SIERRA LEONE – BO

DISTRICT PROFILE

Population | 403,182
Male | 197,395
Female | 205,787

Ethnic diversity: Mende (60% of the population)

Geographical area: 5473 sq. km (2113 sq. miles)

Language: Mende - the language of the majority, Krio is also widely spoken

District level poverty rate: 50.7%

Gini coefficient district: 0.33%

Net primary enrolment by district: 77.6%

Total fertility rate (TFR): 5.1%

Under 5 mortality rate: 102 deaths per 1000 live births

Life expectancy at birth: 45.3 years

Percentage all basic vaccination: 82%

Prevalence of food insecurity: 32%

Prevalence of chronic malnutrition: 38.5%

Agriculture as main livelihood: 49.4%

Livelihoods: Gold and diamond mining

Context: Bo district is in the Southern Province, and borders with Kenema district to the east, Tonkolili district to the north, Moyamba district to the west, Bonthe district to the southwest and Pujehun district to the south. It is the second most populous district in Sierra Leone (after the Western Area Urban district). Bo town is the second largest city in the country and the district capital. Other major towns in the district are Baoma, Bumpeh, Serabu, Sumbuya, Baiima and Yele. The fifteen chiefdoms of the district are Badjia, Bagbwe, Baoma, Bumpe Ngao, Jaiama, Kakua, Komboya, Lugbu, Niawa, Bo, Selenga, Tikonko, Valunia, Wonde and Gbo. The district population is ethnically and culturally diverse, particularly in the city of Bo, however, over 60% of the population belongs to the Mende ethnic group. During the May-October rainy season, the district receives an average of 292 cm rainfall annually.

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**SIERRA LEONE – BO**

**DISTRICT PROFILE**

**Population distribution:** The district population projection 2014 (see table)\(^1\) indicates that 6% are children under the age of 5 years, 54% are among the active workforce (15-64 years) while 25% falls between the age of 5 and 14 years. Among the active workforce, 43% of people reside in Bo town. 45% of the district population live in urban areas (55% are rural population). According to the projected population data\(^2\), the average family size is 5.7.

**Livelihood and Economy:** The major economic activities of the district population are gold and diamond mining, other activities include trading, agricultural production of rice and root crops, cash crops such coffee, cacao and oil palm plantation. Trading is also a livelihood means for many residents as the district serves the important trade route and business hub for the south west of the country. Traditional farming is a common livelihood and family income source for the majority of the population in the country, however, less than half (49%) of Bo residents are engaged in farming activities. The Wealth Index (WI)\(^8\) shows only 9% of residents fall under the poorest quintile and 22% are in the medium poor category. Outside the capital Freetown, poverty was relatively consistent across the country, however Bo district with a 50.7% poverty level remained one of the lowest levels in the country. Despite a low level of poverty, the income inequality (Gini coefficient)\(^**\) stands at 0.33 (on a scale 0 to 1) which is moderately high compared to the national range between the highest level 0.42 in Bombali and the lowest level 0.21 in Tonkolili.

**Education:** The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST)\(^9\) conducted a school census for the 2012-13 school year and recorded 703 schools in the district, of which 64 were pre-primary, 520 primary, 94 junior secondary and 7 are senior secondary schools. In addition, there are 21 Technical Vocational Institutes and a Home Economics Centre. According to the same MEST census, most (83%)\(^9\) of these schools are owned by mission, private and community while the other 17% are government owned schools. There is a sharp decline (*see graph*) in school attendance between primary and junior levels, and the same trend has been observed between junior and senior secondary schools. The net primary enrolment varies widely among the districts; Bo has the second highest enrolment (78%) after the Western Area (83%). The district has one of the highest literacy rates in the country\(^3\). 108 (15%) mostly primary schools\(^3\) have a school feeding programme supported by NGOs. The Njala University is the second largest university in Sierra Leone located in Bo city. Bo Government Secondary School (commonly known as Bo School) is one of the biggest and most prominent secondary schools in West Africa\(^3\).

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**2014 Projected district population by age group & sex\(^1\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under 5</th>
<th>5 to 14</th>
<th>15-64</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35140</td>
<td>49598</td>
<td>104367</td>
<td>8290</td>
<td>197395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35107</td>
<td>49273</td>
<td>110118</td>
<td>11289</td>
<td>205787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70247</td>
<td>98871</td>
<td>214485</td>
<td>19579</td>
<td>403182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education level by Age & Sex\(^9\)**

- **Primary (6-11 yrs)**
  - Female: 57817
  - Male: 60213

- **Jr Sec (12-14 yrs)**
  - Female: 13807
  - Male: 12510

- **Sr. Sec (15-17 yrs)**
  - Female: 8105
  - Male: 5185

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Food Security: According to the Emergency Food Security Assessment in Sierra Leone 2015, over 57% of the district population are severe (10%) to moderately (47%) food insecure. The farmers also experienced important drops in rice production in 2014 compared to the previous year production level. The prevalence of chronic malnutrition among children 6-59 months is 38.5 (Stunting) for the same age group the rate is 22.9% measured by being underweight. Though malnutrition rates are relatively moderate compared to other districts, however, the rate remains high for the region. Food purchase accounts for 62% of household expenditure of the district residents, which undermine the capacity to allocate other essential expenditure such as health, education and family welfare.

Health: The district has 117 health facilities including one Government and two Mission hospitals, 27 Community Health Centers (CHC), 21 Community Health Posts, 62 Maternal and Child Health Posts (MCHP) and 4 private clinics. According to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) data 2013, on average a health facility serve 5,462 persons and has one bed for 2,061 people. The vaccination coverage is 82% among the children aged between 12-23 months old, 1.5% children of the same age group have never been vaccinated. The overall HIV prevalence rate is 1.4%, while the prevalence rate among women (1.8%) is higher compared to men (1%).

Water and Sanitation: (WASH): The Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MoEWR) comprehensive mapping of water points report 2012 indicated that the major drinking water sources for the district residents are wells, hand pumps, public water supplies (piped) and other sources (streams and untreated sources). There are some 3,656 functional water points of different sources, majority (2,412) of which are wells without a pump. During the time of the mapping exercise in 2012, 22% (797) water points were found not functioning, 275 of these sources need repairing. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) census for the 2012-13 school year indicated that 344 (47%) schools has safe drinking water sources (piped supplies and boreholes) inside the school compound while other schools are using wells, streams and other untreated sources. 69% (499) of schools have access to toilet facilities within the school premises.

Ebola Emergency and its impact: The last confirmed case of EVD was reported on 13 January 2015, since then the district has remained transmission free. After 133 days of no new cases, as of 26 May 2015, the government hospital holding and isolation centres were closed. On 7 November 2015, the day Sierra Leone declared end of EVD transmission, the district has reached 237 days without any reported EVD case. Bo district serves as a business route for the south-west part of the country, but during the EVD outbreak when movement was restricted and the closure of borders with the neighbouring countries negatively impacted the business communities and people reliant on this business.
Operational Organization at the District level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grant</td>
<td>NaCSA, WFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection</td>
<td>UNICEF, Save the Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Action Aid, British Council, DMC, Education For All, MEST, MOPADA, UNICEF, World Vision International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Security</td>
<td>WFP, FAO Brac, FANSI-SL, Finn Church Aid, NaCSA, World Vision and Welthungerhilfe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>WHO, UNICEF, IMC, MSF, UNFPA, MoHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>UNICEF, GOAL, WHH, Health Education Department, ISLAG/CHRISTAG/MoHS/SMAC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REFERENCES:

2 SLIS Map Code 02 16 Nov 2006.
4 A poverty profile for Sierra Leone, the World Bank and Statistics Sierra Leone, June 2013 (Calculations based on Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey 2011).
6 http://sierraleone.opendataforafrica.org
7 The state of Food Security and Nutrition in Sierra Leone 2011. The study was undertaken by the WFP in partnership with relevant ministries of the GoSL.
8 Emergency Food Security Assessment Sierra Leone 2015, Data collected in March April and report published in June 2015. The assessment was a joint effort by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security and WFP, FAO, ACF, World Vision, ACDI/VOCA, Save the Children and CARE.
9 Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MEST) conducted school census for the year 2012-2013
10 The Coping Strategy Index (CSI) is a WFP indicator that measures the frequency and severity of the coping strategies households employ when faced with food shortages.
11 Survey of availability of modern contraceptives and essential life-saving maternal and reproductive health medicines in service delivery points in Sierra Leone, Volume -2, February 2011
13 The Ministry of Energy and Water Resources (MoEWR) conducted comprehensive mapping exercise of water points report 2012

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**Definition: The Gini coefficient is often used to measure income inequality, a value of 0 expressing total equality and a value of 1 maximal inequality.**