



SIERRA LEONE



Three years on from the devastating Ebola outbreak, Sierra Leone is successfully restoring and strengthening its health infrastructure capacity, thanks to effective and coordinated efforts between national authorities and international partners.



HEALTH SECTOR RECOVERY PLAN, 2015-2020

<p>7 396 190</p> <p>TOTAL POPULATION, (2016)</p>	<p>51 YEARS</p> <p>LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH, (2015)</p>	<p>243\$</p> <p>TOTAL HEALTH EXPENDITURE PER CAPITA, (2014)</p>	<p>63%</p> <p>TUBERCULOSIS TREATMENT COVERAGE, (2016)</p>
<p>58%</p> <p>OUT OF POCKET EXPENDITURE AS % OF TOTAL HEALTH EXPENDITURE, (2014)</p>	<p>11%</p> <p>GENERAL GOVERNMENT HEALTH EXPENDITURE AS % OF GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE, (2014)</p>	<p>17%</p> <p>EXTERNAL AID AS % OF TOTAL HEALTH EXPENDITURE, (2014)</p>	<p>76%</p> <p>ANTENATAL CARE COVERAGE, (2013)</p>
<p>4</p> <p>HOSPITAL BEDS PER 10 000 POPULATION, (2006)</p>	<p>7%</p> <p>RURAL POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO IMPROVED SANITATION FACILITIES, (2015)</p>	<p>84%</p> <p>DTP3 IMMUNIZATION COVERAGE AMONG 1-YEAR-OLDS, (2016)</p>	<p>60%</p> <p>BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL, (2013)</p>

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SOURCE: WHO GHQ & WB

CURRENT PRIORITIES

Sierra Leone's debilitating civil war left its health infrastructure in tatters. Following years of slow progress, the government launched the Free Health Care Initiative (FHCI) in 2010 and was pushing ahead to improve health outcomes. Reforms had to be put on hold however in 2014 to respond to the Ebola outbreak which led to 3,955 reported deaths, including the country's top doctors. As part of the President's Recovery Priorities, Sierra Leone launched a 5-year Health Sector Recovery Plan (HSRP) in 2015 containing 5 pillars: patient & health worker safety; health workforce; essential services; community ownership; and information & surveillance. The new National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2017-2021 will take this work further, supported by a revised Basic Package of Essential Health Services 2015-2020 and several sub-sector and programmatic plans. In 2016, a Joint External Evaluation of IHR Core Capacities (JEE) was conducted.

LINKAGE TO UHC

As Sierra Leone continues to recover and return to pre-Ebola health system priorities, there is a renewed call for long-term, sustainable, and equitable progress towards achieving universal health coverage (UHC) and improving health for all Sierra Leoneans. Major progress has been made in health information systems strengthening. According to the JEE, Sierra Leone now has a robust revitalized integrated disease surveillance and response (IDSR) system with countrywide coverage.

The vision of the new National Health Sector Strategic Plan (NHSSP II 2017-2021) is a well-functioning national health system that delivers efficient and high-quality healthcare of high quality, accessible, affordable and equitable to all. In March 2017, the government announced a mandatory and universal Social Health Insurance (SLeSHI) scheme, to be funded by contributions by sector employees, ear-marked taxes and health budget allocation. The next steps for establishing the scheme include the passing of the SLeSHI Act in 2017 and the continued sensitization of key stakeholders nationwide.

WHO SUPPORT TO DATE

- Standardization and harmonization of district level annual operational plans/planning cycles 2016-17
- Strengthening of health financing (Health Accounts 2014)
- Mapping of central level MOHS coordination structures and technical working groups
- Development of key strategies including the new NHSSP 2017-2021, HRH and HIS strategies and SARA

Remaining gap: Leadership and management capacity

- ↳ **Recommendation: Conduct leadership and management trainings for District Health Management Teams as well as MOHS leadership**

Remaining gap: Enhance the performance of health

- ↳ **Recommendation : Institutionalize the Human Resources for Health Information System**

Remaining gap: Increase access to essential health services

- ↳ **Recommendation : Review performance of community health centres & health financing**

Stories from the field:

A New Strategy for Human Resources for Health



Sierra Leone's new five-year **Strategy for Human Resources for Health (2017-2021)** aims to improve the quality of health services and ensure it is better placed to respond to current and emerging health needs.

"Well-trained and motivated health workers are the bedrock of a strong, functioning healthcare system," said Dr. Anders Nordström, Country Representative for WHO in Sierra Leone. "An effective health workforce is not just about numbers, but also making sure that staff are trained, capable, and engaged to provide quality health services and ultimately save lives."

Significant actions have been taken to improve the skills and quantity of workers, with the overall health workforce has grown by over 20% across the last 5 years. The Strategy includes the following elements:

- Steps to improve trainings & management of health workers at all levels
- Strategies to improve rural retention rates
- How to absorb more workers into the payroll
- Planning & financing efforts to support implementation



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