

UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Sierra Leone

SUMMARY FOR 2005

Critical Issues for Children and Women

Ravaged by a 10-year conflict, Sierra Leone is ranked last in the Human Development Index, with for example the highest rate of maternal and infant mortality. Access to basic essential services, such as health, water and sanitation, education and child rights remains a real challenge.

Children's health is heavily affected by prevailing diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea, malnutrition, and acute respiratory infections. Wide disparities in access to safe water and sanitation are observed. The quality of education is a major concern, with many over-aged children at school, due to missed opportunities during the war. Increasing cases of sexual abuse and exploitation are reported and the high number of street children indicates real protection concerns. HIV/AIDS is a major threat, with little prevention, lack of access to education and health care systems.

Planned Humanitarian Action for 2005

In 2005, UNICEF programme interventions will continue to emphasize on child survival, access to basic education, child protection, access to safe water and prevention of HIV/AIDS among young people. UNICEF has developed strategic inter-agency partnerships with line ministries, UN agencies and NGO partners.

Health and Nutrition: UNICEF will support immunization activities through provision of vaccines, supplies, and medical equipment and undertaking targeted nutrition activities. It will provide neonatal and emergency obstetrics care and promote safe feeding practices. Training of health staff and community sensitisation campaigns will be implemented.

Water and Environmental Sanitation: UNICEF will provide potable water and sanitation facilities to public facilities like schools and health centres, set up water and sanitation local management committees, and launch public information campaigns on good hygiene practises.

Education: UNICEF will develop a strategic plan for complementary education with emphasis on girls' education, assist in basic rehabilitation, train teachers, and provide essential education materials. UNICEF will provide teacher support services, and mobilise communities in preparing children for schooling.

Protection: UNICEF will support birth registration, identify separated, refugee, and sex worker children, provide essential care, and reunify them with their families. UNICEF will support community based mechanisms to report and prevent sexual abuse, and build capacities of social and health workers, police and probation officers on care and counselling.

HIV/AIDS: UNICEF will train and build capacities of youth peer educators and institutional counterparts including religious leaders in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Extensive public awareness campaigns targeting youth will be implemented.

Summary of UNICEF Financial Needs for 2004	
Sector	US\$
Health and Nutrition	1, 300,000
Water and Environmental Sanitation	400,000
Education	900,000
Child Protection	700,000
HIV/AIDS	300,000
Total¹	3,600,000

¹ The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 12%. The actual recovery rate on individual contributions will be calculated in accordance with the Executive Board Decision 2003/9 of 5 June 2003.