate DRR into Climate Change and Adaptation. We are also in close collaboration with neighbouring Liberia and the Republic of Guinea

**Context & Constraints:**

A major challenge in transnational cooperation in DRR is that countries are not at the same level interms of policy formulation and implementation.

## Priority for action 3

*Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.*

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### Priority for action 3: Core indicator 1

*Relevant information on disasters is available and accessible at all levels, to all stakeholders (through networks, development of information sharing systems etc)*

#### **Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

#### **Means of verification:**

- \* Is there a national disaster information system publicly available? Yes
- \* No: Web page of national disaster information system
- \* Yes: Established mechanisms for accessing DRR information

#### **Description:**

In a bid to sensitise vulnerable communities across the country in line with Priority III of the HFA, the Disaster Management Department has been making tremendous efforts in letting information be available to all Sierra Leoneans. These take the form radio, TV, workshops, public lectures, schools outreach programmes etc. Some of these programmes are done in our local dialects.

However, in spite of the above achievements, the department is yet to establish its own website. The means information on the net still scanty.

#### **Context & Constraints:**

The department is working in close collaboration with its key stakeholders to develop a departmental website and data base on all issues related to disasters

### Priority for action 3: Core indicator 2

*School curricula , education material and relevant trainings include disaster risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices.*

#### **Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

#### **Means of verification:**

- \* Is DRR included in the national educational curriculum? No
- \* No: Primary school curriculum
- \* No: Secondary school curriculum

\* No: University curriculum

\* No: Professional DRR education programmes

**Description:**

The Disaster Management Department has been conducting school sensitisation programmes in selected schools in the Western Area and the Provinces. This is in line with priority III of the Hyogo Frame Work of Action which focuses attention on the use of knowledge, innovation, and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels. The theme of the campaign is in line with the UN/ISDR's slogan; "disaster risk reduction begins at school".

The campaign is still in its pilot phase, with few schools selected from each of the twelve districts and the western area of the country. It is hoped that at the end of the pilot phase, the Disaster Management Department and its partners would now present a convincing argument, with tangible evidence based on successes scored, to the political decision makers, on the need to integrate DRR into the formal school curricula or at least part of school activities. Meanwhile, there have been preliminary discussions with officials of the Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports on the issue.

In Freetown, the usual annual inter Primary School Quiz competition on DRR was organised from the 24th – 31st May, 2010 .

In line with the above, the trend will not be completed as there is also need for a training workshop for teachers in the Provinces on DRR. A training of trainers' workshop was organised in six districts last year (2009) and the remaining six districts this year (2010).

The training targeted 10 Junior Secondary schools in each district with 3 teachers from each school. This amounted to a total number of 180 teachers trained for this year. Current number of DRR pilot schools is up to 102. Fifteen of these are primary schools in the western area, and the remaining 87 are Junior Secondary Schools.

**Context & Constraints:**

- The ratification/enactment of the DM Plan and policy which will enhance the integration of DRR into the National School Curricula
- Ministry of Education being reluctant to include DRR as a module/part of its Schools' extra Curricula activities.
- Inadequate funds to extend DRR training to Secondary Schools
- Cooperation of school authorities in conducting DRR activities like sensitization, DM lectures to capacitate students for the inter-primary school quiz competition
- Sustainability of DRR school clubs formed for interactive sessions among schools, weekly assembly lectures to capacitate their students on DRR issues

**Priority for action 3: Core indicator 3**

*Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost benefit analysis are developed and strengthened.*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

2: Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment

**Means of verification:**



\* Is DRR included in the national scientific applied-research agenda/budget? No

\* No: Research outputs, products or studies

\* No: Research programmes and projects

\* No: Studies on the economic costs and benefits of DRR

**Description:**

Disaster Risk Reduction is not included in the national scientific applied research agenda as the country is not scientifically grounded. However there is a collaboration between the disaster management department and the two main universities of Sierra Leone. Infact the research of the national hazard profile was conducted by professors from the two universities. The department also enjoys a close collaboration with the nationan metreological services and the bureau for climate change.

**Context & Constraints:**

There is a dire need to link DRR with Scientific applied-research agenda and budget, this is especially so for the establishment of an effective and timely early warning system. The upgrading of the Mets department fits into that category

**Priority for action 3: Core indicator 4**

*Countrywide public awareness strategy exists to stimulate a culture of disaster resilience, with outreach to urban and rural communities.*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

\* Do public education campaigns on DRR reach risk-prone communities? Yes

\* Yes: Public education campaigns.

\* No: Training of local government

\* Yes: Availability of information on DRR practices at the community level

**Description:**

As part of its public education campaign, the Disaster Management Department has engaged in numerous strategies in building a culture of resilience to disasters in vulnerable communities in Sierra Leone. Such strategies include:

- DRR school outreach programme on the theme Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School.
- nationwide community sensitization awareness campaign through songs, skits and drama groups
- training of volunteers in identified disaster prone areas on Disaster Management
- organising television documentary programmes on the disaster prone areas, hazards faced,risks and mitigative measures to avert disasters
- Radio discussion programmes to sensitize the public on Disaster Management

**Context & Constraints:**

In spite of the above, the department and its partners recognise the fact that more needs to take the public education campaign to the grassroots communities.

There is also the need to expediate the formal integration of DRR into the national primary school curriculum.

## Priority for action 4

*Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.*

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### Priority for action 4: Core indicator 1

*Disaster risk reduction is an integral objective of environment related policies and plans, including for land use natural resource management and adaptation to climate change.*

#### **Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

#### **Means of verification:**

\* Is there a mechanism in place to protect and restore regulatory ecosystem services? (associated with wet lands, mangroves, forests etc) Yes

\* Yes: Protected areas legislation

\* No: Payment for ecosystem services (PES)

\* No: Integrated planning (for example coastal zone management)

\* Yes: Environmental impacts assessments (EIAs)

\* Yes: Climate change adaptation projects and programmes

#### **Description:**

Government has established structures/systems to address protection and regulatory issues. But as it is with many other policies around here, it is the translation of such policy into practice that throws the real challenge. In addition, many of these policies need updating as they have become obsolete in the course of time, thereby losing their relevance.

#### **Context & Constraints:**

Many of our existing policies need updating, as they have become obsolete in the course of time, thereby losing their relevance.

Duplicity of efforts/functions is also another issue leading to operational ineffectiveness and inefficiency.

In some instances, the penalties for violating these laws are so ridiculous that they hardly serve as deterrents.

### Priority for action 4: Core indicator 2

*Social development policies and plans are being implemented to reduce the vulnerability of populations most at risk.*

#### **Level of Progress achieved:**

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

#### **Means of verification:**

- \* Do social safety nets exist to increase the resilience of risk prone households and communities? No
- \* No: Crop and property insurance
- \* No: Employment guarantee schemes
- \* No: Conditional cash transfers
- \* Yes: DRR aligned poverty reduction, welfare policy and programmes
- \* Yes: Microfinance
- \* Yes: Micro insurance

**Description:**

Social safety Nets are very few and don't necessarily target communities in risk/disaster prone areas. Amongst those available also, they can only be accessed by a very small percentage of the population- which is the working class., Also worth mentioning is that DRR is now being taken into consideration when most of the development policies are formulated.

Production companies, especially those into drill and excavation are bound by law to conduct environmental impact assessments of their activities before they are issued to be undertaken. This is to ensure they are done with a licence of operation. Clearly, this ensures that underlying risks are identified and modalities put into place to address them.

**Context & Constraints:**

Very little insurance is available in respect of social safety nets. The national safety nets available only cater for the working class in government, as well as staff of private institutions.

**Priority for action 4: Core indicator 3**

*Economic and productive sectorial policies and plans have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

- \* Are the costs and benefits of DRR incorporated into the planning of public investment? Yes
- \* Yes: National and sectoral public investment systems incorporating DRR.
- \* Yes: Investments in retrofitting infrastructures including schools and hospitals

**Description:**

Presently a majority of all the economic and development policies being put in place integrate DRR as

an integral component of sustainable development.

Thus most national investment systems work very hard to reduce the vulnerabilities and increasing their capacities to minimize existing/potential risks

**Context & Constraints:**

Availability and Accessibility of IRisk transfer insurance companies is not easily locally attained..

**Priority for action 4: Core indicator 4**

*Planning and management of human settlements incorporate disaster risk reduction elements, including enforcement of building codes.*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

\* Is there investment to reduce the risk of vulnerable urban settlements? Yes

\* Yes: Investment in drainage infrastructure in flood prone areas

\* No: Slope stabilisation in landslide prone areas

\* No: Training of masons on safe construction technology

\* No: Provision of safe land for low income households and communities

**Description:**

There is the national office in charge of town and city planning and a department responsible for issuance of building permits and ensuring that building codes and regulations are respected. However, the enforcement of the laws governing the operations of these offices is very minimal if any at all. After the civil conflict the city and other provincial and district headquarters experience a surge in population figures resulting in an increasing number of slums, particularly so in the western area.

In addition, there has been an increasing demand with the same plots of land, settlements sprung in areas not fit for human settlement. Number of settlements built in disaster/hazard-prone areas across the country. However, government has recently established a Advisory Committee for the Freetown Resettlement Plan'. This committee comprises of key stakeholders, including the DM Department , Local government councils, to ensure that DRR considerations are given a priority as we embark on such developmental plans.

**Context & Constraints:**

Many of the laws are outdated and the ones that are amended are not enforced, thus the need to review the old laws and enforce the new ones to ensure that the associated risks within human settlements are minimal.

**Priority for action 4: Core indicator 5**

*Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

- \* Do post-disaster recovery programmes explicitly incorporate and budget for DRR? Yes
- \* 65 % of recovery and reconstruction funds assigned to DRR
- \* Yes: Measures taken to address gender based issues in recovery

**Description:**

Recovery efforts are generally carried out with a view to reducing the risks and vulnerabilities.

**Context & Constraints:**

A major leap towards recovery efforts is the short of much needed funds to reconstruct critical infrastructure and restore normalcy to disaster hit communities

**Priority for action 4: Core indicator 6**

*Procedures are in place to assess the disaster risk impacts of major development projects, especially infrastructure.*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

- \* Are the impacts of major development projects on disaster risk assessed? Yes
- \* Yes: Assessments of impact of projects such as dams, irrigation schemes, highways, mining, tourist developments etc on disaster risk
- \* Yes: Impacts of disaster risk taken account in Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)

**Description:**

With no disaster management/emergency funds and a greater reliance on donor support, the national disaster management programme tries to meet the minimum international requirement.

It is also mandatory for companies whose activities are closely linked with the environment to submit environment impact assessments (EIAs).

Disaster risk reduction is part of the pillars of the poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) and all development and social policies on WATSAN, agriculture etc incorporate disaster management as not to create a disaster during development.

**Context & Constraints:**

Challenges include the delay by mining companies to submit their EIAs on time, or the non compliance of certain companies.

## Priority for action 5

*Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.*

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### Priority for action 5: Core indicator 1

*Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for disaster risk management, with a disaster risk reduction perspective are in place.*

#### Level of Progress achieved:

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

#### Means of verification:

\* Are there national programmes or policies to make schools and health facilities safe in emergencies?  
Yes

\* Yes: Policies and programmes for school and hospital safety

\* Yes: Training and mock drills in school and hospitals for emergency preparedness

#### Description:

In order to consolidate our efforts on DRR, vulnerability and capacity assessments have been updated and training of community based volunteers at local levels etc.

In the Western Area (capital city Freetown), 300 volunteers have been trained between April & October 2010. It is hoped that these would not only provide first hand response during local emergencies but also help to promote & encourage the implementation of DRR activities within their respective communities.

#### Context & Constraints:

Resources Availability for the conduct and sustainability of such programmes remain a challenge. The mainstreaming of DRR into development programmes and everyday life is also fraught with challenges. Increased political commitment and subsequent commitment of government ministries, departments and agencies is also beginning to grow but there is still need political & institutional commitment at all levels.

### Priority for action 5: Core indicator 2

*Disaster preparedness plans and contingency plans are in place at all administrative levels, and regular training drills and rehearsals are held to test and develop disaster response programmes.*

#### Level of Progress achieved:

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

#### Means of verification:

\* Are the contingency plans, procedures and resources in place to deal with a major disaster? Yes

- \* Yes: Contingency plans with gender sensitivities
- \* No: Operations and communications centre
- \* No: Search and rescue teams
- \* Yes: Stockpiles of relief supplies
- \* No: Shelters
- \* Yes: Secure medical facilities
- \* No: Dedicated provision for women in relief, shelter and emergency medical facilities

**Description:**

The International Disaster Risk Response Law for Sierra Leone has been drafted, awaiting parliamentary ratification. The aim of this is to remove/reduce the barriers or bureaucracies associated with accessing international help in the event of large scale disasters. In addition to this, simulation exercises have been conducted to test institutional capacities.

In a bid to promote DRR and management at all levels, community-based volunteers have been trained at all levels, including the provincial & district levels. At Chiefdom level, the process has just started and so far we have replicated these programmes in 17 out of 151 chiefdoms in the country. In the capital city (Western Area), a community-based volunteer training programme has just been completed. The objective is to empower communities to promote DRR activities in their respective communities and also provide the first line of response in the event of emergencies.

**Context & Constraints:**

The implementation of practically all of these activities has resource implications. Bringing together the key players including relevant institutions and their focal persons, hiring the services of resources persons,volunteers at all levels, organizing refresher training courses and above all, sustaining these groups remain a challenge.

In addition, mainstreaming DRR into sectoral plans and everyday life is still very slow, The enforcement of laws/policies still need to be strengthened if these should serve as deterrents.

On the otherhand, factoring DRR into everyday life can hardly be practical where there is abject poverty.

**Priority for action 5: Core indicator 3**

*Financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to support effective response and recovery when required.*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

3: Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial

**Means of verification:**

- \* Are financial arrangements in place to deal with major disaster? No
- \* No: National contingency funds
- \* No: Catastrophe insurance facilities



\* No: Catastrophe bonds

**Description:**

National emergency funds are yet to be set aside by national government to . However, the polithas recently expressed a desire to have this done very shortly.

Apart from the national preparedness & response contingency plans, a national contingency Plan on health has been developed to compliment this generic contingency plan. This plan covers a wide range of diseases/empidemics and provides a clear-cut response strategy. In line with this, the department continues to collaborate with the Unit for Disease control and prevention at the ministry of health.

Amongst some of our gains for this year also is the enactment of the free-health policy for Sierra Leone in support of DRR, . For a country with a very poor health record, especially as it relates to infant child mortality reates, the introduction of such a policy has been a huge boost for the health sector.

**Context & Constraints:**

The national Contingency plan on health is yet to be discussed at cabinet and ratified by Parliament thereafter.

In other instances, the need still arises to capacitate and empower relevant institutions to be able to implement DRR prgrammes at thier respective sectors cannot be overemphasized.

**Priority for action 5: Core indicator 4**

*Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information during hazard events and disasters, and to undertake post-event reviews*

**Level of Progress achieved:**

4: Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities

**Means of verification:**

\* Has an agreed method and procedure been adopted to assess damage, loss and needs when disasters occur? Yes

\* Yes: Damage and loss assessment methodologies and capacities available

\* Yes: Post disaster need assessment methodologies

\* Yes: Post disaster needs assessment methodologies include guidance on gender aspects

\* Yes: Identified and trained human resources

**Description:**

The deployment of our staff at various leves and the strong collaborative ties with other government departments, ministries and agencies makes information sharing possible. As a result of this, we benifit from the fact that many of our partners who have some presence in almost every community. This way we can exchange vital information across borders wthin the shortest possibloe time to make way for timelyintervention/ action.

Also the presence of community volunteers, extention of mobile communications coverage across the whole country, etc makes communication of the most urgent issues possible.

**Context & Constraints:**

Amongst our challenges include the absence of a centralized communications network that is accessible to all partners and the general public as a whole. In addition, even though we are on the verge of developing a departmental website and establish a central emergency line that is accessible to the general public, the process is yet to be completed.

## Drivers of Progress

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### a) Multi-hazard integrated approach to disaster risk reduction and development

#### Levels of Reliance:

Significant and ongoing reliance: significant ongoing efforts to actualize commitments with coherent strategy in place; identified and engaged stakeholders.

#### Do studies/ reports/ atlases on multi-hazard analyses exist in the country/ for the sub region?:

Yes

#### If yes, are these being applied to development planning/ informing policy?:

Yes

#### Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

Reports on multi hazard inform decisions on development planning to some degrees. For e.g, the national hazard profile gives a clear indication of the hazards/diasters that Sierra Leone. The vulnerability and capacity assessments also inform policy and decision making at strategic levels. In a programme jointly implementaed by the government of Sierra leone called 'The Agenda for change' the UN mission here in Sierra Leone worked very closely with the DM department to review the national preparedness and response contingency plans to reflect the current environment and also to ensure that DRR is being strongly integrated into development programmes.

However, there is room for improvement to consolidate efforts on this drive.

### b) Gender perspectives on risk reduction and recovery adopted and institutionalized

#### Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

#### Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

A gender perspective has been interated into the Sierra Leone Disaster Management Policy and other sectoral policies to ensure that the different needs of mem, women, boys & girls are considered and addressed.

In a society that is still male-dominated, women are now being encouraged to be part ofr the decision -making process in issues that affect them relating to Didsaster Risk Redection. As a mttter of principle, the modus operandi requires what women are not merely participants , but are actually partners and form part of the management board of comunity-based volunteer groups across the country.

A good example can be

### c) Capacities for risk reduction and recovery identified and strengthened

#### Levels of Reliance:

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

#### Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):

Capacity building prgrammes on DRR and recovery are continuous & on-going. Different strategies are being used to achieve this ranging from public sensitization programmes, training of volunteers at

national, provincialo, district and now, chiefdom levels in Sierra Leone.

In addition to this, we also have a very vibrant schools out-reach programme which has so far been established in 103 schools across the country.

#### **d) Human security and social equity approaches integrated into disaster risk reduction and recovery activities**

##### **Levels of Reliance:**

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

##### **Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):**

•Risks assessments, vulnerability mapping, and analysing trends of disaster impacts, hazards and vulnerability have been conducted and included in the analysis. This provides the baseline information upon which strategies could be formulated to address the emerging trends/issues.

There is an intrinsic relationship between poverty and the vulnerability to disasters. Even though DRR has been integrated into poverty reduction strategy papers for Sierra Leone. challenges still exist in the translation of these policies into practice. Thus economic poverty often forces people to settle in areas that are highly prone to natural hazards. The socio-cultural dimension of poverty is perhaps the main reasons for higher vulnerability to hazards among marginalized people, particularly women. This is due to their lower status within the society, which is often a reason for being poorly educated. It subsequently leads to e.g. inappropriate use of natural resources that in turn can increase disaster risk.

Additionally, recovery programmes haven't always eliminate/minimize risks as one could have hoped they would. Awareness raising programmes using an all hazard approach also on-going and continual but very little or no scientific information is available to the general public since the national meteorological services department got vandalized in the course of the civil war.

However, there are now plans to re-establish eleven of these weather stations across the country for the purpose of early warning.

#### **e) Engagement and partnerships with non-governmental actors; civil society, private sector, amongst others, have been fostered at all levels**

##### **Levels of Reliance:**

Significant and ongoing reliance: significant ongoing efforts to actualize commitments with coherent strategy in place; identified and engaged stakeholders.

##### **Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):**

Very strong collaboration between government ministries, departments & agencies, relevant international & development agencies, civil society etc.

This arrangement is replicated at all levels across the country to the extent that they all form the membership of the disaster management committees at all levels. In addition, these groups make up the membership for pre and post disaster assessment missions in Sierra Leone.

#### **f) Contextual Drivers of Progress**

##### **Levels of Reliance:**

Partial/ some reliance: Full acknowledgement of the issue; strategy/ framework for action developed to address it; application still not fully implemented across policy and practice; complete buy in not achieved from key stakeholders.

**Description (Please provide evidence of where, how and who):**

Regional and international support for disaster risk management is a powerful driver of progress to stimulate interest and to enhance knowledge, capacities and increased commitment needed at national and local levels.

Effective coordination using the cluster based approach existing within government and in collaboration with NGOs, Private sector, Institutions, using an all hazard approach is necessary.

# Future outlook

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## Area 1

*The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction.*

### Overall Challenges:

- The need for Government's increased commitment to mainstreaming DRR into its development plan
- The need for national budget allocation for DRR/DRM is equally urgent.
- Draft policies and other statutory instruments for an effective DRM at both local and national levels require immediate updating and eventual enactment.
- The need for the department(DMD) graduating into an agency or commission.

### Future Outlook Statement:

- Sierra Leone would have a decentralised Disaster Management/Climate Change Adaptation Agency/Commission with full capacities for effective implementation of its programmes.
- High collaboration with local and international development partners for resilience building.
- A multi-stakeholder and integrated DRR/DRM approach is adopted in line with the government's development plan.

## Area 2

*The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards.*

### Overall Challenges:

- Need for a well defined and operational early warning system.
- The need for established DRM local level structures with the full capacities for the implementation of DRR programmes.
- Need for establishing a well trained and capacitated national rapid disaster response team.

### Future Outlook Statement:

- An established and functional early warning system
- Effective DRM institutions at both local and national levels
- Trained and capacitated National Disaster Response team

## Area 3

*The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes in the reconstruction of affected communities.*

### Overall Challenges:

- The need for a reviewed and standardized building codes for any infrastructural development.
- The need for a proper urban and land use planning policies and such statutory instruments for the development of disaster resilient communities
- The need for a robust law enforcement protocols for offensive related to land degradation and inimical human activities with the propensity to cause disasters.
- The need for a decentralized stockpiling of food and non food items for victims of disasters.
- The need for a sustainable livelihood programmes for at-risk populations.

**Future Outlook Statement:**

- Development of proper land use planning policies available.
- Enforcement of laws with penalties for offenders.
- Warehouses constructed and stockpiled with FIs and NFIs
- Alternative livelihood programmes introduced at community levels

## Stakeholders

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### Departments/organizations that have contributed to the report

\* Ministry of Lands, Country Planning (Gov) - Dr Dennis Sandy Minister

\* Freetown City Council (Gov) - Mayor