**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

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| **Inclusive democratic governance cluster**  **Strategic Note** |  |

**SIERRA LEONE**

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# OVERVIEW

The Governance cluster strategy sets the agenda for UNDP’s intervention in Sierra Leone for the period 2020-2023. The goal of the strategy is to support the achievement of an ***effective***, ***transparent***, ***accountable***, ***inclusive*** and ***participatory*** governance ***guided by the rule of law*** for enhanced service delivery. This is in line with the Sierra Leone’s Medium-term National Development Plan (MT-NDP) 2019-2023, specifically ***Cluster 4: ‘Governance and Accountability for Results’*** with the goal to achieve a peaceful, cohe­sive, secure and just society,[[1]](#footnote-1) and ***cluster 5: ‘Empowering Women, Children and persons with disabilities.’*** Governance remains the key thread that runs through all the sectors to ensure the achievement of national development agenda. The specific objectives of the Cluster programme are ***to strengthen systems and structures for good governance; enhance service delivery for all especially for the vulnerable and women***; ***respect for and protection of the human rights and the rule of law***; ***promote sustained peace and dialogue for effective conflict management.***

At regional level, UNDP Governance programme is aligned with the ***African Union Agenda 2063*** with the guiding vision of ‘An Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful Africa’. Specifically, the ***programme contributes to Aspirations 2, 3, 4, & 6***[[2]](#footnote-2). The programme is also aligned with the Sustainable Development ***Goals (SDG) 16,*** which seeks to ‘promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development; provide access to justice for all; and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. Sierra Leone is currently the lead country and chair of the task force on the implementation of SDG 16 and has opted for voluntary reporting in two years’ time. Hence the governance programme is crucial in ensuring that this exemplary position which Sierra Leone occupies at the global stage is maintained. Further, the UNDP Governance programme interventions ***contribute to SDG 5*** on promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, ***SGD 10*** on reducing inequality and SDG 17 which seeks to forge strengthen partnerships for the achievement of sustainable development.

Regarding the programmatic need for ‘delivering-as-one’ at the country level, ***the governance programme is in conformity with the UN Sustainable Development Corporation Framework (UNSDCF) for Sierra Leone 2020-2023*** (extended to December 2019) under the thematic results area on democratic governance. The programme will further contribute to achievement of governance aspirations of the new UNDAF under the results area: “All people in Sierra Leone, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, enjoy secure, peaceful, inclusive and cohesive society; and hold duty bearers accountable at all levels for effective governance that is transparent, has respect for the rule of law, human rights and gender responsive by 2023”. The cluster contributed to the achievement of democratic institutions’ capacity strengthening in order to enable good governance; and justice and security sector service delivery systems improved to expedite processes and procedures in compliance with international human rights principles.

# CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Sierra Leone has made significant progress towards consolidating peace, strengthening democratic institutions, rule of law and human right culture since the end of the 11-year civil war. In 2019, the Sierra Leone ranked as the 52nd and 6th most peaceful country in the world and Sub-Saharan Africa respectively.[[3]](#footnote-3) Further, Sierra Leone scored 85.8 on national security in the 2018 Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), the highest among the categories measured by the foundation[[4]](#footnote-4). Additionally, in 2018, Sierra Leone held transparent, inclusive and credible elections that resulted in the peaceful transfer of power from one political party to the other and ushered in the most politically diverse parliament since independence. Despite these enviable rankings, the country remains polarised along ethno-political and regional lines with a clear North-West and South-East divide following the 2018 presidential and parliamentary elections. The 2019 global peace ranking is a testament to the deterioration in peacefulness of the country after being ranked 35th and 3rd most peaceful country in the world and in sub-Saharan Africa respectively in 2018.[[5]](#footnote-5)

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report (2004) pointed to the contours of the problem when it concluded that the war in Sierra Leone was largely ***the result of the failure of governance and government institutions with the corresponding rights violations and rampant impunity for human rights infringement.*** The report states that for good governance to obtain, ***the constitutional requirements for the separation of power must not merely be written but must be reaffirmed continuously in application***[[6]](#footnote-6). In response to this, the country embarked on reviewing the constitution which was perceived to contain contradictory provisions that do not only contribute to conflict and entrenched inequalities but continue to pose a severe obstacle in the application and interpretation of ordinary laws as enacted by Parliament. After an extensive consultative process of multiple groups, about 80% of the recommendations ***that included a 30% quota for women at all levels of governance, were not considered,*** and as a result, efforts to facilitate change in the low levels of representation of women in parliament and other decision-making processes were frustrated. Further, the TRC report noted that skewed development landscape, where rural areas were mostly neglected, contributed to the war. In response to this, the government reintroduced decentralized governance structures through the Local Government Act 2004 and subsequently commenced a devolution process with the view to transfer core functions from central to local governments. Of the 80 functions to be devolved, only 56 have been transferred to local councils with resultant impact on service delivery and effective engagement of communities in decision making processes. The MTNDP 2019-2023 highlights the devolution of functions of key ministries as a core priority for delivering development results to rural communities.

***Corruption*** remains one of the biggest challenges to development in sierra Leone where it is estimated that government losses considerable amount of money to corruption[[7]](#footnote-7) including bribery as an obstacle adversely affecting the citizenry in their quest to access basic services across the governance spectrum. ***Oversight institutions*** that should promote accountability and transparency continue to grapple with independence and are either not adequately equipped or resourced to perform their role or are constrained by weak laws that continue to affect their ability to perform as per their mandates. In instances where strong laws exist, the poor implementation of these laws and claw-back clauses from the Constitution and other laws reinforce the culture of impunity and lack of respect for human rights.

***Elections*** have become flashpoints and a test of the independence and strength of democratic institutions. The rule of law came under significant strain before, building up to and post-elections in 2018 with the delay in the announcement of the electoral calendar by the executive, multiple recourse to litigation leading to an injunction placed on the NEC; thereby delaying the re-run of the 2018 Presidential election, multiple court cases leading to several court injunctions post-elections. The resulting tensions in the election of the Speaker of Parliament as well as the removal of heads of key institutions of governance deepened the already fragile structure of governance after the 2018 elections. These challenges signify the institutional weakness and low level of independence that democratic institutions still face.

***The justice system*** landscape in Sierra Leone is also complex, characterized by a dual system of justice with the coexistence of both customary and written law; close to 70%, or even more of the population live in areas where the reach of the formal justice system is weak or nonexistent and reliance on customary law is the norm. This arrangement is responsible for some of the structural barriers that limit the achievement of equality, the empowerment of women and disparate rates of development in rural and urban areas. The reform of local governance for example that commenced in 2004, stalled having achieved the devolution of 56 of the 80 core government functions to local councils. The unclear roles between local councils, paramount chiefs, district offices continue to hamper efforts geared towards bringing governance closer to communities and vice versa. Associated with the above challenges are the issues of corruption, bribery, limited transparency and lack of trust in institutions of recourse for rights abuses and violations and the overarching mistrust or lack of confidence in the delivery of services by institutions.

While the recent elections were peacefully conducted and largely commended for being free and fair with UNDP playing a central role in the coordination of assistance and the enhancement of collaboration across the board ***during the electioneering process, they highlighted deep ethnic divisions*** in the country and ***entrenched political maneuvering*** with the potential to destabilize the peace of the country. They also highlighted the limitations of a system of the ‘winner having it all’ in a modern dispensation especially around political representation in Parliament. ***The divisive political campaigning*** and ***strong ethno-regional rhetoric*** used by political parties during the election, coupled with reports of electoral violence negatively affected the maintenance of peace and social cohesion in the country, with 183 politically related conflicts recorded between January 2017 and April 2018[[8]](#footnote-8). Election related civic education appeared to be too little, hence did not yield the change in culture.

An important aspect of UNDP’s work in Sierra Leone has focused on the reform of state institutions including security and justice sector reforms and support to key democratic institutions, namely parliament, media, electoral management bodies and civil society organizations. Over the years there have been significant improvements in the country’s democratic governance reflected in the peaceful conduct of four presidential and parliamentary elections in 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2018. Most noticeably, progress within the democratic governance landscape is the successful conduct of the parliamentary and presidential elections which led to the peaceful transfer of power from the ruling APC to the opposition SLPP in 2018 after the drawdown of UNIPSIL (the UN Mission in Sierra Leone) in 2014. This marked a fundamental shift in the maturity of the country’s democratic and developmental credentials.

# PROPOSED APPROACH

The Inclusive Democratic Governance strategy is informed by the current country context vis-à-vis the governance profile of state institutions and the need for suitable responses to facilitate change. Therefore, programme implementation will be consistent with the undermentioned UNDP’s traditional approaches, whilst also exploring innovative means of delivering portfolio activities and interventions.

The pursuit of the vision of a peaceful Sierra Leone characterized by inclusive democratic institutions, respect for rule of law and human rights standards, transparent and accountable service delivery’, requires appropriate programmatic approaches with causal linkages between problems, solutions and programme objectives. Lessons learnt from previous programme interventions suggest that ensuring sustained partnerships with sister UN agencies and relevant national stakeholders in project activities is extremely critical to optimize achievement of desired results. In this regard, the Inclusive democratic Governance Cluster programme will employ the following approaches:

***Fostering programme coherence and integration of interventions:*** The programme focus on contributing to the MTNDP cluster objective on governance and accountability for results, requires linkages between programme components and actions, inter-cluster synergies and collaboration with external partners to increase effectiveness. Therefore, emphasis will be placed on the integration of implementation strategies of mutually reinforcing governance portfolios to maximise results, an example being the capacity strengthening of electoral courts to adjudicate elections related offences, mainstreaming human rights in elections management, enhancing security sector management and community policing to harness peace and social cohesion among others. In order to preclude the possibility for duplication of efforts and ensure efficiency, ***existing collaboration with strategic UN agency partners will be maintained***. This inter-agency collaboration will be crucial to support the priorities of national institutions in a coordinated manner, particularly on ***policy and legal reforms***, ***continuation of the Constitutional review process***, ***building social cohesion,*** ***women’s empowerment*** and contributing to ***enhancing oversight institutions’ ability to deliver on their mandates.***

***Promoting national ownership and strong partnerships:*** The programme approach further acknowledges the relevance of promoting national ownership to ensure planned interventions are effectively carried out and sustained. Accordingly, programme partners and beneficiaries will be involved in all programme management functions from design to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. ***Programme delivery through nationally led coordination frameworks***, attracts commitment of national development actors. In this regard, it will provide an opportunity for the integration of national perspectives through offering of expert opinions and recommendations relevant to programme delivery and management. In previous years, the Justice Sector Coordination Officer (JSCO), the Human Rights Working Group (HRWG) forum, the National Committee on Gender-Based Violence (NAC GBV) among many, have helped to reinforce national leadership and ownership of development agendas. The capacity of these structures will be further enhanced. Engagement with civil society organisations (CSOs) has also proven to be an important approach to demand accountability for service delivery from duty-bearers and the need to strengthen such partnership with CSOs is important and crucial to enhance a bottom-top approach.

***Human rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment:*** Mainstreaming human rights principles and standards, gender equality and ensuring women’s empowerment into national development programmes are considered as essential corporate compliance issues for programming and accountability for contribution to SDG 5 results. Therefore, these thematic issues will be integrated in all programme interventions from support to elections, Constitutional review process, justice service delivery, local governance and participation, conflict prevention to capacity building of oversight and accountability institutions.

***Leave no-one behind****:* The governance programme approach will also be influenced by the need to ensure ‘no-one is left behind’ and therefore will offer the opportunity through concrete actions to ensure marginalized communities, vulnerable population especially people living with disabilities (PWDs) and women benefit from programme interventions. Both at local and national governance levels, the programme will support people-centered development that provides opportunity for participatory processes and inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable population into local development planning and decision-making processes. Gender justice will be reinforced to address the discrimination within the justice system, specifically in terms of fostering the delivery of quality justice services and supporting legal reforms that are geared toward protecting the vulnerable and women. They (Women) will be empowered for the advancement of their rights to effective participation and representation in democratic institutions and processes and enjoyment of right to property entitlement and more.

**THEORY OF CHANGE**

The underlying theory of change that will shape the Governance Cluster interventions in Sierra Leone is based on the following inter-connected assumptions: *1)* ***IF*** *justice, security, human rights, political institutions, peace and security infrastructures are strengthened in a cohesive and collaborative approach, IF electoral management systems, peace and social cohesion infrastructures, oversight and justice and security sector systems of governance are reformed and enabled to function in accordance with established national and international standards,* ***THEN*** *this will lead to improved**governance with enhanced oversight, accountability and inclusiveness, leading to improved service delivery, greater public confidence in institutions, improved conflict resolution and increased public trust which counters potential conflict triggers that undermine peaceful long-term development and social cohesion and enhances service delivery*.

**If**

**Justice, security and human rights institutions are strengthened**

**Then**

**Electoral laws are reformed and capacity of democratic institutions are strengthened**

**Capacities of peace infrastructures are strengthened and communities empowered to promote dialogues and reconciliation**

**Local government policy and legal frameworks are strengthened and local communities are empowered to monitor government programmes**

**Justice, security, human rights institutions will improve their governance systems and processes to effectively to deliver services and thereby improve public confidence**

**Local governance will improve its service delivery and increase citizens’ participation especially women**

**National and local level disputes are solved more effectively, efficiently and fairly, thereby building trust and social cohesion**

**There will be improved electoral cycle management, oversight and accountability in service delivery**

**Women are legally empowered and they discover and value their potential**

If these are achieved, then …

***Figure 1: Inclusive Democratic Governance Programme Strategy Outlook***

**Outputs**

**Interventions**

* **Strengthen delivery capacity of justice, human rights and security institutions**
* **Improve legal reforms and outreach of institutions**
* **Foster gender justice**
* **Strengthen capacity of CSOs and communities to demand accountability for services**
* **Strengthen capacities of infrastructure for peace at local and national level**
* **Support cross-border community security and improve trust between communities and security institutions**
* **Empower women and youth for effective inclusion and participation in peace building process**
* building process
* **Strength capacity of EMBs: NEC, PPRC, and Electoral Courts**
* **Support constitutional review and legislative reforms to increased women representation**
* **Strength parliamentary service systems**
* **Strength local councils’ inclusive and** **participatory development processes**

**Problem**

* **Weak capacity of EMBs**
* **Ineffective functional and financial devolution**
* **Weak accountability and oversight**
* **Heightened ethno-political and regional polarisation**
* **Lack of trust in security institutions**
* **Mistrust and unresolved grievances**
* **Weak justice and security institutions**
* **Limited compliance with the rule of law and human rights**
* **Discriminatory law and practices against women**
* **Weak accountability and oversight institutions**

**Context**

**Ineffective governance institutions, discriminatory norms and practices, gender and exclusion, ineffective peace infrastructure, insecurity and mistrust between communities, centralisation of governance**

# PROGRAMME FOCUS

The Inclusive Democratic Governance Programme comprises three broad components or programme portfolios. These include the Strengthening Rule of Law, Human Rights and Access to Justice, Strengthening Democratic Institutions and Sustaining Peace and National Cohesion. Each of these portfolios has various projects which contribute to the overall objective of strengthening democratic governance, oversight and accountability of state institutions.

## Strengthening Rule of Law, Human Rights and Access to Justice

***The objective of this result area is to strengthen the capacities and service delivery mechanisms of justice and security sector institutions to deliver timely and accountable services that are guided by the rule of law.***

This portfolio contributes to the MTNDP’s Governance sub-cluster 4.5: ‘Promoting inclusive and accountable justice institutions’ and sub-cluster 4.9: ‘Strengthening security institutions’; cluster 5: ‘Empowering Women, Children and persons living with disabilities’ (PWDs). It is also aligned with SDG 16: ‘Promoting peace, justice and strong institutions’ and SDG 5: ‘Promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls’ in order to enhance access to justice for women and to reduce violence against women (VAW). This portfolio is also aligned with the Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan (JSRSIP IV) 2019-2023 and the strategic implementation plans around Security Sector Reform (Second Security Sector Review for Sierra Leone (2012-2022). Under this result area, the Inclusive Democratic Governance programme will focus on capacity strengthening of national justice and security institutions to ensure effective delivery of quality services. Specifically, it will cover Support to Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL), Strengthening Gender Justice in Sierra Leone, Support the Judiciary of Sierra Leone and the Sierra Leone Correctional Services (SLCS).

To achieve this, the portfolio will:

1. Enhance capacities and service delivery mechanisms of justice and security sector institutions to deliver quality services to citizens.
2. Enhance access to justice for vulnerable and marginalized groups especially women, girls, PWDs and the aged.
3. Strengthen the demand side of justice services in communities.
4. Improve institutional reforms through legal framework review and quality legislation enactment.
5. Improve institutional reforms of the SLCS through strengthening conditions of detention with enhanced sanitation, systemic application of standards of detention and reform of cases and records management in a transparent and sustained manner, achieving 50% food and 80% furniture sufficiency;
6. Enhance predictability of judicial processes contributing to citizens’ confidence building and trust.
7. Strengthen gender justice and women’s empowerment.

## Conflict Prevention & Mitigation

***The objective this portfolio is to strengthen national and local capacities and structures to prevent and mitigate conflicts for sustained peace and national cohesion***

This portfolio seeks to support peacebuilding and social cohesion in Sierra Leone in line with the MTNDP agenda of the new government, specifically contributing to sub-cluster 4.1: ‘Political development for national cohesion’ and cluster 5: Empowering Women, Children and persons with disabilities. The portfolio is aligned with SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) with a strong focus on SDG 5 (Gender equality), as it aims to enhance participation of women in peace building. It is also aligned with UNDP, Global strategic plan, UNSDCF for Sierra Leone and UNDPs Country Programme Document (CPD) 2020 - 2023.

The portfolio will build on the lessons learned from implementing the Conflict Prevention and Mitigation during the 2018 electoral cycle and the Security Sector Reform (SSR) initiatives as well as years of UN and development partners’ support to transition, stability and peacebuilding in Sierra Leone. It takes a holistic approach bringing together peace and social cohesion in a broader way through interventions under one framework which will enhance synergies and coordination. Synergies will be sharpened and harnessed between the ROL and Conflict Prevention portfolios. The ultimate objective is to ensure that peace is sustained, capacity of national institutions is enhanced, and coordination is strengthened at all levels.

To achieve this, the portfolio will:

1. Enhance capacities of national and sub-national institutions for peace, conflict prevention and mediation.
2. Strengthen partnerships between communities and security sector institutions to provide joint solutions to promote social cohesion and peacebuilding in communities
3. Strengthen peace and security to prevent conflict and promote social cohesion along cross-border areas.
4. Strengthen community-Based early warning and response systems for conflict prevention, mitigation and response at sub-national levels.
5. Empower women and youth to lead strategic actions to address SGBV, sustain peace, and advocate for inclusion.

## Strengthening Democratic Institutions

This portfolio seeks to support continued institutional and capacity strengthening of democratic institutions in the performance of their mandates while empowering citizens to fully participate in governance. It aligns with the GoSL’ s drive to enhance good governance and fight corruption and will use the approach of strengthening oversight institutions such as Parliament; National Electoral Commission to deliver free, fair and inclusive elections; the civil and vital statistics to cost effectively produce data for national planning and voter register; as well as local governance structures to ensure governance and service delivery is people-centred. The Portfolio responds to MTNDP cluster 4.1 & cluster 5 and SDG 16 & 5.

***The objective this portfolio is to increase capacities of democratic institutions for effective and efficient service delivery***

To achieve this, the programme will focus on:

* Improve legislative and oversight functions
* Strengthen legislative reform processes and enhancing capacities for improved service delivery by institutions.
* taking governance closer to communities to ensure national development filters to communities via local councils.
* Increase civic knowledge and ensure citizens’ voice particularly vulnerable, youth and women are reflected in decision making processes.
* Enhance capacity for free fair and credible elections.
* Legal identity for all citizens and residents for people centered development planning and security.

## CLUSTER OUTPUTS

* Targeted democratic, oversight, accountability and monitoring institutions have strengthened technical and functional capacities for improved governance.
* Justice, security and democratic institutions have sustained reforms for strengthened rule of law, order and democratic principles.
* Media and civil society have enhanced technical and functional capacity for increased inclusive engagement and participation in decision-making processes.
* Central and local government have reviewed and harmonized legal framework, devolved systems, functions & resources for improved and inclusive service delivery.

**Linkages with other UNDP Clusters[[9]](#footnote-9)**

* Legislative reform such as Land reform, of other sectors has linkages with Sustainable growth cluster and Strategic Advisory Unit
* Strengthening Democratic Institutions has linkages with the Sustained Peace Portfolio through the support to local governance via initiatives that foster local early warning mechanisms, and to the Sustainable Growth cluster via the local economic development project.
* Gender equality and women’s empowerment and media are cross-cutting across all portfolios and clusters.
* Youth empowerment in the Sustainable Growth cluster has linkages with support to Youth sustaining peace in the Sustaining Peace Portfolio.

# SWOT ANALYSIS

The commitment to an effective delivery of programme intervention is predicated on the Cluster’s internal strengths. The institutionalized practice of result-based management (RBM) methodology will provide an opportunity for a coherent framework for strategic planning and management based on learning. This invaluable corporate practice will help to improve management effectiveness and accountability for planned results, reinforced by effective international control and oversight mechanism. Furthermore, programme implementation will be supported by a highly skilled and experienced the team of personnel. The cluster maintains a team of staff with extensive expertise and competencies in managing capacity building initiatives that are relevant to the various projects within the inclusive democratic governance programme. Despite this staff strength, the perception of poor staff incentives has the potential to affect team morale and ultimately risk staff turn-over. The internal risks and external threats will be countered through effective engagement for improved staff conditions of service, support capacity building, strengthen partnership and negotiation to improve systems and mobilise resources.

***Figure 2: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis***

**Positive**

**Negative**

**Weaknesses**

* Perceived poor incentive
* Inability to retain qualify staff
* Staff turn-over affecting ability of institution to develop a strong institutional memory to sustain programmes and interventions

**Strengths**

* Proven ability to influence policy development and develop national capacities
* Result-based management approaches and effective internal control and oversight
* Commitment to teamwork
* Staff experience and skills with long term engagement of national counterparts

**Internal**

**Threats**

* Endemic corruption in governance institutions
* Polarised political atmosphere
* Limited confidence in governance institutions
* Limited funding opportunities locally
* Limited government commitment to complementary funding

**Opportunities**

* Strong partnership with national government institutions, CSOs and donor community
* Strong commitment to reduce corruption
* Trusted and reliable partner of government and other development practitioners

**External**

# COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

As a development-oriented organisation coupled with its long years of presence in Sierra Leone, UNDP enjoys some comparative advantages over other development partners. The undermentioned are noteworthy.

UNDP, through its democratic governance cluster programme, has provided country-level leadership in key thematic areas such as support to the human rights commission to reinforce rights-based approach to development and policy formulation, rule of law, Parliamentary development, conflict prevention, elections, constitutional review process and enhancing women’s political participation.

Furthermore, due to the many years of presence and respect for the principle of neutrality and fostering dialogue for peaceful resolution of emerging challenges and conflict, UNDP through the democratic governance cluster, has been able to establish an unmatched wide network of partnerships with stakeholders including national and local government authorities, CSOs and strategic partnerships with donors. This has been extremely relevant in building trust and enhancing partnerships, which is critical for attracting strategic support for UNDP’s programmes, fostering national ownerships, dialogue and smooth implementation.

In the area of Rule of Law and access to justice, UNDP’s engagement with the justice and security sector partners presents a unique and unrivalled level of partnership, trust and commitment to action that has been relied upon by justice and security sectors to embark on reforms, drive procedural and administrative changes within justice and security sectors governance institutions. This deepened partnership continues to be useful for transformation of the sector as well as shaping the engagement of the sectors with other development partners.

UNDP’s niche also includes its ability to influence policy and develop capacities, especially in the democratic governance thematic area. Over the years, the democratic governance unit has implemented several projects on policy research and formulation, and capacity building working with government. This has attracted strategic and trusted partnerships with donors who believe UNDP has requisite capacities to effectively implement their programmes priorities in supporting the government.

The vast experience working on a wide range of programmes, the governance unit has been able to generate and build knowledge on best practices. One of such best practices is the integrated or collaborative programmatic approach to strengthening capacities of democratic institutions and processes, thereby demonstrates the ability to harness wide range of support for its programme and projects.

# Programme Governance AND IMPLEMENTATION MODALITY

In order to ensure timely, coherent and mutually accepted and beneficial implementation strategy of the programme, a Cluster Steering Committee (SC) will be established comprising of senior representatives from Ministries Departments and agencies (MDAS), Donor representatives, and senior representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The SC will be chaired by the Minister of State in the Vice President’s Office and co-chaired by the UNDP Resident Representative. The SC will meet on a bi-annual basis (or as required) to provide strategic guidance, agree on targets and delivery of programme outputs, advise on risk mitigation strategy, identify lessons learned that will add value to its efforts in achieving results and in disseminating progress on implementation and resource mobilization strides. The SC will ensure synergies with other Clusters and alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). Terms of Reference (TOR) will be developed to provide strategic guidance to the SC to enable it to steer the Governance Cluster toward achieving its objectives.

Each Portfolio will establish a Portfolio Board with membership comprising of key participating MDAs, the portfolio manager, project managers, project technical specialists and key implementing CSO representatives. The portfolio manager will serve as Secretary to the Board which will be chaired by a selected government institution and co-chaired by the UNDP Resident Representative or his representative. The Technical Committee will meet at least twice a year with a maximum of 3 meetings. Emergency meetings may be convened as the need may so require with exchanges through emails and other communication means that have been documented sufficing for this purpose. The Portfolio Board meetings will provide an important forum to enhance coordination of portfolio activities at the technical level, address implementation challenges that might arise during the programme cycle, document best practices and lessons learned. The Portfolio Board will feed into the work of the Cluster SC through representation and updates on the Portfolio work by the Portfolio Manager.

The Implementation Modality of the Governance Cluster will build on lessons learned from the implementation of the past CPD and will combine both upstream and downstream approaches to working with government and other sector partners.

The downstream approach will foster efforts toward direct implementation that enhances the ability of support to trigger direct changes in the lives of community resident beneficiaries of interventions. This approach will aim at supporting rural and other isolated populations in efforts to bring governance processes and administration closer to the people.

The Upstream approach will strengthen direct support to government and other non-governmental organizations that will be selected as implementing partners. This approach will foster capacity development of government and non-governmental organizations and will complement efforts toward reform processes and harnessing implementation around strengthening institutional capacities to deliver quality, expedited and fair services for all citizens.

# PARTNERSHIP

The programme approach recognises that building strategic partnerships is critical and indispensable for the successful delivery of development interventions and results in Sierra Leone. In this regard, the programme will strengthen relationship with its traditional partners such as the DFID, Irish Aid and European Delegation in Sierra Leone and government counterparts, civil society organisations, and continue to leverage new partnerships. Partnership opportunities with bilateral and multilateral institutions in the sub-region such as the Embassies of Canada and Norway will also be explored to broaden funding sources to support interventions. Working with government partners will boost supply of services while the work with CSOs will increase demand for systems strengthening and delivery of services. The programme will also draw on the work of research institutions and support national data systems to inform an evidence-based development intervention. South-South cooperation will also be strengthened for increased support to capacity-building and development.

# PROGRAMME SUSTAINABILITY

To ensure there is ownership of programme interventions by national partners and thus sustaining achievements, interventions will continue to prioritize capacity development that is complementary rather than supplementary to government existing initiatives. The Governance Cluster programme will ensure that requisite institutional and human resource capacities are developed, sharpened and harnessed to manage development interventions. Accordingly, key government and civil society stakeholders have been involved in the CPD programme design, and will remain engaged throughout the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national projects. UNDP will continue to strengthen national partners’ capacity in core competencies to enable them assume responsibility for their own development by sustaining programme achievements following completion of activities. UNDP will in addition empower and build the capacity of the demand side and beneficiaries through support to NGOs/CSOs to promote and defend their rights and freedoms and hold government accountable for right protection, promotion and fulfilment. As part of the exit plan, planned interventions which are in line with national strategies will be progressively phased-out to national partners during the lifespan of each project or intervention, and eventually incorporated into institutional strategies and budgets.

# PROGRAMME RISKS AND MITIGATION

**Shocks/Humanitarian Disasters**: The delivery of last CPD was severely affected by the Outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease epidemic that created a state of emergency and diversion of development funds to the fight in combating the epidemic. As such, development outcomes were not achieved as planned after almost 18 months of fighting the epidemic and recovery period. While chances remain for repeat of infectious diseases and or environmental disasters, the CO has supported GoSL to strengthen early warning systems and response mechanisms to mitigate these shocks and will continually work, throughout this CPD cycle in maintaining these systems. In addition, the programme will develop and refine its business continuity plan (BCP) to ensure that emerging risks associated with shocks and humanitarian disasters do not adversely affect the delivery of the programme.

**Fiduciary Risk:**

Corruption remains a huge threat to the fight against poverty in Sierra Leone. The country’s transparency index has consistently been high (30 average points) for three consecutive years (2016-2018). In 2019 however, the GoSL supported the Anti-Corruption Commission to step-up the fight against corruption; Sierra Leone qualified for the MCC due mainly to an improvement in its corruption index. The CO will continue to work with GoSL through the ACC and other oversight mechanisms in reducing corruption and strengthening the environment for achieving development results. The CO will employ its own policies particularly in procurement and programme implementation to mitigate the possibility of funds losses while supporting efforts geared toward strengthening national systems.

**Operational/Delivery Risk:**

Over the years, Sierra Leone has seen increased and improved capacities both human and institutional since the end of the civil war. The GoSL has prioritized human development as the vehicle for achieving the MT-NDP and has backed this with a flagship Free and Quality Education programme. UNDP and other development partners have contributed to the development of state institutions and human capacities to staff these institutions. However, there is still room for improvement in the institutional and human capacities; high turn-over rates of staff in GoSL affects institutional memory and capacities built over time. For example, the several capacity building initiatives by UNDP targeting police personnel operating within the Family Support Units of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) have corresponding to massive redeployment of trained staff to other units of the police. This has led to the deployment of staff with little capacities to man the FSUs. The CO will continue to transfer skills and build capacities across institutions while lobbying GoSL for better processes in staff transfers. Additionally, with a DIM modality of implementation of interventions, UNDP will continue to provide close technical assistance to its partners to ensure delivery of results within stipulated timeframe.

Internally, UNDP has suffered from severe staff turn-over within the closing stages of the last CPD. Issues around staff welfare and conditions of service within the institution have affected staff morale and work rates. While the organization has developed mechanisms to progressively address staff concerns, the UNDP Governance Cluster will work to strengthen internal mechanisms aimed at delivering programme interventions including providing close capacity enhancement for partners to improve on delivery.

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The programme monitoring and evaluation will be within the broad framework of UNDP’s policies and procedures. The annual work plans (AWPs) of various projects will define baselines, indicators and targets and these will form the basis for the monitoring and tracking of project progress through quarterly progress reviews and annual programme portfolio reviews and reports. Mid-term and final evaluations will focus on assessment of impact of the various thematic projects and identify key lessons from implementation.

The progress toward achievement of planned targets will be routinely monitored and assessed in order to track and record achievements and concurrently address identified risks and emerging challenges that may impact negatively on programme results. The role of Portfolio Boards will be critical to provide strategic direction to project implementation and fostering accountability for the achievement of planned results. All project activities will be closely monitored and supervised by the UNDP quality assurance unit and Senior Management, and routine joint monitoring visit involving the implementing partners and donors will be conducted.

In relation to data collection and enhancing credibility of results, several layers of data collection and validation will be established or strengthened. Primarily, within each portfolio, there will be a designate project officer responsible for M&E efforts. The work of this officer will be complemented by all project colleagues within the portfolio. The Portfolio Manager will serve as quality assurance for data collected. Data collected within each portfolio will feed into the central system of data collection within the Cluster managed by the Cluster M&E focal point who will be under the direction and supervision of the Governance Cluster Lead. All information collected will flow into the UNDP central system under the stewardship of the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative (O-P).

1. Government of Sierra Leone MTNDP (2019-2023), pg. IX and 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of the Pan-Africanism and the vision of the Africa’s renaissance; An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law; A peaceful and secure Africa; An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth and caring for children. AU Agenda 2063, pg. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Global Peace Index 2019, pg. 9. (Accessed: <http://visionofhumanity.org/reports/>). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. https://allafrica.com/stories/201811050731.html [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Global Peace Index 2018, pg. 8. (Accessed: <http://visionofhumanity.org/reports/>). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Report, 2004; pg. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. GTT Report 2018, Pg. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 183 politically related conflicts recorded in national media between January 2017 to April 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Diagrammatic linkage in Annex 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)