"The children of any nation are its future.
A country, a movement, a person that does not value its youth and children does not deserve its future". **Oliver Tambo**

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Assessing Institutional Readiness for Harnessing Demographic Dividend in Sierra Leone Towards Developing A Comprehensive Demographic Dividend Profile and Monitoring Index for the country



The National Youth Forum - 2021

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Executive Summary

The Demographic Dividend (DD) is a concept that Was made popular during the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). It relates to the window of opportunity that avails itself during the transition of the population from high fertility and mortality to lower and desirable levels. Efforts geared towards harnessing DD in West and Central African Regions have started yielding results. In Sierra Leone, a nation with constantly increasing population growth rate amidst oscillating economic growth, the government with support from development partners continue to engage youths in the planning and implementation of development strategies linked to the demographic dividend and have also formulated policies and guidelines related to the DD. However, Sierra Leone is yet to have optimal policy and economic environment that are needed to harness the DD in the country and a national framework on DD that can be easily referenced or consulted. Similarly, the country is yet to assess and document institutional efforts geared towards harnessing DD since 2017. Therefore, this scoping exercise is both timely and essential in profiling what has been done at nation's institutional levels to harness DD and what initial results have been enacted from these efforts.

The scoping study adopted a desk review at the beginning of the assessment to review relevant literature and available DD-related reports to gauge the institutional readiness to harness DD. Another key approach employed by this scoping assessment was qualitative primary data collection that consisted of technical and stakeholder engagements. The ***'Technical Engagement'*** was organised to hear from the 6 man-team that previously travelled to Ghana for DD-related training in 2018 and to discuss the draft DD Profile they prepared during that training. A *broader '**stakeholder engagement'**,* brought together the consultants and key stakeholders from MDAs, Research Institutions, PIUs, Non-Governmental Organisations and UN Agencies to brainstorm around institutional readiness to harness DD. These engagements helped the consultants to fully understand the efforts made so far by the various stakeholders and their institutions in harnessing DD potential in the country.

It was found out that over 20 institutions are implementing projects and activities that are supportive of harnessing the DD in Sierra Leone. Similarly, there is DD profiling expertise in the country who can work to produce a comprehensive national profile with technical external support. Furthermore, development partners, especially UN Agencies like UNFPA and UNDP, are supporting DD-related activities. A demographic observatory is already established at Statistics Sierra Leone and is expected to be regularly updated. However, awareness of the DD concept and the AU Road Map is limited among stakeholders even when they are working on projects that are DD-related. Equally, there is little or no coordination among institutions working on DD projects. Furthermore, the demographic observatory established at Statistics Sierra Leone is yet to be functional and it is not very clear how it will be regularly updated.

Therefore, key recommendations are that a comprehensive DD profile be prepared jointly by the Institute for Population and Development Studies (IPDS), Fourah Bay College and the 6 MDA staff trained in Ghana on DD profiling using the most recent Sierra Leone's Mid Term Census results expected to be published soon. There is also a need for MoPED to regularly organise workshops for stakeholder engaged in DD programs, projects and activities. Furthermore, a regular training on aligning programs and projects with the 2017 AU Road Map

and tracking of progress at both institutional levels and national levels be organised on a quarterly basis. This will help improve DD tracking skills and reports on progress to be timely and accurate. That the Demographic Observatory be made functional and updated regularly by Statistics Sierra Leone and the Institute for Population and Development Studies to produce quarterly reports on DD progress. Finally, it is strongly recommended that a central coordinating Unit for coordination of all DD programs and activities be established and supervised by MoPED.

1.0. Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. General Background

The Demographic Dividend (DD) is a concept that was made popular during the IPCD. It relates to the window of opportunity that avails itself during the transition of the population from high fertility and mortality to their lowest. As succinctly described by UNFPA WCARO, DD describes the interaction between changes in a population's age structure brought about by the demographic transition and rapid economic growth.1 That is, declines in child mortality accompanied by fertility declines which result in a higher proportion of persons within the working-age population and a smaller number of dependants. The outcome is a boost to economic growth provided there are labour opportunities for the workers especially the young persons.

While developed countries have utilised the DD opportunities well to boost their economic growth, most least developed countries are yet to put the necessary modalities in place to fully harness the DD. Therefore, the advocacy efforts of Regional of Office for West and Central Africa (WCARO) of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is succeeding in having African leaders to make investment in young people their top priority in all national development, peace, and security initiatives.[1] Furthermore, stakeholders with their partners are constantly passionate to invest in family planning, health systems, education and job creation and continue to be committed to promoting a democratic society. All these efforts are geared toward harnessing DD in West and Central African Regions which have started yielding results.

In Sierra Leone, the Government engaged youth in the planning and implementation of development strategies linked to the demographic dividend and launched the National Youth Week in the presence of development partners, media, etc., while the government reaffirmed its commitments to empowering youth. The country is on record to make progress such as averting 63,000 unintended pregnancies, 463 unintended maternal deaths, and 22,700 unintended unsafe abortions in 2017[1]. Equally, a six-man team was sent to Ghana for training on modelling DD in 2017 and produced a draft DD Profile for the nation but was never completed and finalised. A youth conference was organised more recently where the government and partners reaffirmed their commitments to harnessing DD following the 2017 African Union (AU) Road Map. At the same time, UNFPA Sierra Leone has funded the establishment of the DD observatory meant to track national progress on DD although this is yet to be operationalized. UNFPA has also worked with different MDAs to produce DD-related

[1] UNFPA WCARO. (2018). Demographic Dividend in West and Central Africa: 2017 progress Report. Online Available from: https://sierraleone.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/EN-DDA-REPORT-WEB_1_1.pdf

policies such as the National Population Policy and the Youth Empowerment Policy among others. More recently, the Ministry for Basic and Senior Secondary Education launched its Radical Inclusion Policy approved by the cabinet on the 8th of April 2021. The aim of Radical Inclusion is to address inequity in accessing educational opportunities in the country. It is geared towards increasing access to such educational opportunities by all including the most marginalised children in society such as girls and children with disabilities that are widely recognised as more systematically excluded and, thus, likely to be out of school.

Despite these efforts, much remains to be done by the Government of Sierra Leone and its partners towards creating the optimal policy and economic environment that is needed to harness DD in the country. Similarly, there is no national framework on DD that can be easily referenced or consulted on DD issues in the country. Therefore, this scoping exercise is both timely and essential in profiling what has been done at institutional levels to harness DD in the country, and what initial results that have borne out of these efforts. Understanding this initial landscape is critical to informing the development of a comprehensive national DD profile.

1.2. Sierra Leone's Demographic Context

Sierra Leone's population has continuously increased since the first complete count of the nation's population in 1963. According to the 1985 Census Report,[2] the population of the country increased from 2.2 million in 1963 to 2.74 million in 1974, 3.5 million in 1985, 4.98 million in 2004 and 7.09 million in 2015.[3] The sex structure of the population has always been characterized by higher female population than male. In 1985, out of a population of 3.52 million, the male proportion was 1.76 million compared with 1.78 million females. Similarly, in 2004, of the 4.98 million population, there were 2.42 million males and 2.56 million females compared to 3.49 million males and 3.60 million females in 2015 when the population reached 7.09 (Forson and Yalancy, 2017).

As observed from the population figures, the nation's population growth rate has constantly increased. The relatively low population growth rate of 1.8 percent between 1985 and 2004 was associated with the 11-year civil war. Sierra Leone's population is expected to continue to increase and is projected to reach 9,077,691 in 2025 with males expected to account for 4,468,350 and females 4,609,341. (Sierra Leone 2015 Population and Housing Census Projection Report)

In consonance with the other population dynamics, the population density of the country increased from 48.2 persons per square kilometre in 1985 to 68.2 and 97.2 persons per square kilometres in 2004 and 2015, respectively. On the other hand, the sex ratio of the country in 1985 was 99 males per 100 females, declining to 94 males per 100 females in 2004 but increased slightly to 96.8 males to 100 females in 2015.[1&3] The nation's 2022 population is estimated at 8,274,983 (49.2% male and 50.8% female) with a growth rate of 2.1%. The proportion of the population under 15 years is 41.8% compared with 57% and 3.7% between

2 Kandeh and Ramachadran (1995). 1985 census of population and housing Sierra Leone: the analytical report. Freetown, Sierra Leone: Central Statistics Office, Dept. of Development and Economic Planning

3 Weekes, B.S. and Bah, S. (2017). 2015 Population and Housing Census Analytical Report: Population Structure and Population Distribution.

15 and 64 years and 65 years old and above respectively suggesting a high young age dependency ratio (76.7%) due to high fertility.[4]

Sierra Leone recorded a decline in fertility from 4.9 children per woman in 2013 to 4.2 children per woman in 2019, suggesting a slight improvement that is not sufficient to create any meaningful impact.[5] Similarly, the age at first birth is 19.5 for women within the reproductive age group (25 – 49 years) with 24.8% unmet need for family planning among currently married women compared with 34.2% unmet need among sexually active unmarried women (Stats SL and ICF 2020). What is more worrisome is the persisting high rate of adolescent pregnancy which, according to Sierra Leone's DHS 2019 report, was 21% of women aged 15-19. Closely related to this are maternal mortality and morbidity including obstetric fistula, a key demographic and health problem the country is grappling with. Maternal mortality and morbidity are major consequences of adolescent pregnancy, the challenging health systems, and poverty. Anecdotal evidence indicates the number of obstetric fistula cases to be as high as 2,496 with the maternal mortality ratio being 717 deaths per 100,000 live births.[5] While there has been a decline in maternal mortality from 1165 deaths per 100,000 in 2013, the maternal mortality rate in the country is among the highest in the world. All these are factors that will continue to promote rapid population growth and related high child dependency burden.

1.3. Socio-economic Situation of Sierra Leone: 1960 – 2021

Sierra Leone is among the world's poorest countries with a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.452 and ranked 182 out of 189 nations and territories on the HDI rankings, according to the UNDP Global Human Development Report 2021. While the nation has made progress in its HDI scores between 1990 and 2019 (from 0.287 to 0.452 which accounts for 57.5% increase) the progress is not adequate to move the nation to a more prosperous level. The nation has experienced fluctuating development since its 1961 political independence. It went through series of military interventions, protracted civil conflicts, and natural disasters such as disease outbreaks.

The country's civil conflict of 1991-2001 was one of the worst in the world, destroying lives and property including the national economic and social infrastructure. The war undermined the Government's potential to adequately meet the needs of the growing population. The period of stability that followed was climaxed by consideration of economic prosperity from 2002-to 2013. Accordingly, Sierra Leone had sought to become a middle-income country by 2035 before the outbreak of Ebola in 2014. The Ebola Virus disease brought the country's economic activities to a halt with huge human and financial loss forcing the government to declare austerity measures. While the economy was on the path of recovery during 2017-2018, and up to most part of 2019, the COVID 19 pandemic hit the globe by December 2019; its effects sparing no country on earth. As confirmed by the World Bank, Sierra Leone was one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa before the COVID19 pandemic directly hit the country in March 2020.[6] Its economic growth had projected to hit 5.5% which year, 2020?), pronounced as the highest since 2016. The eruption of COVID-19 and its spread effects worsened the

[4] https://countrymeters.info/en/Sierra_Leone.

[5] Statistics Sierra Leone Stats SL and ICF. 2020. Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey 2019. Freetown, Sierra Leone, and Rockville, Maryland, USA

[6] World Bank. 2020. Sierra Leone Economic Update, June 2020: The Power of Investing in Girls. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank.

poverty and vulnerability situation in the country, with increased food insecurity and youth unemployment during this period.

1.4. The Need to Invest in Youths

The importance of youth in achieving future economic development cannot be underestimated. Their contribution to achieving sustainable and inclusive development is acknowledged within the international development community. According to the United Nations Security Council resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), young people can be agents of change in promoting peace and security. Hence, the demand for greater youth participation and opportunities for meaningful youth engagement in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international levels had increased (United Nations, 2020). This UN report makes it clear that young people are active contributors to social change. Similarly, experience has shown that engaging youth in various activities such as neighbourhood, community and national development will create the opportunity for harnessing their potential as young persons are endowed with adequate energy, enthusiasm, skills, and innovative ideas that foster economic growth, social stability, improve civic participation, and ensure healthier, more educated and productive societies (USAID, 2012). For instance, investments in formal schooling, adult education and literacy, school-based health investments such as reproductive health programmes, and strategies aimed to reduce the negative lifestyle such as alcohol consumption and smoking through high taxation, will yield economic returns (Knowles, et al., *2005*).

Trucco and Ullmann did emphasize this point in 2016 when they mentioned that youth are among the key ingredients for advancing a development process that is geared towards achieving equality[7]. This is particularly the case for developing countries that account for the majority of the youth population. In another word, developing countries that promote better education, healthcare, and job training for the majority of their youth through investment, could take advantage of their demographic dividend which accelerates economic growth and radically reduces poverty (USAID, 2012). Kofi Anan had summarised:

> *"Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace. If, however, they are left on society's margins, all of us will be impoverished. Let us ensure that all young people have every opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their societies." (Kofi Annan, 7th UN Secretary-General)*

This statement echoes the present state of African Youth. In reality, the condition of youth in Sub-Saharan Africa in general and in West and Central Africa – including the Mano River countries - in particular, is marred by limited opportunities for them to utilise their full potential. As such, they are mostly subject of manipulation, negative radicalization and general hardship that expose them and their societies to insecurity. As further noted by Trucco and Ullmann (2016), most young people, especially those in developing countries, are socially and economically challenged to an unimaginable extent. They are constantly deprived of and denied participation in policy decisions that affect them, which has serious implications for their future.

[7] Trucco and Ullmann (2016). Youth: realities and challenges for achieving development with equality.

According to the International Labour Organisation, there are approximately 1.3 billion young people between the ages of 15 and 24.[8] Their transition into the labour market has long-term impacts on their lives as well as on the socio-economic development of their countries. It is thus essential to understand their pathways into the world of work and how they are engaging or not, as the case may be, in employment. In Sierra Leone, youth unemployment is rampant and remains a serious challenge for government and development partners. It is estimated that almost 60% of young persons were unemployed in 2021 and continue to be one key factor that is pushing them to seek work abroad using dangerous and illegal migration (IOM, 2022).[9]

To remedy this, countries like Sierra Leone are required to operate a paradigm shift in the way they approach their long walk to sustainable development. They should take advantage of the youth bulge while putting in place relevant social, economic and environmental policies in a manner that ensures a multi-sectoral approach to making inclusive economic growth a reality. To this end, the consideration of the **Demographic Dividend Framework** as articulated within the AU Road Map is of utmost importance. Although the demographic transition has started with some declines in child mortality rates in a number of African countries, including Sierra Leone, a key trigger of rapidly declining fertility is yet to be set in the country. Young people make up a substantial and growing percentage. As such, the government and partners are making efforts to invest in youths in the country. However, it is not clear what level of coordination exists among the institutions working on DD and DD-related projects in the country, among a range of other issues bordering the current incoherent efforts being made to harness DD.

1.5. The Study Objectives

Therefore, the overall aim of this scoping assessment is to determine the extent to which the central government and its partners are prepared to fully harness the demographic dividend potential of the country. The essence is to inform action towards undertaking a comprehensive development of Demographic Dividend Profile for the country in 2022, and subsequently develop a Demographic Dividend Monitoring Index to periodically track the country's progress in harnessing this potential. To help achieve this goal, the following are the specific objectives:

a. To review relevant national policies, plans and programmes for harnessing demographic dividend in the country
b. To identify leading institutions for harnessing demographic dividend and analyse their programmes since 2017, including relevant government MDAs, UN Agencies and NGOs
c. To examine specific efforts that have been made towards profiling and monitoring demographic dividends in Sierra Leone
d. To highlight specific efforts made in domesticating and reporting the progress made in the implementation of the 2017 AU Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend for Sierra Leone
e. To proffer salient recommendations to inform the development of a comprehensive DD Profile and Monitoring Index for Sierra Leone.

[8] International Labour Organization (2020). Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Technology and the future of jobs

[9] IOM (2022). Hundreds of Unemployed Youth in Sierra Leone Receiving Skills Training. Online, Available from: https://www.iom.int/news/hundreds-unemployed-youth-sierra-leone-receiving-skills-training

2.0. Chapter Two. Methodology

2.1. Desk Review/Secondary Data

The consultants conducted a desk study at the beginning of the sopping assessment to review relevant literature and available DD related reports to gauge the institutional readiness to harness DD. This provided an opportunity to study a range of reports on projects and activities that have bearings on DD. This exercise informed the holding of technical and general stakeholder engagements to elicit primary data on the state of advancement of DD in the country. The source of information during the desk review to pull information on existing reports and projects on DD included Government ministries, department and agencies (MDAs), UN Agencies, Research Institutions and Project Implementation Units. Online resources were extensively utilised during the process, obtaining additional information on DD at national, regional and global level.

2.2 Primary Data

Here, qualitative data was collected during two key technical sessions. ***The first was a 'Technical Engagement'*** to hear from the 6 man-team that previously travelled to Ghana for DD related training in 2018 and to discuss the draft DD Profile they prepared during that training. This helped to inform the consultants' work to better understand the key technical issues surrounding the preparation of a comprehensive national DD profile to come later. The team to Ghana did provide useful insights into what will be involved in undertaking a detailed profile and updated the session on the efforts that were made since their return from Ghana.

*The second session was a broader '**stakeholder engagement'**,* bringing together the consultants and key stakeholders from MDAs, Research Institutions, PIUs, Non-Governmental Organisations and UN Agencies to brainstorm around institutional readiness to harness DD. These engagements helped the consultants to fully understand the efforts made so far by the various stakeholders and their institutions in harnessing DD potential in the country. The details of the outcome of these engagements are presented in sections 4 and 5.

An Institutional Assessment Matrix Template was developed and stakeholders guided on how to complete it, and it was shared by email to all stakeholders in attendance. The information required from all stakeholders on the matrix relative to the projects and activities that were being implemented by their institutions since 2017 were presented together with specific questions that stakeholders were expected to respond to.

Other key institutional readiness assessment questions were passed to participants in the general stakeholder engagement meeting to provide responses to from their respective institutions; to be received a few days after this engagement. The questions included the following:

a. Is MoPED making health care planning issues important within the Demographic Dividend Framework and how are funds for services like laboratory, x-ray machines etc. be accessed?
b. Is there a buy in from the President and have conversations been made in pushing DD as an umbrella for all other issues?

c. Is there a single programme document from which everyone can reference Do all institutions and ministries know what they need to contribute to DD?
d. Has the AU roadmap been domesticated?
e. How can the Ministry of Social Welfare be captured in the profiling of demographic dividends in the country?

Chapter Three: Key Findings

3.1 DD-Related Institutions and Programme Efforts and Policies

The findings of the scoping assessment have shown that a total of 14 institutions have been involved in DD related programmes or projects since 2017 when the AU Roadmap was published. These institutions, in combination, have worked on projects/activities that are linked to all the four pillars of the AU Roadmap including employment and entrepreneurship, education and skill development, good health and wellbeing, and governance. A comprehensive matrix of DD Institutions with their specific DD programmes, projects and deliverables are summarised in **Table** 3.1.

Table 3.1. Demographic Dividend-Related Institutions and Deliverables Since 2017

Institutions	DD Programme and Action Delivery Area	Deliverables since 2017	Comments
1. Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED)	National Development Policy formulation, implementation and coordination.	1. Formulated and implemented the National Development Plan 2018-2023, linked to the SDGs/AU Agenda 2063 2. Formulated and launched the National Population Policy (NPP) 2019-2023 3. Followed up and reported on the implementation of the NPP and Sierra Leone's commitment to the International Conference on Population Development (ICPD) @25 4. Coordinated the implementation of the UNFPA Seventh Country Programme Document-2020-2023 at the national level 5. Coordinated the supervision of activities undertaken by Implementing Partners of the UNFPA-supported programmes to the Government 6. Collaborated with UNFPA in organising World Population Day commemorations and launch of the State of the World Population Report 2021 7. Supported the organisation and commemoration of the Africa Youth Day commemoration of 2021 8. Coordinated global and regional-wide population management cooperation-related issues on behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone	MoPED is the national anchor for all national population management related matters on behalf of the state

Institutions	DD Programme and Action Delivery Area	Deliverables since 2017	Comments
		9. Participated in training on DD profile estimation in Ghana. 10. Participated in other international engagements on DD.	
2. Statistic Sierra Leone (NSO)	Coordinate and generate national population-related data and vital statistics	1. Produces national population-related statistics such as the MICS, and Poverty indicator surveys. 2. Established the Gender Desk for the integration of gender issues into data and statistical work. 3. Coordinates the SDGs Results Framework report updating 4. Conduct, produce, and manage the Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Surveys, 2013, 2019 5. Conducted and produced the 2015 Population and Housing Census: Population segregated thematic report and summary of results planning a better future.	Statistics Sierra Leone is responsible for coordinating, collecting, compiling, analysing, and disseminating high-quality and objective official statistics that will be used to inform decision making, and discussion within government, business, and the media, as well as the wider national and international community. Statistics Sierra Leone provides statistical datasets for training and works with the media to reach a wider audience including schools.
3. Parliamentary Unit on Population and development	Promote, educate and effectively sensitise and raise awareness on population and development issues and facilitate the approval of population policies and regulations by Parliament	1. Conduct Parliamentary Engagement on the Sierra Leone ICPD Commitments for members of the Sierra Leone Parliamentary Action Group on Population and Development (SLPAG-PD) and staff from UNFPA and MoPED. 2. Participate in the development of the Sierra Leone ICPD Commitment. 3. Advocacy for the allocation of *at least 1% of the health budget for family planning by 2022 as this is the government commitment.* 4. Participate in the popularisation of the National Population Policy 2019-2023 (NPP). 5. Advocacy for population and development issues.	SLPAG-PD undertakes the activities and promotes the mandate of UNFPA and population and development in parliament with partners and government MDAs on population and development issues.

Institutions	DD Programme and Action Delivery Area	Deliverables since 2017	Comments
4. Ministry of Youth Affairs, National Youth Commission and National Youth Services	Preserving and enhancing outstanding quality youths who are making communities desirable places to live, work, and raise children	1. Produces the National Youth Policy of Sierra Leone, Theme: Empowered Youth Leading the Development of a New Sierra Leone. 2. Coordination of youths' activities and the establishment of Youths Regional, Districts and chiefdoms committees and the Youths empowerment in partnership with National commission for Social Actions (NACSA). 3. Facilitation of the youth's services commission dealing with National Youth Services (NYS) which entails building capacity of new graduates into the labour market through youth corps programme.	To encourage wide and active participation of the youth in all governmental and non-governmental programs, projects, and activities affecting them; To harness and develop the full potential of the youth as partners in nation-building through empowerment and capacity strengthening and creating an enabling environment.
5. Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs	Committed to protecting and promoting women's rights, curbing gender-based violence, and reducing gender inequalities by making progressive changes to legislation to strengthen the protective environment for women, children's and vulnerable persons	1. Developed the National Male Involvement Strategy for The Prevention of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Sierra Leone. 2. Coordination and management of legal and strategic issues that relate to Gender issues. Establishment of the one-stop centres to cater to victims of violence from Sexual and gender relation concerns. 3. Advocate for the reduction of child poverty by ensuring children have the rights to many facilities including education, nutrition, and good health.	The Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs is mandated to lead the development, implementation, and monitoring of the policy and legal framework for issues relating to Women and Children below the age of 18
6. Ministry of Labour and Social Security	Responsible for the development of labour laws and regulations, coordination of other labour Institutions (employing agencies, organisations and institutions)	1. Mediate between the employees, labour and the Employers. 2. Manages the relationships between the Labour union/Federations and the employees. 3. Redress labour complaints and advocate for aggrieved persons	Served as an advocate for labour issues and facilitate the development of policies and regulations

Institutions	DD Programme and Action Delivery Area	Deliverables since 2017	Comments
7. Ministry of Health and Sanitation	To facilitate the health policies formations, technically advise the government on health and wellbeing and improve health by offering free health care services to pregnant and lactating women and children less than five years of age.	1. Developed the National clinical guidelines for comprehensive cervical cancer prevention and control 2020 – 2025. 2. Developed the National Health Facility Assessment on Availability of Reproductive Health Commodities and Services in Sierra Leone, 2019. 3. Produces the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy. 4. Established the National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2021-2025: Towards Universal Health Coverage and Health Security. 5. Developed the Universal Health Coverage Roadmap for Sierra Leone 2021–2030. 6. Established the Standards for Accreditation of Basic Nursing and Midwifery Educational Institutions and Programs in Sierra Leone. 7. Established the Sierra Leone Rapid Emergency Obstetric and New-born Care (EmONC) Assessment 2017.	The Ministry of Health & Sanitation (MOH&S) is the government department responsible for the delivery of health care services in the public sector.
8. Ministry of Education 9. Ministry of Education	*MBSSE conducts Annual School Census to analyse situations in schools in line with below policies and regulation.* *1. The Education Act 2004, Decentralisation Act;* *2. The Three Gender Acts 2007;* *3. The Child Right Act 2007,* *4. The National Education Policy (2010),* *5. The National Referral Protocol (2012),* *6. Anti-corruption Act;* *7. Persons with Disability Act,* *8. The school Health Policy; Operationalized Education Sector Plan (2018-2020) to include*	1. The Free Quality School Education Programme is gender responsive 2. The specific is the Hygiene KIT Programme supported by the Office of First Lady. 3. The Radical Inclusion Programme comprising the pregnant, girls and girl mothers, Children with impairment and those other vulnerabilities (out of school children) 4. The Youth Passport/Digitalization Programme for employability. 5. *The curricula of Basic Education and Senior Secondary School are relevant as they are developed to prepare learners for the world job market as well as self-employment leaving no learner behind.* 6. *MBSSE in collaboration with MOYA and partners has launched a Youth education and skills development programme and various types of platforms are created for innovation in education and learning.* 7. *Comprehensive Sexual Education has been integrated in 6 syllabi/ Subjects to promote learner's good health and well-being.* 8. *MBSSE through the Gender Unit is working in partnership with Marie Stopes to engage community stakeholders including local leaders, education and child protection structures MDAs, school leaderships, school governance, religious leaders as well as parents and the pupils themselves to deal with the misconceptions, myths about family planning.* 9. *Working towards preventing teenage pregnancy, unsafe abortion and STIs/STDs.*	*1. MBSSE has an Education Management and Information System (EMIS) Unit; MBSSE has a curriculum and Research Directorate; MBSSE Has Planning and Policy Directorate; MBSSE has A Human Resource Management Unit. MBSSE has a Gender Unit; MBSSE conducts Annual School Census, Conducts data collection on Out-of-School Children. conducts data collection on vulnerable children including children with Disabilities and pregnant girls.* *2. MBSSE is ready in harnessing and accelerating efforts in that Free Quality School Education*

Institutions	DD Programme and Action Delivery Area	Deliverables since 2017	Comments
9. Ministry of Education	*Emergency Preparedness, and now being reviewed to include a chapter on Gender;* *9. The Radical Inclusion Policy (2019);* *10. The Code of Conduct for Teachers and other Personnel (2019)*	10. *Policies formulated as well as instruments developed to promote rights and good Governance such as:* a. *Radical Inclusion, Comprehensive Sexuality Framework, Code of Conduct for Teachers and other Personnel, Zero Tolerance on Corporal Punishment, School Feeding Policy, Early Childhood Education Policy, Gender Responsive Education Policy, Communication Strategy* *b. Increasing Collaboration and improving Coordination on the preventing, reducing and responding to School Related Gender-Based Violence through the review of the National Referral Protocol* *c. Girl Child Education Programme targeted specific needs for girls-school fees); School Feeding Programme; WASH Programme provided Hygiene Kits for girls to improve access and regularity, and the Early Childhood Development Programme to promote early stimulation.* *d. Free Quality Education School Programme (8/2018) breaks the bias against boys and promotes equity* 11. They are all successful in that they are still on course as they are vital and essential for achieving SDGs, the manifesto, Medium Term Development Plan and the AU, review are imminent to ascertain baseline, identify challenges and proffer recommendations What were the challenges encountered? o *Reaching out to every child is the biggest challenge* o *Radical Inclusion Policy is facing challenges such as stigmatisation felt by pregnant students attending schools. There are also huge financial implications as school enrolment has surged in recent years.* 12. Sexuality Education 13. Code of Conduct for teachers and other personnel (mitigating School-related Gender-based violence)- a breach of any code is tantamount to punishment according to all the laws of Sierra Leone including the sexual Offences Amended Act of 2019 and the 1991 Constitution. 14. Free quality Education Schooling for every child. 15. The Education Act 2004, It is criminal for a school-aged child to be out of school. this crime is punishable by law in that the parent/guardian of such child or ward must pay a fine of Le 500,000 0r one-year imprisonment or both.	*was launched by the President in 2018 improve enrolment and completion rates;* *3. 2020 we undertook a Situational Analysis with available report as a prerequisite to developing a Gender Responsive Education Sector Plan that is at final stage of completion and there is a report on it*

Institutions	DD Programme and Action Delivery Area	Deliverables since 2017	Comments
10. Ministry of Agriculture	Technical support to the government on Agricultural policies, regulations and programme implementation. Coordination of Youths farmers' field school youth farms	1. Technically support youth's farms which gear towards youth's empowerment and entrepreneurship. 2. Guided policy work on youths in agricultural work	Responsible for the Coordination and technical advice to the government on the Youths empowerment through Agriculture and social enterprise
11. Ministry of Marine Resources	Technical support to the government on Marine resources policies, regulations and programme implementation. Coordination of Youths fishermen and boat owners	1. Supported the youths empower through social enterprise in fish farming and fishing by providing funds and boats to youth Fishermen	Coordination of the
12. Ministry of Finance	National Budget and Macro-Fiscal Planning	1. Allocate Zero-point one percent (0.1%) in the 2020 national budget to support the health budget for family planning. To fulfil the ICPD Commitment that was made in Nairobi by the Government of Sierra Leone to support the allocation of at least 1% of the health budget for family planning by 2022.	The Sierra Leone Ministry of Finance is a ministerial department of the Government of Sierra Leone and is in charge of managing the revenue and finances of the Sierra Leone government. The ministry implements the Sierra Leone government's economic policies and public financial management.
13. UNFPA	Technical support to the Government of Sierra Leone on population dynamics, SRHR and Family Planning and Gender/youths Mobilises resources to help ensure access to reproductive health, support and promote awareness of population and development, and promote advocacy.	1. Developed, supported, and funded the implementation of the United Nations Population Fund, a Country programme document for Sierra Leone for four years (2020-2023). 2. Support the Ending Gender-Based Violence in Sierra Leone 3. Developed the Situational analysis of quality improvement in maternal and neonatal health care, Sierra Leone 2018. 4. Supporting the Government of Sierra Leone MDAs working on Health, Fistula, Cervical Cancer, Youths and Gender and Data and supplies of family planning and SRHR commodities.	UNFPA is the leading United Nations Organisation for the follow-up and implementation of the programme of action of the international conference on population and development is fully committed to working in partnership with the government, all partners of the United Nations system, development banks, bilateral aid agencies, non-governmental organisations, and civil society.
14. UNDP		1. Produced the Sierra Leone 4th National Human Development Report 2019: Building Resilience for Sustainable Development.	UNDP works to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities through the Sustainable Development Goals, Governance, and Gender Equality.

Institutions	DD Programme and Action Delivery Area	Deliverables since 2017	Comments
15. IPDS-FBC-USL	Training and Capacity Building	1. Training of Youths in reproductive health; population analysis and social statistics; Women empowerment 2. Research for policy and publication 3. Undertake M&E activities 4. Facilitate training and workshops	

The above matrix demonstrates that there are many institutions working on DD-related programs, projects, and activities that span across all the four pillars of the AU-Road Map. The Team was unable to assess several key organisations due to the non-availability of information on their DD-related programs and activities. These organisations include UNICEF, International labour Organisation, International Organisation of Migration, UN Women, AU Committees, ECOWAS, Sierra Leone's National Civil Registration Agency, etc.

3.2. DD Related Reports and Policy Documents

It could be drawn from the previous section that considerable efforts have been made with the Government circles to address various aspects linked to the Demographic Dividend. To a large extent, these efforts are in the form of formulating national policies, plans and programmes relating to effective management of population for national development. **Table** 3.2 presents a summary of key documents developed in the country and their alignment to the Pillar of the AU Roadmap. The areas of interventions covered by the documents include health, gender, youth, research, and planning.

Table 3.2: List of Documents/Reports on Sierra Leone's Demographic Dividend Since 2017

No	MDA/UN Agency/NGO/ Unit	Report	AU DD RoadMap Pillars
1	Global Youth Network for Empowerment and Development.	First National Youth Summit Report (2021).	Pillar 1-4
2	Ministry of Health and Sanitation.	National Healthy Facility Assessment on Availability of Reproductive Health Commodities and Services in Sierra Leone.	Health and Wellbeing
3	Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Development.	Sierra Leone 2019 DHS Report.	Pillar 1-4
4	Ministry of Youth Affairs.	National Youth Policy Sierra Leone 2020.	Pillar 3
5	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development.	Sierra Leone National Development Plan Mid Term 2019-2023 vol.1.	Pillar 1-4
6	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development.	Sierra Leone National Population Policy (2018).	Pillar 1-4
7	Statistics Sierra Leone Ministry of Planning and Economic Development.	2015 Population and Housing Census, Summary of Final results, planning a better future.	Pillar 1-4

No	MDA/UN Agency/NGO/ Unit	Report	AU DD RoadMap Pillars
8	Ministry of Health and Sanitation.	National Health Sector Strategic Plan (2021-2025).	Health and Wellbeing
9	Ministry of Health and Sanitation UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UK Aid.	Sierra Leone Rapid Emergency Obstetric and Newburn Care (EMONC) Assessment 2017.	Health and Wellbeing
10	Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs.	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy.	Pillar 3
11	Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs.	National Male Involvement Strategy for the Prevention of Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Sierra Leone.	Pillar 3
12	Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs.	National Policy on Comprehensive Cervical Cancer Prevention and Control 2020-2025	Health and Wellbeing
13	UNFPA Sierra Leone.	Situation Analysis of Quality Improvement in Maternal and Neonatal Health Care, Sierra Leone (2018)	Health and Wellbeing
14	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development	Sierra Leone's Medium-term National Development Plan 2019–2023	Pillar 1 -4

3.3 Summary of Key Results from Implementing Actions Under the Pillars of 2017 AU Roadmap from existing DD Efforts

Sierra Leone's National Development Plan (currently the MTNDP 2019-2023) is the country's operational framework that is used for the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the African Union Agenda 2063 to which the country is a signatory. Earlier efforts at advancing the DD in the country and implementation of the 2017 AU Roadmap were undertaken within the context of the implementation of the MTNDP, whose policy clusters are aligned with pillars of the AU Roadmap as indicated in **Table** 3.3.1.

Table 3.3.1. Aligning the DD related clusters of the MTNDP to the Pillars of the 2017 AU Roadmap

Sierra Leone DD related clusters of the MTNDP (2019-2023)	Pillars of 2017 AU Roadmap
Cluster 1 Human Capital Development Cluster 6.1 Youth Employment	Pillar 1: Employment and Entrepreneurship
Cluster 5.1 Empowering Women, Cluster 5.2 Children	Pillar 2: Education and Skills Development
Cluster 5.1 Empowering Women,	Pillar 3: Health and Wellbeing
Cluster 5.1 Empowering Women, Cluster 5.2 Children	Pillar 4: Rights, Governance and Youth Empowerment

Table 3.3.2 presents a summary of results obtained from implementing AU Roadmap-related activities across the public sector in collaboration with development partners including NGOs.

Table 3.3.2. Summary of Key Results under the pillars of the 2017 AU Roadmap and existing DD Efforts made in the MTNDP

Pillars of the Roadmap	Key Results 2019-2021
Pillar 1: Employment and Entrepreneurship	1. Between 2018 and 2021, the government supported a total of 3,400 youths in rice cultivation across the country (as noted in Cluster 1 of the MTNDP under Social Protection); 2. Another set of 3,400 youths were engaged in garbage collection and disposal operations; 3. 28 car washing centres were in construction in different parts of the country to provide mini-jobs to thousands of young males and females—10 of the 28 centres were completed and are functional; 4. Seventy (70) new boats with fishing accessories were constructed and distributed to the 7 coastal districts of Sierra Leone; 5. Hundreds of youths were also trained by the Road Maintenance Skills Development and Training Schemes; 6. An additional 500 youth leaders were trained in entrepreneurship; 7. A total of 1,200 university graduates across the country were recruited, trained, and deployed under the National Youth Service Scheme; and 804 (67%) of them already gained permanent employment at institutions they were deployed for an internship; 8. At least 2,300 youths supported in cocoa and coffee plantation operations; and another set of 3,400 in rice cultivation in various districts since 2018, with 40% female participation; 9. Additionally, 3,400 youths were employed in garbage collection and disposal operations across the country.
Pillar 2: Education and Skills Development Pillar 2: Education and Skills Development	1. National budget for the education sector significantly increased from 18.9% in 2018 to 22% in 2021; 2. Food provided for children in over 1,000 piloted schools across the country during 2018-2021; 3. Tuition fee grants, teaching and learning materials provided in more than 7,600 government and government-assisted schools, covering pre-primary, primary, junior, and senior secondary levels; 4. National enrolment significantly increased by about 800,000 pupils covering pre-primary, primary, junior, and senior secondary since 2018; 5. Several community learning centres were established at the chiefdom level to support non-formal education across the country; 6. A new Ministry of Technical and Higher Education was established to improve governance and service delivery in post-secondary education; 7. Three new public universities were established; 8. At least 54,000 students are now enrolled in government-supported universities, compared to 29,723 in 2018; 9. The Technical, Vocational, and Educational Training (TVET) Unit was revamped and upgraded to a Directorate in the Ministry to scale-up TVET activities across the country; 10. Resource Centres were rehabilitated in 6 Teacher Training Institutions in the 5 regions of the country; 11. Civic education was re-introduced in the school curriculum in the country; 12. Fifty-three (53) women and girls in correctional Centres were provided with legal education sessions; 13. Public education on national development issues frequently mounted and significantly increased following the establishment of the National Council for Civic Education and Development.
Pillar 3: Health and Wellbeing	1. Budgetary allocation to the health sector increased from 6% in 2018 to 11% in 2021, and over 4,000 health workers recruited since 2018; 2. Over 216 ambulances distributed across all 16 districts of Sierra Leone since 2018 to speedily deliver emergency services; 3. Maternal mortality rate dropped from 1,165 deaths in 2013 to 717 in 2019 out of every 100,000 live births;

Pillars of the Roadmap	Key Results 2019-2021
	4. Under-five mortality rate also dropped from 156 deaths in 2013 to 122 in 2019 out of every 1,000 live births; 5. Infant mortality rate dropped from 92 deaths in 2013 to 75 out of every 1,000 live births; 6. Sierra Leone Social Health Insurance Scheme launched; 7. One Stop Centres for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) cases were established in 6 districts; 8. Since August 2021, at least 2,515 survivors of GBV were provided with response services at the One-Stop and Rainbow Centres; 9. Free-of-cost Help Hotline (116) for rape cases was established and is functioning; 10. Sexual Offences Act was reviewed, Special Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Judicial Courts were established; 11. Sierra Leone led UN Resolution on Survivors of Sexual Violence; 12. The country assumed the Presidency of the UN Women Board, leading the fight against gender inequality, and promoting women's empowerment.
Pillar 4: Rights, Governance and Youth Empowerment Pillar 4: Rights, Governance and Youth Empowerment	1. Children in remand homes were provided with constant counseling and rehabilitation services while awaiting court trial; 2. Child inmates serving sentences for various crimes were provided with rehabilitation services and vocational training, and enabled to take public school exams; 3. Since August 2021, a total of 754 child protection cases have been registered in the PRIMERO child protection software. And 2,992 children, including those in conflict and contact with the law, were provided with services by Family Support Units; 4. Strategic government policy interventions toward Gender and Women empowerment included the establishment of a separate Government Ministry for Gender and Children in 2020 and the creation of a Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) toll-free hotline to provide counselling and referral services to SGBV survivors, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic; 5. One Stop Centres for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) cases were established in 6 districts, providing psycho-social support and free medical treatment and examination for survivors of SGBV; 6. The Sexual Offences Act 2012 was revised and a new Sexual Offences Amendment Act was enacted; 7. A Women's Empowerment and Development Funds was established; 8. Civic education was re-introduced in the school curriculum in the country; 9. Fifty-three (53) women and girls in correctional Centres were provided with legal education sessions; 10. Sierra Leone was among 9 countries in the world serving on the Global Board for women, peace and security, and humanitarian Action Compact; 11. Gender Empowerment Bill was laid before parliament for passing; the Bill, inter alia, provided for a minimum 30 percent gender representation for elective (Parliament and Local Councils) and appointive positions, equality in terms of employment opportunities and access to finance for women.

3.4. Sierra Leone's Earlier Efforts at Constructing a National Demographic Dividend Profile

Sierra Leone has not comprehensively created a National Transfer Account for profiling the country's demographic dividend. However, the country has made some progress in this direction, including the training of six (6) staff from demographic dividend related institutions; and developing policies that are addressing the AU Road Map, as contained in Table 1 above.

The six (6) experts from Sierra Leone were trained in 2018 in Ghana by experts from the Regional Institute for Population Studies at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUS"1") in Ghana, Ibadan University in Nigeria, and the Centre for Applied Research in Economy and Finances from the University of Thies in Senegal towards developing a demographic dividend profile for Sierra Leone. After the training, a draft Sierra Leone Country Profile Report was produced through the use of the NTA methodology.

The NTA Report addresses essential components especially in the investment of the youth population that contribute to the holistic nature of a comprehensive DD profile. The following are key observations from the Report:

a. The section on population dynamic analysis provided a rich background to the variations of the population over a period of ten years, using the 2004 and 2015 Censuses to benchmark development in the demographic environment. The projections referred to in the document suggest that the population will continue to be youthful with over 40% being less than 15 years for the next 40 years. This would have serious implications for the DD unless a marked decline in fertility is realised.

b. The analysis on poverty suggested that the country was still lagging behind the average GDP Per Capita in Sub-Saharan Africa even though during 2013-2015 the country experienced continued economic growth. The country was found to be multidimensionally poor by 68.3 percent with the most noticeable deficiencies being access to decent cooking fuel and electricity. Others include poor sanitation, inability to possess durable assets, child mortality and poor housing facilities with severe health implications. World Bank estimates however suggested that poverty declined from 66.4% in 2003 to 52.9% percent in 2011. Generally, poverty was noted to be rife in the country and the HDI in 2015 suggested that Sierra Leone was in 179 positions out of 188 countries.

c. The Report also addressed the health and reproductive health issues and identified the key challenges relating to health infrastructure and resources together with serious operational problems. Various health and reproductive health indicators were reported as being high, with the infant mortality rate being 96 per thousand and the maternal mortality rate being 1,156 per 100,000 live births.

d. Highlights on education in Sierra Leone from the report suggested that education was a dominant factor in society; a determinant of people's earnings and livelihoods. It pointed to the fact that: a) enrolment in all sectors of education had increased; b) Government commitment to education remained strong, and c) education had a strong net impact on development.

e. The Report looked at the dominant theory on the DD and examined the issue of the generational economy. It used the NTA methodology which generally analyses various

inflows and outflows, with gender forming a key aspect of the NTA report, although the methods did not handle males separately from females.

f. The Report considers the DD model by linking age structure with social and economic development to enable policy makers to formulate viable policies to achieve the DD. The model identifies two outputs as the economic and demographic factors with various other subfactors. The demographic model, for example, deals with issues such as contraception, girls' education compared with the economic model considers variables such as financial market efficiency and imports.

g. Various results in graphical form are presented as part of the report. The final section of the report deals with population projections of the DD model. The projections are based on three scenarios using a base population that is unaffected by any of the three scenarios. These scenarios are factors that could alter the base population and are (a) the economic variables and how they affect the population (b), education as an addition to the economic variables (c.), and family planning as another variable to the initial two variables. In short, the changes in population or the age structure are viewed under these three key variables and various results are presented to guide policymakers. Projections are carried out for a period of 40 years (2010 - 2050).

h. While the Report provided laudable insights into the state of the country's level of preparedness for harnessing DD potential (using the Population and Housing Census of 2015, the Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey 2011, the Sierra Leone Demographic Health Survey, and the World Bank Economic Indicator datasets), there are notable gaps in the initial profiling, summarised as follows:

- Also, the projection period of 40 years is considered too long and hence has the tendency of rendering the resulting age structures invalid or inaccurate. This is because the assumptions may not apply or be valid for such a long period.

- Additionally, the population data and analysis were limited in scope to only three censuses (1985,2004 and 2015). The 1963 and 1974 were out of the analysis, making the population change dynamics incomplete, especially in terms of demographics. Thus, there is a need to extend this analysis to cover earlier inter-censual years to get a deeper understanding of the population trend of the country.

- Moreover, no mention has been made of the Free Health Care Initiative (FHCI), its objectives, challenges, and solutions.

- Generally, there was a mismatch in the data; the data in the report to a large extent doesn't match with its sources. For instance, in the matching of the employment, 36.4% represent the "unpaid family workers" which is quite different from the ILO 2015 reports.

Therefore, there is a need to undertake a comprehensive construction of the National DD Profile, building on the earlier efforts, addressing the gaps in those efforts in the process, while gathering and utilising adequate data to ensure sufficient determination of the level of preparedness/baseline for harnessing DD in the country.

3.5 Summary of Key challenges to harnessing DD

One of the key challenges in harnessing the DD is the absence of a central governing or oversight body to coordinate the entire DD-related programs, projects and activities implemented in the different MDAs, UN Agencies, NGOs and academic institutions. There are disparate activities happening within the various institutions and MDAs some of which overlap, causing redundancy of efforts. Some may not even be in sync with larger strategic goals and may even be in conflict with other efforts. These issues were apparent during the scoping assessment as a key challenge to harnessing DD in the country.

Another challenge is access to recent and accurate datasets for the preparation of DD profiles for the country. This was a key problem for the 6 MDA technical Staff in drafting the Sierra Leone DD profile in 2018. The accuracy of the 2015 Population and Housing Census was contested although this formed the main thrust of data used for the DD draft profile. Availability of more recent data will continue to be a challenge until the assurance of the availability of the Mid-Term Census from Statistics Sierra is fulfilled. This will help capture the current trend of demographic situations in the country and help in developing Sierra Leone's DD profile in 2022.

While there are efforts made by Institutions like Agencies like UNFPA and their local counterparts mostly geared towards the provision of Sexual and Reproductive health services and products, such services are either absent or inadequate in most communities in the country, especially in the rural areas. This has the tendency to undermine women's reproductive rights and impossible to control the continuing high fertility levels in the country and by extension, the potential in harnessing DD.

The continuing high fertility rate among women of reproductive age (4.2 children per woman) and related high rate of population growth, and unmet needs among sexually active women amidst degrading cultural practices that erode women's reproductive rights in the country will serve as an obstacle to harnessing the benefits of Sierra Leone's DD.

There is generally a limited number of skilled workers including entrepreneurial skills. This is more evident among youths who lacked the necessary technical skills to attract jobs in emerging industries, especially in the extractive and service industries. In Sierra Leone, similar to most developing countries, most of the job opportunities in existence and those that would be established in the near future would be highly skilled jobs hence the absence of youth with the required skills will continue to undermine the efforts to reap the benefits of DD.

Furthermore, the unstable economic growth, high levels of poverty and food insecurity, and lack of advancement in productivity across sections including the agricultural sector over the years in the face of rapid population growth present serious challenges to harnessing DD in Sierra Leone.

Chapter Four : Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

The sopping assessment study was undertaken to review existing national policies, plans and programmes relevant for harnessing DD; identify institutions including MDAs, NGOs, UN Agencies, etc., engaged in efforts geared towards harnessing DD; examine the programmes

and specific efforts made by such institutions in domesticating and reporting progress in the implementation of the 2017 AU Roadmap on harnessing DD in Sierra Leone since 2017. Using a desk review and primary data collection that adopted a qualitative approach involving technical and stakeholder engagements, the scoping assessment observed that:

a. Over 20 institutions are implementing projects and activities that are supportive of harnessing the DD in Sierra Leone. Similarly, there is DD profiling expertise in the country who can work to produce a comprehensive national profile with technical external support. Furthermore, development partners, especially Un Agencies like UNFPA and UNDP, are supporting DD-related activities. A demographic observatory is already established at Statistic Sierra Leone and is expected to be regularly updated.

b. However, awareness of the DD concept and the AU Road Map is limited among stakeholders even when they are working on projects that are DD-related. Equally, there is little or no coordination among institutions working on DD projects. Furthermore, the demographic observatory established at Statistics Sierra Leone is yet to be functional and it is not very clear how it will be regularly updated.

Therefore, it could be concluded that while much has been done and continues to be done, the Sierra Leone Institutions are yet to be in full readiness to harness the demographic dividend. As such, the next section provides salient recommendations to help institutions to be fully prepared to harness the DD.

4.2 Recommendations

The following are key recommendations to help the preparation of the comprehensive DD profile for Sierra Leone and the related DD Index:

1. The Institute for Population and Development Studies should collaborate with members of the 6 MDA staff that were trained in Ghana on DD profiling to prepare a comprehensive 2022 DD profile for Sierra Leone. It will be essential for the team to be supported intermittently by an international consultant(s) at the beginning to help the team of local consultants identify and operationalise the DD model appropriately for the country and, to help with the review of the final DD profile.
2. The most recent available datasets are to be used such as Sierra Leone's Mid-Term Population and Housing Census Data which will be available in the next few weeks as confirmed by Statistics Sierra Leone.
3. Stakeholder workshops to be organised regularly by MoPED to coordinate DD-related efforts in the country. This will help to capture the programs, projects and activities of the Institutions that were not assessed during the scoping study.
4. A regular training on aligning programs and projects with the 2017 AU Road Map and tracking of progress at both institutional levels and national levels be organised on a quarterly basis. This will help improve DD tracking skills and reports on progress to be timely and accurate.
5. That the Demographic Observatory be made functional and updated regularly. Statistics Sierra Leone to work in concert with the Institute for Population and Development Studies to produce quarterly reports on progress as captured by updates from the DD observatory.

6. A central coordinating Unit for coordination of all DD programs and activities be established and supervised by MoPED. This unit will help to monitor DD progress at both institutional and national levels.
7. Financial resources need to be set aside to be utilized exclusively used for the implementation of all aspects of the DD as outlined above. These would include fielding consultants, organizing extensive sensitization and educational workshops/seminars, publications and other appropriate activities.

Annex I

List of institutions that were contacted

The following Institutes participated during the development of this document:

Bo City Council
Bo District Council
Bo Government Hospital
Bombali District Council
Bonthe District Council
Bonthe Municipal Council
District Medical Officer BO District
District Medical Officer Bombali District
District Medical Officer Kenema District
District Medical Officer Koinadugu District
District Medical Officer PortLoko District
District Medical Officer Western Area
Falaba District Council
Kailahun District Council
Kambia District Council
Karene District Council
Kenema City Council
Kenema District Council
Koidu New Sembehun City Council
Koinadugu District Council
Kono District Council
Makeni City Council
Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), Bo District
Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), Bombali District
Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), Kabala District
Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), Kenema District
Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), Kono
Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), PortLoko
Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), Western Area
Ministry Of Gender and Children Affairs (MoGCA)
Ministry of Health & Sanitation (MoHS)
Ministry of Labour
Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED)
Ministry of Youth Affairs
Moyamba District Council
National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA)
National Youth Commission Sierra Leone (NAYCOM)
Port Loko City Council
Port Loko District Council
Pujehun District Council
Statistics Sierra Leone,
The Freetown City Council
The Institute of Population Studies and Development, Fourahbay College
The Ministry of Finance (MOF)

The Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone (PPASL)
The Sierra Leone Parliamentary Action Group on Population and Development (SLPAG/PD)
The Six Technical Staff trained in Ghana
The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Tonkolili District Council
Western Area Rural District Council (WARDC)

Annex II

The following engagements were conducted during the process of Assessing the Institutional Readiness for Harnessing the Demographic Dividend for Sierra Leone:

Annex IIA
Stakeholders Meeting on the Outcome of the Second Edition of the National Transfer Account (NTA) Africa Conference in Senegal, 27-28 October 2021.

Agenda

10:00 - 10:05 a.m.	Prayers	
10:05 – 10:15 a.m.	Introduction of Participants	
10:15 – 10:20 a.m.	Purpose of the Meeting	MoPED
10:20 – 10:50 a.m.	Update on the Outcome of The Second Edition of the NTA-Africa Conference	MoPED – Director of PPR
10:50 – 11:10 a.m.	I. Response from the six technical staff that were sent to Ghana	
11:10 – 11:20 a.m.	II. Response from UNFPA	UNFPA
11:20 – 11:40 a.m.	III. Response from The Institute of Population Studies	Ag. Director, Institute of Population Studies, FBC
11:40 – 12:00 noon	IV. Response from UNFPA	UNFPA
12:00 – 12:15 p.m.	V. General Discussion	
12:15 – 12:20 p.m.	Next Steps	

Annex IIB

Technical Engagement for Assessing the Institutional Readiness for Harnessing the Demographic Dividend for Sierra Leone

AGENDA

9:00 – 9:15 a.m.	Arrival and Registration of Participants
9:15 – 10:00 a.m.	Breakfast
	Call to order
10:00 - 10:05 a.m.	Prayers
10:05 – 10:10 a.m.	Purpose of the Meeting, MoPED
10:10 – 10:20 a.m.	Statement from the Director of Planning Policy and Research (PPR)
10:20 – 10:50 a.m.	Presentation of the back to Ghana Report, Mr. Wogba E. P. Kamara
10:50 – 11:15 a.m.	Status update from the consultancy team on the assessment of the institutional readiness for harnessing the demographic dividend in Sierra Leone, Consultancy Team Lead

Technical Session (Moderated by Consultancy Team)

11:15 – 12:00 p.m.	Discussions on the presentations
12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	Wrap-Up
12:10 p.m.	Lunch and administrative arrangement

Annex IIC

General Engagement on the Assessment of the Institutional Readiness for Harnessing Demographic Dividend in Sierra Leone

AGENDA

9:00 – 9:15 a.m.	Arrival and Registration of Participants
9:15 – 10:00 a.m.	Breakfast Call to order
10:00 - 10:05 a.m.	Prayers:
10:05 – 10:10 a.m.	Purpose of the Meeting, MoPED
10:10 – 10:20 a.m.	Statement from the Director of Planning Policy and Research (PPR)
10:20 – 10:50 a.m.	Update on the Outcome of the Second Edition of the NTA-Africa Conference, MoPED – Director of PPR
10:20 – 10:50 a.m.	Status update from the consultant on the assessment of the institutional readiness for harnessing the demographic dividend in Sierra Leone, Mr. Bartholomew Boima Bockarie
10:50 – 11:45 a.m.	Presentation on the experience and progress made in supporting the Demographic Dividend Programme for Sierra Leone: 1. Ministry of Health and Sanitation 2. Statistics Sierra Leone 3. Directorate of Reproductive Health and Family Planning 4. Ministry of Youth Affairs 5. ILO 6. UNICEF 7. IOM 8. UNFPA 9. UN Women
11: 45 - 12:15 p.m.	Lunch

Technical Session (Moderated by the Consultant)

12:15 – 12:35 p.m.	Group work
12:35 – 12:50 p.m.	Group presentations
12:50 – 1:10 p.m.	Discussions on the presentations
1:10 – 1:15 p.m.	Wrap-Up