Government of Sierra Leone

Ministry of Planning and Economic Development

A Progress Report on the Implementation of the Addis Ababa Declaration @ 10 and the International Conference on Population and Development @30 for Sierra Leone

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ABBREVIATIONS

AADPD:	Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development
AFCTA	The African Continental Free Trade Area
ANC:	Antiretroviral Therapy
AU:	African Union
ART:	Anti Retroviral Therapy
AU-FMP	African Union For Free Movement of Persons
CPR:	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
CRVS:	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSE:	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSO:	Civil Society Organization
DD:	Demographic Dividend
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
EEE:	Education Employment Empowerment
EU:	European Union
FGM:	Female Genital Mutilation
GEWE:	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GIS:	Geographic Information System
GOSL:	Government of Sierra Leone
GST:	Good and Service Tax
HPDC:	Health Population and Drug Control
ICPD:	International Conference on Population and Development
IOM:	International Office of Migration
IUD:	IntraUterine Device
MBSSE:	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
MDA:	Ministry Department Agency
MICS:	Multi Indicator Cluster Survey
MoGCA:	Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs
MOHS:	Ministry of Health and Sanitation

MoPED:	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
MOLHCP:	Ministry of Lands Housing and Country Planning
MTNDP:	Medium Term National Development Plan
NaCSA:	National Commission for social Action
NAS:	National AIDs Secretariat
NASSIT:	National Social Security and insurance Trust
NCRA:	National Civil registration Authority
NGOs:	Non-Government Organizations
NPC:	National Population Commission
NRA:	National Revenue Authority
PPASL:	Planned Parenthood Association Sierra Leone
RDT:	Rapid Diagnostic Test
RMNCAH:	Reproductive Maternal Newborn, child and Adolescent Health
RRT:	Rapid Response Teams
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SLA:	Service Level Agreement
SLDHS:	Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey
SLRSA:	Sierra Leone Road Safety Authority
SRGBV:	School related gender based violence
SRH&R:	Sexual Reproductive Healthy and Rights
STC:	Specialized Technical Committee
STEM:	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
TLC:	Teacher Learning Circle
UNECA:	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA:	United Nations Fund for Population Activates
VNR:	Voluntary National Review

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Sierra Leone is a signatory to the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development adopted by the African Union**.** The main goals of the Declaration include harnessing the demographic dividend in Africa, improving human rights and meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS).

The AADPD covers a wide range of key target groups including women, children, youth, girls and the general population. In the same vain, it includes pertinent programmatic concerns in the African continent such as reproductive rights, civic rights economic rights, gender based violence and other harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM).

To enhance the conduct of the current review the Technical and Monitoring Guide of the African Union, adopted in 2017 and containing 88 Commitments and their indicators was used.

Justification of the review

This review comes at the end of another five years of implementation of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development involving all. It therefore provides an opportunity for the Government to evaluate its efforts, during the period, by recording its achievements in terms of policy formulation and, programme development. The review also enables Government to identify the challenges that may have inhibited accelerated growth in the progress on the population and development discuss.

Sierra Leone is a signatory to the Declaration and conducting the review is compliant with the requirements of the continental agreement

Methodology of the review.

The review involved the provision of adequate data to assess progress on the 88 Commitments outlined under six Pillars namely: Dignity and Equality; Health; Place and Mobility; Governance; Data and Statistics and Internal Cooperation and Partnerships. To effect this assessment, both primary and secondary data were captured. Regarding the primary data collection, the targeted institutions were MDAs and Civil Society Organizations. Field data were collected by twelve enumerators recruited from MoPED and comprising of 75 percent males and 25 percent females. These enumerators were trained prior to the conduct of the field exercise on all the Commitments. In addition, they were guided on how to supplement their data with secondary sources.

The field work which covered all commitments and their corresponding indicators lasted for a total of one month, although it was initially planned to last for two weeks. Busy work schedules of identified respondents leading to their inability to keep to appointments, was a major reason for the extension of the duration of field exercise.

The analyses of data involved assessing the nature of achievement across all commitments and their respective indicators as well as documenting various challenges provided by the respondents.

Findings of the review

Findings of the review revealed achievements and challenges across the six pillars. Some of the key achievements are captured below by pillars as follows

PILLAR 1 DIGNITY AND EQUALITY

Achievements

Increase in the minimum wage from Nle500-NLE800 an increase of 60 Percent

Increase in Government's budgetary allocation to education to 22.0 percent from 15.8 percent in the 2013 -2018 period

Challenges

Some of the challenges of this Pillar are:

Inadequate funding/resources to support the implementation of programmes

Inadequate skilled manpower for programme implementation

PILLAR 2: HEALTH

Achievements

Financial support to medical and public health research on risk is on- going

Existence of comprehensive sexuality education

Challenges

Unavailability of staff and facilities to service the rural areas/ hard to reach communities

PILLAR 3: PLACE AND MOBILITY

Achievements

Free movement of goods and services within countries, national, Mano River Union, ECOWAS

Existence of Migration Policy 2022

Challenges

Inadequate finance for increasing investment in rural areas

PILLAR 4: GOVERNANCE

Achievements

Existence of Mechanism to intergrate population data in development planning

Government invests budget to integrate data in planning

Challenges

Delay in transforming the Population Desk into a Commission also limited capacity and resources of the Desk

PILLAR 5: DATA AND STATISTICS

Achievements

There are institutions to undertake evidence- based and policy studies

There is an improved system of civil registration.

Challenges

Over-dependence on donor funding for the civil registration system

PILLAR 6: DATA AND STATISTICS

Achievements

A number of formal agreements between government agencies and civil society organizations exists'

AADPD also mainstreamed in the UN's post 2015 development agenda

Challenges

Limited skills, expertise and funding to conduct training and sharing of data

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The timing of the review in the last but one and the current exercise has been inappropriate because of its simultaneity with the country's national election processes. During both times data collection has been greatly delayed. Subsequent reviews (Sierra Leone) should utilize more appropriate time lines.
2. Conducting interviews with respondents is a much more rewarding method of data collection and should be recommended over self- completion of the review instrument by respondents. The former leads to higher quality of response as the enumerator has the opportunity to probe and clarify conflicting issues.
3. Greater awareness about the AADPD and its importance should be disseminated across all MDAs so as to soften the ground for future data collection processes.
4. Feedback on the results of this study should be provided to MDAs who participated in the review as a way of getting them to know some of their 'low' areas so that further improvements can be made. This could be done by MoPED, as the coordinating Ministry.
5. As all the implementation regarding the AADPD goes on in various countries with different levels of political stability it is pertinent to include indicators on the Rule of Law in the commitments and the indicators

CONCLUSIONS

The assessment of the 88 commitments across 6 pillars has been helpful as a process of determining how much developmental progress has been made between the last assessment in 2018 and the current situation, five years later, in 2023.

New policies have been enacted; some programmes have been energized; new concepts have been given greater emphases. The demographic, social and economic situations have changed with new data, new findings and achievements. Greater efforts have been made by the government to allocate more funds to key ministries and programmes thereby upscaling such programmes and making them more meaningful in the national development process.

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.0.1. **Overview**

Sierra Leone signed up to the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD) 2013 Africa Regional Population Conference of Ministers from all African Countries. The Declaration is the blueprint for the continent on population and development as well as a road map for the implementation of the ICPD beyond 2014.The goals of the Declaration include harnessing the demographic dividend in Africa, improving human rights and meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS).

The six thematic pillars make important contributions to Africa's development as five of the pillars are linked to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and three out of the six are connected to the African Union's Agenda 2063.

The AADPD covers a wide range of key target groups including women, children, youth, girls and the general population. In the same vain, it includes pertinent programmatic concerns in the African continent such as reproductive rights, civic rights economic rights, gender based violence and other harmful practices such as FGM.

1.0.2. **The Purpose and Rationale for the Review**

The Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD) was adopted by African Ministers at the Africa Regional Conference on Population and Development that was held in Addis Ababa from October 3- 4, 2013, and endorsed by African Heads of State at the African Union Executive Council in 2014. The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) was organized thirty (30) years ago. This declaration provides region-specific guidelines on population and development in Africa and the full implementation of ICPD beyond 2014 in Africa. This year marks 10 years since the adoption of the AADPD, thus the national reviews of the ICPD+30 by all member states including Sierra Leone.

The data set for the review of the implementation progress (AADPD) comprises 88 commitments of the six pillars. The declaration (AADPD) re-echoes the need to continue the unfinished agenda of the ICPD Programme of Action in relation to Population and Development including the emerging issues in Africa since 1994. These new challenges include the demographic dividend, migration, urbanization, and changes in the environment, which need to be analyzed and monitored.

The review report of the implementation progress of the AADPD is broad and inclusive, incorporating issues on the entire population of Sierra Leone. An estimated 33 percent of the commitments of the declaration are on Pillar 1; Dignity and Equality, 19.3 percent on Pillar 2 Health, 22.7 percent on Pillar 3, Place and Mobility, 4.5 percent on pillar 4; Governance; 8 percent on Data and Statistics and 12.5 percent on pillar 6; Internal Corporation and Partnerships

Also, very prominent in the AADPD review instrument is the extent to which it incorporates issues of civic, economic and reproductive rights, which are adaptable to our national and local

setting. This factor strongly underpins human development seen from various aspects such as health, education and employment.

The review instrument is in essence rich in terms of content and is justifiable as a good monitoring tool.

It therefore serves a very useful guideline on assessing the progress Sierra Leone has made on achieving the key indicators every five years. These results can be used by individual countries in determining levels of achievements, successes and failures during the time frame. The exercise could also lead to capturing lessons learnt, constraints or challenges encountered, and provide recommendations which would pave the way for improvement over time. Owing to its continental nature, the review would allow comparisons across countries which would enable slow developers identify specific areas for improvement

Finally, the AADPD review instrument makes for healthy collaboration in terms of indicators across development partners. For example, it is beneficial to foster linkages between AADPD indicators with those of the ICPD, SDG and AU 2063 Agendas.

In conclusion, the review is crucial because of its importance for generating large scale social, economic and demographic data for national and continental improvement on population and development.

1.0.3. **Methodology**

The review started with a series of planning meetings between UNFPA, MoPED and the Consultant on developing a roadmap to guide the process, timelines and methodology. An Inception Report was eventually produced and shared.

The target population of this progress review was invariably all Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), development partners and CSOs that are identified as having links with both the pillars and commitments of the review. Prominent among these are the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (Pillar 2) Statistics Sierra Leone (Pillar 4) and the Ministry of External Affairs (Pillar 6). Other key Ministries include the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and the Ministry of Gender, among others. Where possible information was also sought from NGOs such as Planned Parenthood Association Sierra Leone and others.

Two complementary data collection techniques were used. Firstly, primary data were collected from the field as outlined above. In this regard, twelve (Senior) Planning Officers, comprising of75 percent males and 25 percent females were recruited as Enumerators from the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED). Enumerators were allocated to Pillars based on the number of Commitments. Field work was undertaken for two weeks covering the period 18th -31st May on all the pillars, SDGs Progress and ICPD commitments. Training of Enumerators was done by the Consultant taking the survey team through all 88 commitments with guidelines to obtain discussions on the indicators as well as highlighting challenges/constraints. The second approach of data collection involved secondary data collection from various sources available or

provided by the MDAs. In both approaches, MoDEP provided invaluable inputs during the training session.

1.0.4. **Data Management**

Data collected by enumerators were reviewed by the teams before being sent electronically to the Consultant. A second level of review was done by the Consultant with comments which were sent back to the Teams. Returns from the Teams were finally imputed into a master sheet, whilst keeping the original data.

Analyses were done for all indicators under the 88 commitments in all the six pillars to ensure completeness. Emphasis during analyses was based on evidence to support achievements such as policies developed, budgetary allocations rather than on activities, although the latter sometimes complemented the achievements.

The progress review followed the recommended three pathways to support the analyses ,namely: Direct, using specific programmes; indirect, through the demographic dividend and the interactive, through improvements in the institutional and policy environment.

1.0.5. **Problems encountered and Lessons learnt**

The review coincided with the national elections and especially when the political campaigns were heating up which delayed the process.
Due to the above, and other constraining factors, some managers, directors and professional heads being unavailable (a) to respondents to complete questionnaires in a timely manner (b) give authority to junior (intermediate) senior staff who had completed the questionnaires to submit them to enumerators. Some were in other official business out of their offices and country.
As a result of (a) and (b) above, the data collection process was delayed up to two weeks in June, thus extending the time to one month, which was not the initial plan.

1.0.6. **Lesson learnt**

A major lesson learnt was that the timing of the data collection was affected by political activities and fears of security concerns. This period should be avoided in the future where possible

CHAPTER 1
DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT

1.1. Population Growth

The Sierra Leone population has grown rapidly since 1963 with an intercensal growth rate of 2.0 per cent per annum between 1963 and 1974 to 2.3 per cent between 1974 and 1985. The reduction in the intercensal growth rate to 1.8 per cent between 1985 and 2004 could be attributed to the 11-year civil conflict which resulted in massive emigration of Sierra Leoneans to neighbouring countries as refugees. However, by 2015, most of the refugees that fled because of the had returned following the end of the war in 2002. The 2015 Population and Housing Census enumerated 7,092,113 persons comprising 3,490,978 males and 3,601,135 females respectively. The data indicates that the population grew from 4,976,871 in 2004 to 7,075,641 in 2015, registering an average annual growth rate of 3.2 percent. Males represented 49.1 percent of the total population, while females 50.9 percent. The 2015 Census further revealed that 40 percent of the total population were under age 15.

The 2015 Population and Housing Census projected a total population of 8,746,749, with 4,305,710 being male, and 4,441,039 being female for 2023. Since the future is uncertain, the projections were done for three different variants, to highlight the impact of varying assumptions about the future paths of fertility on the size and structure of the population. The high variant projections show that the total population of Sierra Leone will reach 9.2 million between 2015 and 2025: an increase of 2.1 million. The medium and low variant projections show that the country's population will increase by 1.98 million and 1.7 million to reach 9.1 million and 8.7 million respectively in 2025, and 10.3 million in 2030.

1.2. Age/Sex Structure

The sex ratio revealed from the 2015 Census overall is 96.9 males per 100 females, implying three percent fewer males than females in the national population. This pattern has remained unaltered in all national censuses. Over a period exceeding six decades the age structure of the country has been characterized by a 'young' population since the first national census in 1963.The UN World Population Dashboard notes that in 2023 the population aged 0-14 years accounts for 39 percent of the total population, (3,432,000) or a 1.8 difference from the 2015 census data. The population 65 years and over has remained characteristically low at around 3.0 percent estimating 264,000 in 2023. The productive population 15-64 years which was reported as 55.7 percent in 2015 is estimated to have increased by 2.3 percent to 58.0 percent (5,104,000) in 2023. A direct implication of the populations in these age groups is the Dependency Burden which expresses the relationship between the productive (15-64 years) and the non- productive ages (0-14 and 65 years and over). Using the 2023 data, the Dependency Burden is estimated as 72.4 percent implying that for every 100 producers there are 72 consumers, a situation which is still untenable but suggests a 7.0 percent decline from the 2015 census.

In conclusion the age/sex trends of the country have remained largely stable over a period exceeding half a century

1.3. Migration and Urbanization

Sierra Leone has experienced very low levels of immigration over the years, with the largest number of immigrants coming from neighboring African countries of Guinea and Liberia. The results of the 2015 national census suggested that the foreign-born population accounted for 0.8 percent (58,053). This percentage has declined over the years. In 1985, for example, the foreign population comprised 2.81 percent of the national population and 1.81 percent in 2004. This shows a declining trend in the immigrant population which could reflect poorer facilities and opportunities for investment by foreigners. With regard to internal movements, the nation is characterized by rural – urban migration, resulting from skewed national development between rural and urban areas. Urban areas are hubs of development whilst the rural areas are comparatively less developed. Such imbalance in development has accelerated the process of urbanization as reflected in the urban population and percentage of urbanization. In 2015, 2,893,507 persons were living in urban areas resulting in an urbanization level of 40.8 percent compared to 36.7 percent in 2004. Increasing urbanization has led to huge diseconomies of scale leading to deficits between the urban population and available resources such as water and electricity. Inadequate housing has contributed to the development of slum conditions and shanty settlements. Poor sanitation is another characteristic of the accelerating urbanization problem.

In the 2019-2023 period, efforts to combat migration have included: employment of border patrol officers who were deployed at strategic border crossing points to curtail irregular migration; the development and implementation of a Regulatory Overseas Employment Framework in 2021 to manage overseas recruitment; the government received and reintegrated 328 stranded Sierra Leone Migrants from 10 countries. These included women, boys and girls. Government's strategic objective regarding migration in the period under review is 'to ensure that internal and external migration is reduced and effectively managed' (GOSL, 2022)

1.4. The Youth Population

Youth in Sierra Leone are persons 15-35 years old. An analysis of the youthful population is crucial as it hinges on developmental issues such as the provision of education, employment, reproductive health as well as the demographic dividend. Slightly over one third, 34.0 percent of the national population are young persons in this age bracket. In absolute terms there were 2,404,226 youth in 2015. The distribution of the youth population by sex based on the 2015 census suggests that there were 53.4 percent females, compared to 46.6 percent males.

Across the regions and districts of the country, three in every ten persons (30.0 percent) were youths.

1.5. Female Population 15-49 years

The population of women in this age bracket is crucial for reproductive health planning and review. Overall, they comprise 51.0 percent of the female population in Sierra Leone. In absolute terms there were a total of 1,835,3278 of women nationally. The biggest concentration of these women was in the Northern District which housed about 34.0 of the female population, 15-49 years.

1.6. Fertility

Over the years, fertility levels have been high in Sierra Leone. Census estimates up to 2004, based on the total fertility rate, were 6 children per woman. However, the census of 2015 suggested a rate of 5.7 children per woman (Weekes S, Bangura P 2017). Fertility decline has been slow because of the low use of contraceptives among married women in addition to other factors. Estimates of contraceptive use is about 21.0 percent (MOHS and Statistics Sierra Leone 2020). In addition to the low contraceptive use other limiting factors include high unmet need for family planning about 25.0 percent, in 2019 (MOHS and Statistics Sierra Leone ibid), cultural factors such as male opposition to the use of contraceptives by partners. Other explanations include inaccessibility and unaffordability. In addition to these factors, wealth and level of education also have effects on the size of the family through the use or non-use of contraceptives. According to the 2019 Sierra Leone Demographic Health Survey, women in the lowest wealth quintile have 6.1 children in their lifetime compared to women in the highest wealth quintile who have 3.0 children, at least 3 children fewer than their counterparts in the lowest quintile. The relationship between wealth and fertility in Sierra Leone therefore is inverse.

Teenage childbearing is another prominent measure of child bearing in Sierra Leone. The 2019 SLDHS cited above, considers the measure as the percentage of women 15-19 who have given birth or are pregnant with their first child. The results indicate that the rate has decreased from 28 percent in 2008 (first SLDHS) to 21 percent in 2019. However, the results also point to the fact that the percentage of teenagers who have started childbearing has increased considerably from 4 percent at age 15 years to 45 percent at age 19 years. The adolescent fertility rate would therefore be in the region of 121 births per 1000 women 15 to 19 years.' Concerns over adolescent fertility have been raised because of both health and social reasons. Children given birth to by young mothers are at high risk of illness and death. These young mothers quite often experience complications including Visico Vaginal Fistula (VVF). In addition, they are also prone to becoming dropouts from school.

1.7. Ideal family size

On average men 15-49 years want almost the same number of children as women in the same age bracket based on the 2019 SLDHS. Whereas men want an ideal family size of 4.9 children women want just slightly less – 4.7 children. The trend however reveals a decline from 5.4 in 2013 to 5.2 in 2019 among currently married women.

Finally, a major fertility differential in Sierra Leone is the rural- urban disparity. Results over the years have indicated as expected higher fertility levels in rural areas compared to urban areas. As typified in the 2019 SLDHS already cited, in urban areas the TFR is 3.1 children compared to 5.1 children in rural areas. The implication of an almost stable fertility over the years as against declining mortality, is a young population which fuels the demographic dividend by increasing the population of children 0 – 14 years.

1.8. Trends in contraceptive use

Knowledge or awareness of contraceptives is widespread in Sierra Leone , The 2019 Demographic and Health Survey Report cited earlier for the country indicated that 98 percent of currently married women and 99 percent of currently married men reported knowing at least one contraceptive method. However, a big disparity exists between knowledge and use as the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) was reported as 21 percent for married women using any contraceptive method. Trends in the CPR reflect an increase from 7.0 percent in 2008 to 16 percent in 2013 and 21 percent in 2019. In terms of specific methods used, the 2019 SLDHS notes that Injectables accounted for 9 percent, Implants made up 7 percent, Pill was 4 percent and condom, IUDs, and traditional methods were each less than 1 percent .The survey report also noted the following; (a) 46 percent of currently married women have a need for family planning that is 32 percent for spacing and 14 percent for limiting births. On the whole, 56 percent of women are reported as not having a need for family planning.

1.9. Mortality and Life Expectancy at birth

Data on recent mortality levels were obtained from the SLDHS 2019 which shows that infant mortality rate was 75 deaths per 1.000 live births for the 5 years preceding the survey, while the under-5 mortality rate was 122 deaths per 1,000 live births. This implies that 1 in 8 children die before their 5th birthday. The under-5 mortality rate decreased from 156 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013 to 122 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019. Similarly, infant mortality decreased from 92 to 75 deaths per 1,000 live births and neonatal mortality declined from 39 to 31 deaths per 1,000 live births

The 2019 SLDHS results further show that neonatal mortality was 31 deaths per 1,000 live births, post neonatal mortality was 45 deaths per 1,000 live births, and infant mortality was 75 deaths per 1,000 live births in the 5-year period preceding the survey. The child mortality rate was 50 deaths per 1,000 live births TheUnder-5 mortality increased from 140 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2008 to 156 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013 before decreasing to 122 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019. Similar patterns were observed for infant mortality (89 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2008, 92 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013, and 75 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019) and neonatal mortality (36 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2008, 39 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013, and 31 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019)

The life expectancy is an index which measures the number of additional years expected to be lived after reaching a particular age. The life expectancy at birth for Sierra Leone based on the 2015 national census was 51.5 years. As expected there was a difference between the sexes with males having a life expectancy of 48.3 years compared to females with 50.8 years.

1.10. The Demographic Dividend

The following characterize the demographic dividend situation in Sierra Leone

a) The young population 0-14 years has been large over time constituting 42.0 percent in 2015
b) Declining fertility – The total fertility rate declined from 6.1 children in 2004 to 5.7 children in 2015 (Statistics Sierra Leone 2017), a decline of less than one child. Further decline is expected because the contraceptive prevalence rate has been on the increase as indicated earlier, although there are other militating factors.

Under such conditions of declining fertility and a large young population, UNFPA (2015) makes the point that "A country with both increasing numbers of young people and declining fertility has the potential to reap the demographic dividend". But in spite of these two related results, the productive population 15-64 years has grown by only 1.8 percent between 1974 and 2015. (Weekes and Bah 2017). This suggests that the working population has not grown enough for an impact to be felt in the productive sector. The EEE framework; Education, Employment and Empowerment could contribute to enhancing the demographic dividend. (World Economic Forum) These are analyzed in turn as below:

1.11. Education

The Free Quality Basic and Senior Secondary education has been the main thrust of the educational system during the five-year period being reviewed. The strategic objective of this approach was to 'significantly improve and increase access to quality basic and senior secondary education in both formal and non-formal settings, providing modern, free basic and secondary education services that are safe, inclusive, equitable, corrupt free and relevant to the needs to impact productive economic activity.' (GOSL, 2022). The key policy targets were all set for 2023 and included (a) implementing free quality basic and secondary education; (b) increase access equity and completion rates at all levels of schooling, for formal and non- formal, above the 2018 rates; (c) improve the basic and senior secondary learning environment at all levels above the 2018 rates; (d) review and strengthen educational systems and governance architecture for improved quality education. Various levels of progress have been made towards meeting the strategic targets and objective as set out below:

1. The percentage of recurrent national budget allocated to the basic and secondary school sub-sector increased from 18.9 percent in 2018 to 21 percent in 2019 and 22 percent in 2020.
2. The proportion of girls completing primary education increased from 65.4 percent in 2018 to 79.7 percent in 2019 and 84.6 percent in 2020.
3. The percentage of boys completing primary education also increased from 66.6 percent in 2018 to 79.6 percent in 2019 and 83.0 percent in 2020.
4. The proportion of girls completing the Junior Secondary school increased from 48.7 percent in 2018 to 68,1percent in 2019 and 73.8 percent in 2020.
5. For boys the comparative figures were 53.6Percent in 2018 68.9 percent in 2019 and 73. 9 percent in 2020.

With respect to completion of Senior Secondary school the percentage of girls increased from 15.0 percent in 2018 to41.7 percent in 2019 and 43.2 percent in 2020. Among boys the completion rate rose from 22.0 percent in 2018 to 45.2 percent in 2019 and 2020. Some

contributory factors to the results above include, school feeding, provision of teaching and learning materials and development of school infrastructure. With respect to tertiary education, the strategic objective between 2019 and 2023 was 'to increase equitable access to quality technical and higher education that promotes review, innovation and entrepreneurship for growth, stability and national development.

1.12. Youth employment

Regarding youth employment, the Government's intentions were clearly set out in Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023.(GOSL 2022) The Strategic Objective of this intervention was:To support the youth to undertake viable and innovative business activities through start-up projects and to promote collaboration among them by taking advantage of their ingenuity for job creation. It is also to ensure the enforcement of labour laws for the benefits of youth in employment and business' (GOSL,2022 ibid).

1.13. Three key policy targets were set for 2023 as follows;

(a) Increase youth employment by 15 percent, with special attention to gender equity.
(b) Ensure that the number of young people involved in entrepreneurial activities is higher than in 2018.
(c) Ensure that the National Youth Service and the Skills Development Project are fully functional.

During the period under review, considerable efforts have been made by the government to get young persons into a variety of economic activities. The following constitute part of this effort.

1. The Youth in Fisheries Project led to the construction and equipment of 70 new fishing boats that were distributed to young people in seven riverine districts of the country. This led to the creation of 1,400 new jobs.
2. Over 500 youth leaders were trained in entrepreneurship.
3. Under the National Youth Service scheme, a total of 1,200 university graduates were recruited, trained and deployed throughout the country based on their experiences 67 percent or 804 of them have gained permanent employment.
4. To encourage young persons into agriculture, at least 200 youths were supported in cocoa and coffee plantations. Another 3,400 have also been supported in rice cultivation in various districts since 2018. Forty percent participation in rice cultivation has come from females.
5. In the garbage collection and disposal operations, another 3,400 youths have been given employment across the country.
6. The proportion of the youth population engaged in wage employment increased to 14Percent in 2020 beyond the 2014 level of 10Percent. In summary, by 2020 13,261 additional jobs had been created beyond the total of 10,000 in 2018. The target for 2020 was however 25,850.

Challenges affecting youth employment include limited funding to implement youth development programmes; over reliance on donor resources for skills training for youths and low retention rate for the National Youth Service internship programme

1.14. Empowerment

The Strategic Objective on Women's Empowerment during the last five years has been:'to promote the overall empowerment of women in the political, social ,economic and cultural spheres.'

The policy targets set against 2023 were:

(a) Ensure that there were more women in leadership positions in government than in 2018;
(b) Ensure that more women are supported to engage in entrepreneurial activities than in 2018;
(c) Develop and implement national data and information management system on gender-based violence cases;
(d) Drastically reduce by more than 50 percent the number of women experiencing GBV compared to 2018.

Some key achievements in the period include an increase in the percentage of seats held by women in Parliament from 12 percent in 2018 to 13.6 percent in 2020. This was however, below the target of 18 percent for 2020. Nonetheless, the percentage of female cabinet ministers increased from 12 percent to 18.5 percent in 2020.

In addition, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Policy was reformulated, adopted and launched in 2020. Furthermore, a National Male Involvement Strategy on GBV prevention was also developed and adopted. Key challenges in meeting the set targets included: limited budgetary allocations and late disbursement of funds; unpredictable donor support; limited human resource capacity to effectively coordinate the implementation of programmes. (GOSL, 2022).

The analyses above answer the World Economic Forum's three Es model as a means of harnessing the demographic dividend. The analyses also reveal the government's efforts to meet the needs of young persons in respect of the demographic dividend.

1.15. Social characteristics

Education as a major social characteristic of the population is crucial and is strongly tied up with the demographic dividend for development. Current assessment of this characteristic points to the fact that the Adult Literacy rate for ages 15 and over increased from 51.4Percent in 2015 to 62Percent in 2019. A major input to the educational system was the significant increase in educational expenditure from 18.9Percent in 2018 to 22 percent in 2021.

Increase in school enrolment of over 800,00 pupils has been recorded since the launch of the Free Quality School Education Programme in 2018.. In addition, gender parity was maintained at the primary level. The special support offered to girls offering STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) in Government Universities was scaled-up. The educational system also recorded a strengthening of the tertiary and higher education sector.

In 2018, a new Ministry of Technical and Higher Education was established. This was geared towards enhancing the human capital development programme of the country. The new establishment saw an increase in enrolment in government supported universities from 29,723 students in 2018 to 54.000 in 2020. (GOSL 2022). Moreover, three new universities were established, one in the Western Region and two in the Eastern Region. Finally, the Technical Vocational and Educational Training Unit (TVET) was upgraded to a Directorate in the Ministry.

1.16. Marriage

Another key social characteristic of the population is marriage which can be contracted in one of three ways in Sierra Leone: customary, ordinance and religious. The results on marital status indicate that 49.3 percent of persons 10 years old and over were married. Another 46.0 percent were never married.

The mean age at marriage based on the results of the 2015 census was 17.9 years which was consistent with the minimum age at marriage prescribed by the Customary Marriage and Divorce Act of 2007. But this notwithstanding, marriages are contracted before 18 years. In the Northern Region, the minimum age at marriage is 16.7 years. This raises questions about the effectiveness of the implementation and monitoring of the Act. A number of campaigns have been mounted against early marriage. The Flag ship project of the current First Lady, Fatima Bio is 'Hands off our Girls' which also is against child marriage.

1.17. The National Social Security and Insurance Trust

The National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT) is a Statutory Public Trust charged with the administration of Sierra Leone's national pension. The Trust came into being by the National Social Security and Insurance Trust Act No.5 of 2001 and is still in operation.
The objective is to provide income protection for the contributions under the specified contingencies of old age, invalidity and death, as well as such contingencies to be prescribed by the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Industrial Relations, from time to time.
It is supposed to cover both formal and informal sector employees in all forms of productive employment, thereby providing an opportunity for every Sierra Leonean to be a member of the scheme.

1.18. Economic Characteristics

Sierra Leone is a least developed country. The country is endowed with minerals including diamond, gold, iron ore and bauxite. Heavy concentration on the mining sector over the years has led to a decline in agriculture to the extent that bulk of the staple food rice is still being imported. Some of the economic characteristics of the population are outlined below based on the 2015 Census.

(a) The economically active population 10 years and over was 3,937,595
(b) Thirty nine percent of this population were youth 15 to 24 years.
(c) A total of 7.1Percent of the labour force were in paid employment.
(d) In the formal sector men make up 73 percent of paid employees.
(e) Men continue to dominate the labour force even though there are more women in the working age population than men.
(f) The share of women in wage employment in non-agricultural occupations is less than 1.0 percent.
(g) Whilst women work mostly in the informal sector men account for only 43Percent of those in the sector.
(h) Children 0-14 years are in employment in all regions of the country. The Northern region has 82.4 of these children in employment compared to 52Percent in the Western Region. (Braima and Turay, 2017).

The World Bank data on macroeconomic performance in 2021 suggest the following: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 4.1 percent annual change; GDP per capita of $480.04; a Gross National Income (GNI} of 14.777 ppp dollars. In the five-year period under review, the government's target was to diversify the economy and promote growth. In 7 planned sectors as indicated below:

(a) Improving the productivity and commercialization of the agricultural sector.
(b) Improving the productivity and sustainable management of fisheries and the marine sector.
(c) Revitalizing the tourism sector.
(d) Enhancing manufacturing and services.
(e) Improving the management of oil and gas exploration /production/
(f) Improving the management of mineral resources.
(g) Promoting an exclusive rural economy

Various specific challenges to implementation were identified during the period. However, funding, inadequate skilled manpower, the Covid 19 epidemic appear to be common set-backs to implementation.

1.19. Political structure

Sierra Leone is a constitutional democracy. Its political process is largely based on the multi-party system. The citizens enjoy universal suffrage once they are 18 years of age. The Legislative arm is made up of a Parliament with 146 seats, 132 are chosen by popular vote. The

remaining 14 are paramount chiefs elected by separate elections. All 146 legislators have a five-year term.
The current system of decentralization was affected by the New Local Government Act ratified in February 2004. The Act called for the active participation of local people and communities in public discourse and decision making through devolved governance, especially in connection with economic, social, environmental, health and education issues. The Act gave rise to the setting up of 19 local councils across the country.

1.20. The Legal System

Sierra Leone has a mixed legal system of English common law and customary law. The Judiciary of Sierra Leone is the branch of the government of the Republic of Sierra Leone which interprets and applies the laws of Sierra Leone to ensure impartial justice under the law and to provide a mechanism for dispute resolution. The independence of the judiciary is guaranteed by the national Constitution. The judicial system, headed by the Chief Justice, comprises the inferior courts, represented by the Magistrate Courts and the local courts and the superior courts represented by the High Court, the Appeal Court and the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court has the final jurisdiction in all civil, criminal and constitutional cases within Sierra Leone and its decision cannot be appealed. This court has the exclusive constitutional power to overturn the rulings of lower courts within the jurisdiction. It consists of the Chief Justice and not less than four other justices.

CHAPTER 2
PILLAR 1 DIGNITY AND EQUITY

2.1. Introduction

Pillar1 deals with Dignity and Equality and has Twenty nine Commitments. The results suggest that a number of improvements are recorded with respect to the social and economic indicators sketched out in the Pillar.

2.2. COMMITMENT 1

2.2.1. **Indicator 1** Percent public budget allocated to social protection programs.

Achievement: According to the national budget 2023, the Government of Sierra allocated 15 percent of the budget to poverty expenditure.

2.2.2. **Indicator 2** Minimum wage.

Achievement: The results indicate that there has been an increase in the minimum wage from NLe500 to NLe 800, an increase of 60.0 percent in the five- year period. The change was effective 1st April 2023.

Challenges: Disparities in salary still exist and the implementation of the Wages and Compensation Commission is slow.

2.2.3. **Indicator 3** Tax Policy

Achievement: This Indicator dealt with the nature of the government's current tax regime. Responses indicate that currently the government is maintaining zero import duty and GST on imported rice as well as reducing import duty on cement to 10 percent and Iron Rod from 10 percent to percent.

2.2.4. **Indicator 4.** Percentage Allocation to education.

Achievement: Returns from the field noted that the current allocation to education is 22 percent of the budget from 16.8 in the 2013 -2018 period. This reflects an increase of 31.0 percent

2.2.5. **Indicator 5** Allocation to Public Health

Achievement: The allocation to public health stands at 15.3 percent in 2023 compared to 5.33 percent in 2018, suggesting an increase of 189 percent in the five-year period.

2.2.6. **Indicator 6** Human Right

Achievement: As in 2013-2018, a number of measures, offices and documents are in place to guarantee human rights including many legal instruments. The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone is a major regulatory body regarding human rights issues. Rights are guaranteed for various sectors such as children, women's health, education, the law, inheritance and resources. Some of the old but extant laws on various categories of rights are:

(a) Child Rights Act of 2007
(b) Domestic Violence Act 2007
(c) Devolution of Estate Acts 2007
(d) Customary Marriage and Divorce Act 2009
(e) Sexual Offences Act 2012
(f) Persons with Disabilities Act 2011 to address the human rights concerns of persons with disabilities.
(g) Refugees Protection Act which provides for assistance to refugees
(h) The Human Trafficking and Migrant Trafficking Act, 2022
(i) The Post-Secondary Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2022

More recent Acts or Laws with similar import include the Property rights, The Property Land Rights, The Gender Equity and Women's Equality Act 2020. Regarding women's guaranteed access to resources, the passing of the Customary Land Act and the Land Commission Act in 2023 has been very helpful to women owning land resources.

Challenge: Much as the laws and rights would be helpful to women, the key challenge is effective implementation of these policies.

2.2.7. **Indicator 7**: Public campaigns and education programmes to promote awareness of human rights

Achievements: Hands off our Girls campaign, enactment of 30 percent quota for women's representation in Parliament (GEWE Act 2022), Free Quality Education in primary and junior secondary schools, Free Health Care for under five children and lactating mothers.

Challenge: Inadequate funding and ineffective implementation pose serious constraints to these achievements. Inadequate health facilities and trained and qualified personnel at the Rural communities.

2.3. COMMITMENT 2

2.3.1. Indicator 1: Existence of National Strategy to Eradicate Extreme Poverty

Achievements: The nation has developed various strategies gearing towards eradicating extreme poverty. Such strategies are National Social Protection Strategy for Sierra Leone 2022, 2026, Medium Term National Development Plan (MTNDP 2019-2023), Free Quality Education, Free Health Care, Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Act

(GEWE 2022). The employment makes adequate provision for non-discrimination of women in the labour force.

Emergency cash transfer programme funded by the Government of Sierra Leone, World Bank, UNICEF, through the productive social safety nets and youth employment project, as well as the MUNAFA fund. In the five- year period under review, government's target was to diversify the economy and promote growth in 7 planned sectors as indicated below:

a) Improving the productivity and commercialization of the agricultural sector.
b) Improving the productivity and sustainable management of fisheries and the marine sector.
c) Revitalizing the tourism sector.
d) Enhance manufacturing and services.
e) Improving the management of oil and gas exploration /production/
f) Improving the management of mineral resources.
g) Promoting an inclusive rural economy.
h) Poverty reduction, though implied in all seven strategies, is explicitly indicated in (a),(b) and
i) Various specific challenges to implementation were identified during the period. However, funding, inadequate skilled manpower, the COVID 19 epidemic appear to be common set-backs to implementation.

2.3.2. **Indicator 2:** Percent of government budget or resources allocated directly to poverty reduction programmes

Achievement: This allocation is less than one percent, specifically 0.6 percent and comes through the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA)

2.4. COMMITMENT 3:

2.4.1. Indicator 1: Harmonize national legislation with international commitments on gender inequality

Achievement: Sierra Leone has passed the Gender Empowerment Act, which stipulates a minimum quota of 30 percent of women's employment in all public and private institutions. The act also specifies a 30 percent minimum quota of women for all elective and appointive positions in Sierra Leone's government or public offices. The law provides equal access to job opportunities, training and pay1. It also encourages the establishment of Gender Units in all MDAs. The act will result in more women in political positions, making it compulsory for the government to develop policies and streamline women's issues in its activities. Clauses which do not promote gender equality are repealed from the Constitution. Currently women make up 30.4 percent of Parliamentarians and 32.0 percent of the Cabinet.

2.4.2. **Indicator 2:** Create an independent body responsible for promoting and protecting the right to non-discrimination

Achievements: There are civil society groups, Non-Governmental Organizations and other women's Organizations that ensure that women's voices are heard on gender equality. The 50/50 Group is one of the main groups with the responsibility for monitoring discrimination against women. It was established with a mission to increase the level of female participation in government and to ensure gender parity in all walks of life. Since then, it has been involved in the training of women politicians. They also lobbied the political parties for the reservation of a certain percentage of political seats for women during the 2004 local government elections.

Challenges: Inadequate knowledge about women's rights coupled with long standing cultural traditions and customs may hinder the effectiveness of such a body

2.5. COMMITMENT 4:

2.5.1. Indicator 1: Abolition of laws, regulations, and practices with a discriminatory impact on women.

Achievements:: There is no law that regulates or discriminates against women in Sierra Leone except for traditional or cultural beliefs. .

2.5.2. **Indicator 2**: Create an independent body responsible for monitoring discrimination against women

Achievements There are civil society groups, Non-Governmental Organizations and other women's Organizations that ensure that women's voices are heard on gender equality. The 50/50 Group is one of the main groups with the responsibility for monitoring discrimination against women. It was established with a mission to increase the level of female participation in government and to ensure gender parity in all walks of life. Since then, it has been involved in the training of women politicians. They also lobbied the political parties for the reservation of a certain percentage of political seats for women during the 2004 local government elections.

Challenges: Inadequate knowledge about women's rights coupled with long standing cultural traditions and customs may hinder the effectiveness of such a body

2.6. COMMITMENT 5:

2.6.1. **Indicator 1: Support paid parental leave; sick and care leave**.

Achievements: In the Sierra Leone Civil Service, provision is made for female employees to proceed on 14 weeks maternity leave and males will go for 2 weeks paternity leave (the Employment Act, 2023). Regulations and Rules give female officers to proceed on maternity leave subject to the submission of a medical report of the expected due date (Rule 10.9 of the civil service code). Regulation and Rules grant permanent employees sick leave on full pay for a period not exceeding 183 days and the leave is renewed with half pay for another 183 days starting with an initial 30 days having provided certified medical report by the chief medical officer and a medical board.

Challenge:

2.6.2. Indicator 2: Offer work-place accommodations for nursing mothers

Achievements: Creating strategies to make sure nursing mothers have enough time to take care of their young ones is very essential and has been provided for in the Employment Act, 2023.

Challenge: The provision of funding to develop these facilities is a major constraint

2.6.3. **Indicator 3:** Create and support gender equality offices/units
Achievements: Some of the public offices have established gender units, sections or divisions to promote gender equality

Challenges: Some institutions have resisted the creation of gender units, sections or divisions. Many of them citing the lack of funds to do so.

2.6.4. **Indicator 4:** Create/ support institutions providing leadership training for women

Achievements: Government is supporting the academic institutions to train women on gender empowerment and rights**.**

2.7. COMMITMENT 6:

2.7.1. Indicator 1: Existence of national programmes to promote gender equality in rights

Achievements: The Government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs has embarked on several programmes to promote gender equality and rights. These programmes include the women's' economic empowerment programme in Falaba in the North of Sierra Leone, with support from CARE, UNFPA and UN Women. Other programmes include; the Comprehensive sexuality education programme, Radical Inclusion (leaving no one behind), the distribution of Free Sanitary Pads to girls throughout Sierra Leone, and the Hands Off our Girls initiative the later too are supported by the office of the First Lady

Challenges: Some of the challenges are**:** the lack of economic independence, high illiteracy and entrenched customs and traditions, political violence and reprisals, and the lack of confidence to vie for public positions.

2.8. COMMITMENT 7:

2.8.1. Indicator 1: Existence of laws guaranteeing women's equal access to ownership and control of resources

Achievements: The adoption of the Customary Land Act and the Land Commission Act in 2022, represents a historic first for Sierra Leonean women. These laws address inequalities in land ownership and access for women who have historically been disenfranchised but wider societal changes are needed. The newly enacted laws grant ownership rights to all citizens, including non-natives and women. The enacted law intends to promote gender equality and ensure that married couples can jointly register land ownership. Land titles will now be registered in family names to ensure the consent of both the husband and wife is required before family-owned land is disposed of. In rural communities across Sierra Leone, land is the most critical economic resource for most poor women. These women depend on land for their subsistence. Women's ownership and control of land can affect what households produce and how the proceeds from agricultural production are allocated within the family which has implications for their communities and local economies.

Challenge: Enforcement of the new rights against the backdrop of cultural barriers against women poses a serious challenge to the implementation.

2.8.2. **Indicator 2**: Existence of systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Achievements: The Ministry of Finance makes budgetary allocations to the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs to implement activities that include programmes to promote gender equality and support women's empowerment. Public Expenditure and Tracking System (PETS) is utilized by the Ministry of Finance to track public expenditure including allocation made to the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs for gender equality and women empowerment.

Challenge: Inadequate budgetary allocations for gender equality and women empowerment.

2.9. COMMITMENT 8:

2.9.1. Indicator 1: Existence of affirmative action policies for women's and youth participation in decision-making**.**

Achievements: The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act (GEWE) is a law in Sierra Leone that requires public and private employers to reserve 30 percent of jobs for women, including leadership positions. It also stipulates that 30 percent of candidates put forward by any political party for parliamentary and local elections must be female. The law was signed into law by President Julius Maada Bio in January 2023. The GEWE Act aims to improve the broader socio-economic conditions for women and increase their representation in Sierra Leone

The Sierra Leone National Youth Policy is a progressive, pragmatic, rights-based and gender-responsive policy that outlines government's commitments, principles and concrete actions to empower youth. The policy aims to enhance the development of youth and provides guidelines for the responsibilities of adults towards youth and the responsibilities of youth towards society. It also outlines the rights of youth. The 2003 National Youth Policy established the Ministry for Youth and Sports, which is now the Ministry for Youth Affairs.

National Youth Service is a strategy or roadmap for the implementation of the National Youth Policy aimed at promoting national youth participation in governance. There is no policy on Affirmative action for women and youth participation in decision.

Challenge: Entrenched cultural and social practices are hindering progress towards achieving the goals and targets set in the aforementioned act and policies

2.10. COMMITMENT 9:

2.10.1. **Indicator 1:** Existence of systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Achievements: The Ministry of Finance makes budgetary allocations to the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs to implement activities that include programmes to promote gender equality and support women's empowerment. The Public Expenditure and Tracking System (PETS) is utilized by the Ministry of Finance to track public expenditure including allocation made to the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs for gender equality and women empowerment.

Challenge: Inadequate budgetary allocations for gender equality and women empowerment.

2.11. COMMITMENT 10:

2.11.1. **Indicator 1:** Existence of national policies/ programmes to address children's rights to health, nutrition and education; infrastructures for learners with disabilities.

Achievement: There is a National Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools which provides a roadmap for the day-to-day operations of schools and the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education to ensure inclusion and positive experience for all students regardless of their status in society. The policy's main concern is the removal of all infrastructural and systemic policy and practice impediments that limit learning for any child. Radical Inclusion, as defined by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, is "the intentional inclusion of persons directly or indirectly excluded (from education) due to actions or inactions by individuals, society or institutions. It is about creating an enabling and inclusive environment that eradicates stigma, harassment, intolerance and exclusion of any kind. Radical inclusion is a process and a way of increasing justice and equity in peoples' lives and organizations. The policy particularly emphasizes the inclusion of historically marginalized groups: pregnant girls and parent learners, children with disabilities, children from rural and underserved areas, and children from low-income families.

Under the Free Quality School Education Policy, a school feeding initiative was introduced to provide meals for all school going children including children with disabilities. The Free Health Care Policy provides free health care for children under five as well as lactating mothers.

Challenges: Long term challenges are likely to be funding and provision of facilities as the school population increases. Limited coverage for free meals.

2.12. COMMITMENT 11:

2.12.1. Indicator 1: Existence of school-based programs to attract children who have never-enrolled in school

Achievements: The Free Quality School Education (FQSE) policy, Radical Inclusion and the school feeding programme are initiatives that have increased access and enrollment in schools by children who have never enrolled in schools. Under these policies, the Government of Sierra Leone has provided school fees subsidies, the payment examination fees for pupils taking public examinations (NPSE, BECE, and WASSCE), rehabilitated schools, and school bus services for all pupils.

Challenge: Inadequate infrastructure and facilities to accommodate all pupils especially persons living with disability.

2.12.2. **Indicator 2**: Student /teacher ratio in primary and secondary schools

Achievements: The pupil to teacher ratio (PTR) in primary and secondary schools are 45:1 for primary, 29:1 for junior secondary and 38:1 for senior secondary. The pupil to qualified teacher ratio (PQTR) in primary and secondary schools are 60:1 for primary, 45:1 for junior secondary and 94:1 for senior secondary. The PQTR is calculated after removing untrained teachers and trained teachers not qualified for the levels they are teaching.

Challenge: The workload of teachers increases and could affect the quality of learning.

2.12.3 Indicator 3: Percent of certified trainers;

Achievement: 77 percent of teachers are trained (Annual Schools Census 2021)

2.12.4 Indicator 4: Share of public expenditure allocated to each level of education

Achievements

1. Technical and Higher Education 15.3 percent of total expenditure, 2022
2. Basic and secondary Education 3.11 percent of total expenditure, 2022

2.13 COMMITMENT 12:

2.13.1. Indicator 1: Existence of policies and school-based programs to keep pregnant girls and teen mothers in school;

Achievements: There is a National Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools which provides a roadmap for the day-to-day operations of schools and the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education to ensure inclusion and positive experience for all students regardless of their status in society. The policy's main concern is the removal of all infrastructural and systemic policy and practice impediments that limit learning for any child. Radical Inclusion, as defined by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, is "the intentional inclusion of persons directly or indirectly excluded (from education) due to actions or inactions by individuals, society or institutions. It is about creating an enabling and inclusive environment that eradicates stigma, harassment, intolerance and exclusion of any kind. Radical inclusion is a process and a way of increasing justice and equity in peoples' lives and organizations. The policy particularly emphasizes the inclusion of historically marginalized groups: pregnant girls and parent learners, children with disabilities, children from rural and underserved areas, and children from low-income families.

Challenges: Social norms and perception leading to stigmatizations of pregnant girls and parent learners are some inhibiting factors.

2.14. COMMITMENT 13

2.14.1. Indicator 1: Existence of policies to prevent school-based violence;

Achievement: The Government has produced a Guide for Reducing Violence in School in order to provide guidance on how to prevent, report and respond to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). Other policies include the Sexual Offences Act of

2019, the Sexual Offences Court, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse guidelines, prohibition of corporal punishment in schools, Comprehensive School Safety Policy 2023)

These policies have a significant impact on students' ability to participate in and complete school, particularly adolescent girls and students with special needs

Challenges: Social norms, belief patterns serve as impediment to the effective implementation of these new policies.

2.14 COMMITMENT 14

2.15.1. Indicator 1: Legal age of marriage set in accordance with Article 6(b).

Achievement: Sierra Leone ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, which sets a minimum age of marriage ***of 18*** years. The Child Right Act 2007 also prohibits marriage under the age of 18 years.
Challenge: The harmonization of the above Child Right Acts and the customary marriage practices. Ineffective monitoring and implementation of the laws across the country.

2.15.2. Indicator 2: Public campaigns against child and early marriages.

Achievements: The Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs launched the African Union campaign to end child marriage on 17 August 2016.

A growing number of traditional chiefs have publicly condemned child marriage, often instituting punishment for perpetrators.

Sierra Leone was one of 12 countries selected to be part of UNFPA and UNICEF's Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage.

16 'Girls Not Brides' members work in Sierra Leone to end child marriage and support married girls.

The national strategy for the reduction of teenage pregnancy and the establishment of the national secretariat for the reduction of teenage pregnancy and child marriage.

Challenges: Most of these campaigns have been affected by the EBOLA and the COVID 19 outbreaks, customary practices, traditions and norms.

2.15.3. Indicator 3: Existence of an institutional mechanism to prevent child marriage

Achievements: The government established the National Secretariat for the reduction of teenage pregnancy and child marriage, the Sierra Leone Adolescent Girls Network,

2.15 COMMITMENT 15:

2.16.1. Indicator 1: Adoption of laws against early and forced marriages, and female genital mutilation

Achievement: The Child Right Act 2007 also prohibits marriage under the age of 18 years and the Sexual Offences Act of 2019.

Challenges These involve long standing cultural practices which may prove difficult to handle successfully in the short run.

2.16 COMMITMENT 16:

2.17.1. Indicator 1: Existence of laws against gender-based violence within and outside the family

Achievements: The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has enacted the three "Gender Acts" (Laws) in 2007-09, and the Sexual Offences Act in 2012. The three Gender Laws collectively are:
Domestic Violence Act: addresses all types of violence in a domestic setting
Devolution of Estates Act [also known as the 'Intestate Succession Act']: provides protection for women in terms of land and estate inheritance in the event that her spouse dies intestate (without a will). Registration of Customary Marriages and Divorces Act: outlines a framework for registering customary marriages and divorces, which provides further economic and legal protection for women. In addition to the 2007-09 Gender Laws, the Sexual Offences Act was also passed in 2012, which provides a clear framework for addressing sexual violence crimes.

Government has taken steps to domesticate the CEDAW through the passage of a range of laws protecting women and children in Sierra Leone.

However, a major **challenge** is with enforcement of these laws
The passage of national laws and policies is one thing, while ensuring that they are fully implemented, publicly understood, and effectively enforced is quite another. This is particularly the case when such laws tend to challenge informal social norms that are deeply embedded in culture, and which normally take time to change.

2.17 COMMITMENT 17

2.18.1. Indicator 1: Existence of laws guaranteeing human rights for all, and equality before the law;

Achievements: The Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act 6 of the 1991 Constitution. The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone Act, 2004. Section 8 of the Human Right Act 2004 prescribes key issues including: a. right to recognition as a person before the law, b.

right to enjoy human rights without distinction or discrimination, c. everyone is equal before the law.

2.18.2. Indicator2: Number of centers, public agencies and CSOs devoted to the protection of human rights.

Achievements: Public agencies and CSOs devoted to the protection of human rights includes: the Human Right Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission, Office of the Ombudsman, Independent Media Commission, Law Reform Commission, Independent Police Complaint Board, Justice and Legal Service Commission, Office of the Solicitor General, Justice Sector Coordinating Office, Legal Aid Board, Administrator and Registrar General, National Commission for Democracy for Human Rights.

2.18 COMMITMENT 18:

2.19.1. Indicator 1: Promulgation and enforcement of laws against discrimination, stigmatization and violence

Achievement: The Government of Sierra Leone criminalized, enacted and enforced laws regulations to address discrimination, stigmatization and violence. The Sexual Offences Act 2019, the Radical Inclusion and the school safety policy. Other bills before Parliament for enactment include the Child Marriage Bill, The Persons Living with Disability Act.

Challenges: Delays in the passage of the Bills.

2.19 COMMITMENT 19:

2.20.1. Indicator 1: Provision of free elementary, education and universal

Achievements: Sierra Leone has implemented the Free Quality Basic and Senior Secondary education system, increasing access to education and improving completion rates. The Free Quality School Education (FQSE) policy, Radical Inclusion and the school feeding programme are initiatives that have increased access and enrollment in schools by children have never enrolled in schools. The Government of Sierra Leone has provided school fees subsidies, the payment examination fees for pupils taking public examinations (NPSE, BECE, and WASSCE), rehabilitated schools, and school bus services for all pupils. Beyond the senior secondary school level, the Government of Sierra Leone provides Grant-in-aid, student loan services, free education for female students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

Challenges: Inadequate resources, overcrowding in schools, and limited certified teacher supply are among the challenges faced.

2.21. COMMITMENT 20:

2.21.1. Indicator 1: Existence and number of education facilities that are gender and disability sensitive.

Achievement: There are about 1386 education facilities that are gender and disability sensitive.

Challenge: These facilities are not evenly distributed across the country.

2.21.2. Indicator 2: Existence of legal provisions to provide a safe, non-violent and inclusive learning environment for all.

Achievement: There is a strong political will and a number of Acts of Parliament which support this indicator. These include the Basic and Senior Secondary Education Act 2023, Sexual Offences Act 2019, and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Act 2022

Challenge: The implementation of these laws in the school settings are constrained by social norms, belief patterns and other traditional harmful practices.

2.22. COMMITMENT 21:

2.22.1. Indicator 1: Existence of policies and programs to generate employment

Achievements: The National Youth Policy, the National Youth Service programme, the establishment of the Government Technical Institutes across the country. Construction of four TVET institutions in four districts [Kambia Koinadugu, Kono and Pujehun], operationalized with the provision of basic equipment's. The Social Entrepreneurship programme for youth, Productive Social Safety Net and Youth Employment (PSSNYE)

Challenges: Limited employment opportunities for a growing youth population

2.22.2. Indicator 2: School institutions that mainstream training in life skills;

Achievements: The establishment of the Government Technical Institutes across the country. Construction of four TVET institutions in four districts [Kambia Koinadugu, Kono and Pujehun]

Challenges: The number of training facilities in life skills are inadequate for the target population.

2.22.3. Indicator 3: Percent educational institutions in vocational schools

Challenges: This indicator is not clear

2.23. COMMITMENT 22:

2.23.1. Indicator 1: Existence of programs to create opportunities and a supportive environment for innovation and entrepreneurship for young people;

Achievements: The National Youth Policy, the National Youth Service programme, the establishment of the Government Technical Institutes across the country. Construction of four TVET institutions in four districts [Kambia Koinadugu, Kono and Pujehun], operationalized with the provision of basic equipment's. The Social Entrepreneurship programme for youth, Productive Social Safety Net and Youth Employment (PSSNYE)

Challenges: Limited programmes to meet the growing youth population

2.24. COMMITMENT 23:

2.24.1. Indicator 1: Existence of social protection programs for families

Achievements: Emergency cash transfer program with support from the World Bank and other UN Agencies for the productive social safety nets and youth employment project. Another social protection programme is the MUNAFA fully funded by the Government. Other progress made in terms of social protection during the period include: More than 36,00 households were provided with cash transfers to alleviate their poverty in the 16 districts of Sierra Leone. About 320 Micro-Enterprise Groups were trained and organized in value chain development and provided with start-up grants; various credit schemes were launched across the country; twenty-nine thousand low-income informal sector workers in five district headquarter towns.

Challenges: Inadequate resources to scale up and replicate gains across the country.

2.25. COMMITMENT24:

2.25.1. Indicator 1: Existence of programs addressing the economic (housing, food and health) needs of emerging family structures

Achievement: Provision of targeted cash transfer to female headed households, child headed household and persons with disabilities through the social safety net programme and the PSSNYE

Challenges: Funding is inadequate to address all the economic needs of the emerging family structure.

2.26. COMMITMENT 25:

2.26.1. Indicator 1: Existence of programmes and policies to support active and healthy ageing

Achievements: A National Ageing Policy exists. The National Social Protection Policy, The National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT) ensures that the aged are provided with pensions.

Challenges: Although its implementation is poor.

2.27. COMMITMENT 26:

2.27.1. Indicator1: Existence of programs and policies to support lifelong learning and the integration of older persons in society.

Achievement: Cash transfer to older persons fully operationalized with social protection, adult Education programme, establishment of a social safety net fund for emergency response for older persons, the existence of home for the aged, and the National Social Protection Policy

Challenge: The facilities are not adequate. Programme Timeline limited for implementation. Funding is a major problem

2.28. COMMITMENT 27:

2.28.1 Indicator 1: Existence of child protection units at national and subnational levels

Achievements: These units exist throughout the country especially at head quarter towns at the district level, all devolved District Councils are responsible for protecting the welfare and promoting the rights of children within their area of authority.

Challenge: Ineffective monitoring of child protection units by the national headquarter.

2.29. COMMITMENT 28:

2.29.1. Indicator 1: Existence of policies and programmes to facilitate migrants' access to work

Achievement: The implementation of the Refugees Protection Act 2007 provides for the protection of refugees and that employers should consider refugees when considering application for work. The National Migration Policy 2022 provides the policy framework for migrant workers in the country. In addition, the Overseas Employment and Migrant Employment Act, 2023 and the Anti-Human Trafficking and Migrants Act, 2022 support the indicator.

Challenges: Limited job opportunities available in the country.

2.29.2. Indicator 2: Existence of law enforcement units to protect their rights; consular services for migrants

Achievement: The Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Internal Affairs, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Anti-Human Trafficking and Taskforce and Immigration Department provide consular and other services for migrants.

Challenges: Inadequate documentation of migrants, especially those traveling by road. Inadequate staff and office space for monitoring migrants.

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2.30. COMMITMENT 29:

2.30.1. Indicator 1: Implementation of the provision of the rights of persons with disabilities

Achievements: The 2011 Persons with Disability Act is in force and has been reviewed as the 2021 Person with Disability Act. The Commission for Persons with Disability has been established. The first country report on the status of implementation of the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities has been drafted. Persons living with disability have been given more focus by the Ministry of Social Welfare which came after the separation from the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs

Challenges: Weak coordination to effectively fast track disability issues nationwide, lack of disability friendly infrastructures and weak institutional capacity. Non-rectification of the optional protocol on the rights of persons with disabilities. Little attention paid to non-formal education.

2.31. LESSONS LEARNT based on Pillar 1

(1) Increase in funding to education is crucial for effective output in the system.
(2) Successful accomplishment of all issues relating to rights would depend on increased awareness of women about their rights as well as an improvement in the cultural environment of the society.
(3) Social and economic support to both the aged and the disabled is vital to improving their poverty levels

2.32. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There should be widespread behavior change communication campaigns to reduce the cultural and traditional effects on the implementation of policies on issues such as Gender Based Violence, equity, human rights, reproductive health and rights.
2. Increases in levels of funding/budgetary allocations towards various social protection programmes should be affected in order to reduce poverty levels nationwide.
3. Educational policies which could lead to an increase in enrolment should be accompanied by provision of the appropriate facilities, funding and human resources so as to upscale teaching and learning standards.
4. There should be much stronger collaboration and linkages among stakeholders working on salient socio-cultural programmes such as child marriages, sexual and gender-based violence, female circumcision and teenage pregnancies so as to produce to desired results.
5. Strong advocacy campaigns should be implemented to fast track the enactment or passing of various bills into law, so as to alleviate some of the detrimental social and cultural problems in the country.

CHAPTER 3:
PILLAR 2 - HEALTH

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings on the health indicators constituting the second Pillar. The outcomes for Commitments and their indicators are presented below systematically.

3.2. COMMITMENT 30

3.2.1. **Indicator 1:** Level of health financing

Achievement: The Government of Sierra Leone is rolling out the Free Health Care programme which focuses on lactating mothers, children under five, pregnant women, and persons with disability. There is also further engagement by the government and development partners on the introduction of the Sierra Leone Health Insurance Scheme to finance health spending..

Challenges:

3.2.2. **Indicator 2:** Share of national budget allocated to health.

Achievement: The share of the national budget allocated to the health sector currently stands at 11.0 percent.

Challenges: Disbursement to the health sector is usually less than the amount allocated.

3.2.3. **Indicator 3:** Trained health personnel;

Achievement: The number of trained health personnel stands at 12,594 based on health payroll 2023.

Challenges: The number of health personnel is grossly insufficient compared to the size of the population. Also, the in-country specialised health training is low.

3.3. COMMITMENT 31:

3.3.1. **Indicator 1:** Adoption of equity and rights-based planning in health; policies and programmes to facilitate community.

Achievement: Equity and right based approach in all planning, policy development, and programmes are fully implemented with the view to facilitate community ownership. The health policies and programmes have been decentralised with an enhanced Planning

and M&E Directorate to strengthen primary health care on the one hand and the community health workers programme.

Challenges: Availability of staff and facilities to service hard to reach communities are limited. Access to some specialised services is limited by the availability and affordability.

3.3.2. **Indicator 2:** Existence of programmes to train the public in participation in health decision making;

Achievement: The Department of Health Education undertakes training in health decision making.

Challenges: The training programmes do not occur regularly due to inadequate funding.

3.3.3. **Indicator 3:** Programmes to educate HCP on the right to health.

Achievement: The Department of Health Education undertakes training of HCP on the right to health.

Challenges: The training programmes do not occur regularly due to inadequate funding.

3.4. COMMITMENT 32:

3.4.1. **Indicator 1:** Financial support to medical and public health review on risk factors;

Achievement: Financial support is provided for the training of medical and public health review on risk factors through numerous capacity building programmes.

Challenges: Inadequate funding and capacity building opportunities.

3.4.2. **Indicator 2:** Public health campaigns against tobacco, alcohol, and for the use of mosquito nets;

Achievement: Health campaigns are periodically undertaken across the country.

Challenges: Public health campaigns for the use of mosquito nets have not adequately addressed the incidence of malaria. Bed net utilisation is poor in some communities.

3.4.3. **Indicator 3:** Invest in public services to facilitate early detection of diseases;

Achievement: Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) were capacitated with logistics and skills to enhance the effectiveness in all phases of response to emergencies and aptness in rolling out recommended public health interventions. The National RRTs supported districts in the investigation and response to various public health alerts/threats including outbreaks of Measles in three districts. The timely support helped in reducing the adverse impact of these threats and outbreaks.

Challenges: the investment is limited resulting in the mismatch between demand and supply. Standby emergency funds are not available at district level for prompt response to outbreak.

3.5. COMMITMENT 33:

3.5.1. **Indicator 1:** Development of new programmes/ resources to prevent HIV transmission or the treatment/ care/ support for people living with HIV.

Achievement:

1. The National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS 2021-2025 has been revised and Operational Plan developed that will run from 2023-2027
2. NAS in collaboration with MoHS has submitted a proposal to the Global Fund in Geneva to access resources for the HIV Programme for the period July 2024-July 2027.

Challenges

1. Limited programmes integration with other health services.
2. Stock outs of ARVs and other drugs.
3. Inadequate number of skilled service providers & high attrition rates.
4. Not well motivated HR.
5. Inequity in the distribution of HIV services across the districts.
6. Stigma which affects access and uptake of services.

3.6. COMMITMENT 34:

3.6.1. **Indicator1:** Increase in the number of health centres that offer an essential package of SRH services.

Achievement: All health centres now offer an essential package of SRH services.

Challenges: More fundings to increase coverage of SRH country wide.

3.7. COMMITMENT 35:

3.7.1. **Indicator 1:** Existence of laws and regulations that guarantee women and adolescents informed choices regarding their SRH rights.

Achievement: Yes, the RMNCAH Policy on National Strategy for the Reduction of Teenage Pregnancy is fully operational.

Challenges: Social norms and belief patterns coupled with limited SRH services affect choice.

3.7.2. **Indicator 2:** Laws and regulations that guarantee women and men access to SRH care, information and education

Achievement: The Reproductive and Child Health Policy, Strategy and Adolescent Health Strategic Plan launched in 2012 is fully operational. The School Health Policy, the Public Health Policy, the National Population Policy, RMNCAH strategy, the safe motherhood and reproductive health bill are expected to be enacted soon.

Challenges: Low level of male involvement in SRH, the implementation of policies, traditional and cultural belief limit access to SRH services. There is a need for education of men on SRH services. Moreover, there is some stock out of SRH commodities such as family planning.

3.8. COMMITMENT 36:

3.8.1. **Indicator 1:** Administrative integration of SRH, HIV/AIDS and family planning.

Achievement: RMNCAH Directorate of MoHS is the body responsible for this. The Department works with other CSOs and UNFPA to ensure the process of national integration is followed through.

Challenges: Integration of HIV services in ANC at some facilities limited. Poor ART/RMNCAH Integration in many of the facilities. Inadequate number of skilled service providers and high attrition rates. Inadequate space hinders integration opportunities in some facilities.

Recommendation: Systems of referral of mothers to ART Clinics- need Accompaniment

3.8.2. **Indicator 2:** Budget and other resources allocated to the integration of these services

Achievement: There is allocation of resources and budget to the integration of SRH, HIV/AIDS and family planning in the health budget sector for 2023. Also, the

Government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and the Ministry of Finance have signed the COMPACT agreeing to allocate 1.0 percent of the health budget to family planning.

Challenges: The integration of these services at community level with the devolved administrative system is considered as a challenge.

3.9. COMMITMENT 37:

3.9.1. **Indicator 1:** Increase in number of qualified health care professionals (by type), as a Percent of the total population.

Achievement: To be provided by MOHS

3.9.2. **Indicator 2:** Improvement in the Percent of health facilities with skilled personnel (by type);

Achievement: There has been considerable improvement and increase in the number of health facilities around the country since the introduction of the Free Healthcare policy in 2010. Subsequent government introduced the Community Healthcare Workers (CHW) programme and a mass recruitment of skilled personnel in all categories to meet the demand, especially in rural areas.

Challenge: staffing the facilities in the rural areas with highly skilled personnel

3.9.3. **Indicator 3:** Share of national budget allocated to maternal health

Achievement: With the percentage of the national budget to health standing at 12%, and the policy of Government to bring down maternal health, the share of the national budget allocated to maternal health is proportionally high.

Challenges: No absolute figures available.

3.10. COMMITMENT 38:

3.10.1. **Indicator1:** Increase in the percent of health centres providing safe abortion services;

Achievement: Not applicable. Abortion is illegal in Sierra Leone

3.10.2. **Indicator2:** Increase in the percent of health centres providing access to treatments of complications from unsafe abortion;

Achievement: All health centres provide post abortion care.

3.11. COMMITMENT 39:

3.11.1. **Indicator 1:** Campaigns for antenatal care.

Achievement: YES, National Integrated Obstetric Care Guidelines. ANC services are provided at all health facilities.

3.11.2. **Indicator 2:** Develop programmes to monitor high-risk pregnancies.

Achievement: yes, on-going

3.12. COMMITMENT 40:

3.12.1. **Indicator 1:** Create/expand health centres that have reproductive health information, services and commodities;

Achievement: The Government of Sierra Leone, development partners and donors have invested hugely to provide reproductive health information, services and commodities across the country;

Challenges: Inadequate funding to create and expand health centres at all districts and communities remain a challenge. There are also inadequate commodities in some centres.

3.12.2. **Indicator 2:** Existence of comprehensive sexuality education programmes.

Achievement: A CSE programme has finally come to fruition this year and is currently being rolled out at national level. It has been integrated into five subject areas: Integrated Science, Social Science, Physical Health Education, Home Economics and Some advocates are, however, requesting that it should be a stand-alone subject where it would receive the desired attention. It is expected that from September 2023 CSE would be examinable.

Challenges: Training teachers, providing the required materials, popularizing the subject and dispelling myths about CSE. The effort is a collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation.

3.13. COMMITMENT 41:

3.13.1. **Indicator 1:** Existence of policies promoting the right of people/couples to freely choose their number and spacing of birth

Achievement: The National Population Policy of 2019 is non-coercive and allows free choices of the number and spacing of children.

Challenge: A major constraint is the dissemination of the policy especially to the rural areas

3.14. COMMITMENT 42:

3.14.1. **Indicator 1:** Improvements in access to contraceptive information, technology, commodities and services

Achievement: Yes, there have been improvements in access to these contraceptive services. Results of the 2019 Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey indicate that 99 percent of currently married men and 98 percent of such women are now aware of one modern method of family planning. Gains in access to contraceptive information have been achieved through the use of social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, facebook and Hot line 3535.

Challenges: Physical access may be limited in the rural areas because of the over-centralization of services and commodities in the urban areas.

3.15. COMMITMENT 43:

3.15.1 Indicator 1: Existence of programmes providing RDT for HIV and other STIs

Achievements:

The following Programmes provide RDTs and STI Services

1. MoHS (National AIDS ControI Programme not only provide RDTs but also manages STIs
2. Global Reach II programme under Jhpiego using PEPFAR Resources (Only RDTs
3. AIDS Healthcare Foundation Sierra Leone not only provide RDTs but also manages STIs
4. Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone manages STIs only.

Challenges: Fear of stigma prevents people from coming forward to participate in the programmes.

3.16. COMMITMENT 44:

3.16.1. **Indicator 1:** New measures/programmes to facilitate males' access to RH information, counselling and services.

Achievements: The National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021 provides male access to reproductive health. It also includes: i) National Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health Strategy, ii) Use of role models/champions in male involvement, and iii) strong advocacy with community leaders, religious groups and paramount chiefs, among others.

Challenges: Cultural setting: males are not generally involved in RH issues as women.

3.17. COMMITMENT 45:

3.17.1. **Indicator 1:** Number of centres providing medical and psychological support to victims/survivors of gender-based violence;

Achievements: One Stop Centres in each of seven districts. Rainbow Centres in each of six districts. This gives a total of thirteen centres across all regions of the country.

Challenges: Inadequate Service Provision, unavailability of transportation to SGBV survivors, lack of Forensic laboratory and legal Services. In addition, survivors face logistical and other challenges during prosecution of cases.

3.17.2. **Indicator 2:** Public awareness campaigns on violence against women;

Achievements: There are a number of public awareness campaigns on violence against women in the country. FSU in the SLP and the Ministry of Gender and Children affairs engage on violence against women. An SGBV hotline (116) is available for reporting.

Challenges: There are issues of reporting violence against women in the country. Also, there are limited rehabilitation centres and services for persons with disability.

3.17.3. **Indicator 3:** Budget to support actions against GBV

Achievement: No data to support the indicator.

3.18. COMMITMENT46:

3.18.1. **Indicator 1:** Integration of gender-based violence in all SRH programmes and services

Achievement: The Ministries of Health and Sanitation and Gender and Children's Affairs collaborate in providing sexual and reproductive health services.

Challenges: Limited availability of resources constrain collaboration on sexual and reproductive health programmes.

3.19. LESSON LEARNT:

1. Stigma and Discrimination can fuel the epidemic, if not addressed.
2. Community Response is the key for sustainable HIV/AIDS response and national ownership.
3. HIV response can be mainstreamed in all sectors without altering the primary focus of the institution.
4. Strengthening social and economic protection and support for the key priority and vulnerable populations can reduce HIV vulnerability.
5. Addressing Human Rights of all persons and inequity are key to reducing vulnerability to HIV infection
6. Greater involvement of males in SRH would need intense and widespread IEC and BCC strategies.
7. The ultimate success of the CSE programme would depend on adequate funding and effective collaboration between the Ministries of Education and Health and Sanitation.

3.20. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Training of health personnel at all levels needs to be given priority to improve the provision of services to the general population.
2. Funding to medical and health review should be given priority in order to improve the effectiveness of diagnosis and treatment of diseases.
3. Effective integration of services such as SRH, HIV AIDS and family planning should be provided with budgetary support, adequate and well compensated skilled service providers.
4. The success of the new CSE Programme would depend on the provision of important inputs such as funding, training of personnel, sensitization of parents and effective monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

CHAPTER 4
PILLAR 3 PLACE AND MOBILITY

4.1. Introduction:

This chapter covers a total of nineteen Commitments. Its analyses consider the stipulated Commitments and their indicators. The progress made or achievements are outlined and constraints or challenges regarding the achievements are described. Lessons learnt relating to the Pillar are also included.

4.2. COMMITMENT: 47

4.2.1. Indicator 1. Free movement of goods and services within countries; administrative restrictions on mobility;

Achievements: The free movement of goods and services within Sierra Leone, Mano River Union, ECOWAS is guaranteed through the regional block. At the continental level, the Free Trade Area (AFCFTA agreement) and the Protocol to the Treaty which was adopted on the 21st March 2018, and the date of entry into force is 30th May 2019 guaranties the movement of goods and services.
This treaty allows member states to freely move with goods between countries. Furthermore, this establishes that Right of Residence and Establishment (AU-FMP) within 54 countries with the exception of Eritrea and ratified by 38 countries including Sierra Leone, while the AU-FMP protocol has been signed by 33 countries and ratified by 4 countries

Challenge: Up to date, the AFCFTA agreement has been signed by 54 countries (except Eritrea) but only ratified by 38 countries. Which means the AU-FMP has not received as much attention.

4.2.2. Indicator 2. Per km cost of transportation

Achievement: The cost of transportation Per km has reduced over the years due to the improvement and expansion of the road network in the country.

Challenges: Road freight costs are higher in Sierra Leone than in some major routes in Sub-Sahara Africa (World Bank, 2011).

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Challenges:

1. **Limited Connectivity:** The existing railway network in Sierra Leone is limited and primarily used for freight transportation by mining companies. This limited connectivity can hinder efficient movement of goods and people to various regions, leading to higher transportation costs and logistical challenges.

2. **Lack of Diversification:** The lack of diversified transportation options, such as an extensive and integrated road and rail network, can hinder economic growth and development. It may limit the movement of goods and people, impede trade, and reduce opportunities for investment.

4.2.3. Indicator 4. Share of non-paved roads.

Achievement: Major roads have been constructed in most part of the country. Out of a total of 11,700km of public road, 8,700km are paved and functional leaving 3000 km of public unpaved roads (SLRA 2022)

Challenges:

1. **Maintenance and Upkeep:** One of the significant challenges is ensuring regular maintenance and upkeep of the constructed roads. Proper maintenance is essential to prevent deterioration and to extend the lifespan of the roads. Failure to conduct timely repairs can lead to increased road damage, higher repair costs, and inconvenience to users.
2. **Funding Constraints:** Financing road construction projects can be a challenge, particularly for a developing country like Sierra Leone. Adequate and sustainable funding is necessary to complete ongoing projects and undertake new ones. Budgetary constraints and competing priorities may hinder the allocation of sufficient funds to infrastructure development.

COMMITMENT: 48

4.2.4. Indicator 1. Existence of migration policies to maximize the benefits of international migration and manage irregular migration

Achievement: National Migration policy (2022) exists. The aim of the policy is to address issues relating to the management of the country's border crossing points, Citizenship and basic rights of nationals living in the diaspora

Challenges: The role of the Immigration Department is limited in implementing policy directives.

1. **Implementation Challenges:** One of the primary challenges is ensuring effective implementation of the migration policy. Sometimes, policies remain on paper without practical execution, leading to limited impact on migration management and benefits.
2. **Lack of Awareness:** Lack of awareness and understanding of the migration policy among key stakeholders, including government agencies, migrants, and the public, can hinder its successful implementation.
3. **Irregular Migration:** Despite the existence of a migration policy, irregular migration may persist due to push factors such as poverty, conflict, and limited economic opportunities in the country of origin.

4.3. COMMITMENT: 49

4.3.1. Indicator: 1. Existence of evidence-based migration policies
Achievement: National Migration Policy for Sierra Leone (2022)

Challenges:

1. **Data Availability and Quality:** One of the significant challenges in developing evidence-based migration policies is the availability and quality of data. Lack of comprehensive and up-to-date data on migration patterns, trends, and socio-economic impacts can hinder the formulation of effective policies.
2. **Policy Implementation Gap:** While having a national migration policy is an achievement, the challenge lies in translating it into practical actions. Poor implementation or lack of coordination among relevant government agencies may undermine the policy's effectiveness.
3. **Stakeholder Involvement:** Engaging all relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations, academia, and migrants themselves, in the policy development process is crucial. Lack of inclusivity may lead to overlooking important perspectives and needs.

4.4. COMMITMENT: 50

4.4.1 **Indicator** Existence of mechanism to integrate migration in national planning.

Achievement: Migration has been addressed in National Planning, up to the current Medium-Term National Development Plan (2019-2023). The Strategic Objective of this sub-cluster is to ensure that internal and external migration is reduced and effectively managed.

Challenges:

1. **Policy Implementation Gap:** Although migration is addressed in national planning documents, the effective implementation of migration policies and strategies on the ground may face challenges. Ensuring that policies translate into practical actions and outcomes can be a complex task.
2. **Limited Resources:** Integrating migration in national planning requires adequate financial and human resources. Limited budgets and capacity constraints may hinder the full implementation of migration-related initiatives.

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4.5. COMMITMENT: 51

4.5.1. Indicator1: Existence of systematic city planning that ensures access to health and social services to all

Achievement: All City Council development plans ensure access to health and social services for all.

Challenges:

1. **Population Growth and Urbanization:** Rapid population growth and urbanization can strain existing health and social service infrastructure. As cities expand, the demand for services may outpace the capacity to provide them, leading to gaps in access.
2. **Limited Financial Resources:** Adequate funding for city planning and the development of health and social services may be limited, hindering the implementation of comprehensive plans and improvements.

4.6. COMMITMENT: 52

4.6.1. Indicator Increase in the investment in rural services

Achievement: There **is** increasing investments in the rural areas, to ensure that rural communities have better opportunities in participating fully in the economic, social and political life of the country. The percentage of the rural population using improved sanitation facilities increased from 5.4Percent in 2013 to 33 Percent in 2019. Also, 36,000 household heads were provided with cash transfers in the 16 districts of Sierra Leone with a high rural population concentration

Challenge: Financing has been a major problem.

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4.7. COMMITMENT: 53

4.7.1. Indicator Existence of plans for urbanization and the creation of sustainable cities

Achievement Yes, these plans do exist and efforts are ongoing.

Challenges:

1. **Infrastructure Development:** Rapid urbanization can lead to a strain on existing infrastructure, such as transportation, water supply, and waste management systems. The lack of adequate infrastructure may hinder the creation of sustainable and well-planned cities.
2. **Inadequate Urban Planning Expertise:** Limited capacity and expertise in urban planning within government agencies may lead to suboptimal plans that do not effectively address the challenges of urbanization.

3. **Funding and Resources:** Insufficient financial resources and funding for urban development projects can hinder the implementation of sustainable city plans.

4.8. COMMITMENT: 54

4.8.1. Indicator Programs to attend to the land and housing needs of the poor and to improve land market

Achievement: the programmes **exist.** Land Raffle Initiative for "Kekeh" and Motorbike Riders was developed in 2021 with the aim to give access to land for low income earners such as motorbike riders who would otherwise not afford to purchase land on their own.

The challenge for this initiative is that it is only limited to motorbike and "kekeh" riders. There are more low income earners who are not commercial motorbike or "kekeh" riders.

4.9. COMMITMENT: 55

4.9.1. Indicator 1: Efforts to plan future growth and population needs;

Achievements: National Planning, up to the current Medium-Term National Development Plan (2019-2023) and the National Population Policy have been consistent planning for future growth and population needs. in the management of the population

Challenge: Sierra Leone's economic development has been constrained by concurrent global and domestic shocks. Macroeconomic management remains weak. Fiscal pressures have progressively intensified, the debt burden has worsened, and inflation has soared, driven by global supply shocks, exchange rate depreciation, and a deterioration in the terms of trade.

4.9.2. Indicator 2: Existence of a long-term urbanization plan

Achievement: None. There is no long-term urbanization plan.

Challenges:

1. **Formulate a Comprehensive Urbanization Policy:** Initiate the development of a comprehensive and long-term urbanization policy that outlines the vision, objectives, and strategies for managing urban growth and development. The policy should address issues such as land use planning, infrastructure development, housing, transportation, and environmental sustainability.

2. **Stakeholder Engagement and Participation:** Engage all relevant stakeholders, including local communities, civil society organizations, private sector entities, and academia, in the urbanization planning process. Ensure their active participation and input to develop a plan that is inclusive and addresses the diverse needs and aspirations of the population.

4.10.COMMITMENT: 56

4.10.1. Indicator : Existence of plans, programs to address the needs of people in fragile ecosystems

Achievement: Various programmes to address the needs of people in fragile ecosystems (Yele Bowya, River Rhine areas in the Bonthe and the Moyamba Districts and the Mangroves swamps areas) exist.

Challenges:

1. **Limited Resources:** The implementation of programs in fragile ecosystems often faces resource constraints. Limited funding, technical expertise, and equipment can hinder the effective execution of initiatives aimed at addressing the needs of communities living in such areas.
2. **Inadequate Infrastructure:** Fragile ecosystems often lack adequate infrastructure, such as transportation networks, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions. This hampers the delivery of services and support to the communities residing in these areas.

4.11.COMMITMENT: 57

4.11.1. Indicator: Programmes to promote the sustainable use of urban space

Achievement: There exist a Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Country Planning (MLHCP) and the Office of the Administrator and Registrar General (OARG) who have ensured the administration of freehold land tenure in the Western Area, surveying of all lands (including urban, sub-urban and rural territories), demarcating private and state land boundaries, conducting comprehensive registration of land title, and compiling and maintaining a comprehensive record of lands in the country through a land information system. “Transform Freetown” initiative seeks to recognize risks and identify resilient solutions to promote and recover from disasters.
Also, the initiative seeks to increase vegetation cover by 50Percent in the not too distant future

Challenges: The General Registry does not investigate the title and therefore does not guarantee the legal validity of the document.

4.12. COMMITMENT: 58

4.12.1. Indicator 1 Investments in rural infrastructure (mostly roads)

Achievement: The National Development Plans including the MTNDP have made a lot of investments in rural roads infrastructure. These are lead by the Sierra Leones Roads Authority, and Road Maintenance Fund.

Challenges: Infrastructure development presents both critical challenges and substantial investment opportunities for investors in Sierra Leone.

4.12.2. Indicator 2: Investments in financial services in rural areas

Achievement: There exist political will for financial inclusion and considerable investment in financial services especially in the rural areas.

Challenges: The limited participation of women in the formal financial system, the low level of financial and digital literacy in the country, and the lack of financial products tailored to women are some of the barriers to women's financial inclusion in Sierra Leone. The current financial inclusion rate is only 29 percent, and for women, according to the 2021 edition of the Global Findex report.

4.13. COMMITMENT: 59

4.13.1. Indicator : Existence /reinforcement of international partnerships on migration

Achievements: Sierra Leone is a member of the Migration Dialogue for West Africa (MIDWA) – a regional consultative process (RCP) established to encourage the member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to discuss common migration issues in a regional context. It is also a member of the Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development (Rabat Process), which was established in 2006 and brings together the European Commission, ECOWAS and countries from North, West and Central Africa to tackle migration-related questions.
Sierra Leone participates in the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) – European Union (EU) Dialogue on Migration, which supports the ACP's policy making efforts by facilitating improved and updated information-gathering on South–South migration; and the Pan-African Forum on Migration (PAFoM), which brings together all African Union member States, African Union regional

economic communities, RCPs in Africa, United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations to deliberate on issues affecting migration governance in Africa.

Challenges: Implementation of the International commitment is limited**.**

4.14. COMMITMENT: 60

4.14.1. Indicator: Existence of policies to foster the integration/ reintegration of migrants

Achievements

The Government launched the National Migration Policy in 2022. The policy contains a comprehensive framework to improve and enforce administrative and legislative procedures towards migration's management in Sierra Leone. The Migration Policy addresses issues related to diaspora engagement, border management, internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, return and reintegration, migration and national disasters, statelessness, human trafficking among others

Challenges: The country continues to grapple with responding to the consequences and impact of both regular and irregular migration.

4.15. COMMITMENT: 61

Indicator 1: Programs to increase the portability of benefits and rights from migration

Challenges:

4.16. COMMITMENT: 62

4.16.1. Indicator: Ensure that migrants have access to secure and low cost remittance transfer options

Achievement: A higher proportion of remittances are transferred through informal channels,

Challenge the high cost of transmitting remittances through formal financial institutions. Also, bureaucratic procedures deter people from using the formal financial institutions.

4.17. COMMITMENT :63

4.17.1. Indicator 1: Existence of programs (tools) to forecast the consequences of climate change-related migration

Achievements:

There are programmes such as:

1. Youth empowerment
2. Statistics -SL provide forecasting tools
3. West Africa Coalition in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (WACTIPSOM-SL). this group do advocacy, coordination

Challenges: Environmental issues have a host of challenges, including a weak regulatory and legal framework, policy incoherence; conflicting government mandates, low management capacity, inadequate coordination, limited public awareness and education, data, and finance pose huge challenges

4.18. Commitment :64

4.18.1. Indicator: Level of funding of migration data collection'

Achievement:

Statistics Sierra Leone in collaboration/partnership with ECOWAS and funding from Statistics Sweden and IOM have been very instrumental in migration data collection. Actual data on funding are not available

Challenge:

1. Lack of funding to expand on scope of work.
2. Data capture tools are paper-based
3. Issues with timely returns of forms to secretariat for input and analysis
4. Sierra Leone experiences mixed migration flows, which involves complex population movements including economic migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.
5. The country also experiences both voluntary and forced migration flows. This section looks at the 29 various categories under which immigrants come to Sierra Leone, what are the current issues and sets out policy proposals on how to tackle them according to the NATIONAL MIGRATION POLICY FOR SIERRA LEONE 2022

4.19. COMMITMENT: 65

Indicator: Programs to guarantee the rights and protection of refugees and their repatriation

Achievements: A National Migration Policy (2022) which guarantees the rights and protection of refugees and their repatriation.

Challenges:

1. **Limited Resources:** Providing adequate support and protection to refugees requires significant financial resources. Sierra Leone may face budget constraints in fully implementing the programs outlined in the National Migration Policy.

2. **Capacity and Expertise:** Ensuring effective protection for refugees demands skilled personnel and institutional capacity. Training and equipping relevant agencies and personnel to handle refugee-related issues can be challenging.

4.20. COMMITMENT: 66

4.20.1. Indicator: Programs to use technology in promoting sound governance and public behavior that are beneficial to the environment

Achievements: Several interventions are in place to promote sound governance and public behavior that are beneficial to the environment. These include the training of women in innovative and appropriate technology for recycling and renewable energy.

Challenges: Inadequate funding to scale up programmes and coverage.

4.21. LESSONS LEARNT

(1) Migration policies are vital for regulating various aspects of the process including trafficking, rights, work opportunities and resettlement.
(2) A strategy to provide low-cost housing facilities for the poor in the Freetown Municipality is helpful but can cover a wider group of poor citizens.
(3) Effective planning of our cities and fragile ecosystems do not seem to have received much attention based on the data returns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Fast track the implementation of the project on low cost housing in the city to reduce the perennial problem of housing.
2. Greater efforts should be made to ensure effective planning of the fragile ecosystems in the urban areas.
3. The new Migration Policy should be fully disseminated nation wide

CHAPTER 5
GOVERNANCE, DATA AND STATISTICS AND INTERNAL COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter covers all the three Pillars above. Together they cover 22 Commitments. Since the Commitments vary by Pillar and within Pillar, the reporting therefore considers the Pillars separately as delineated below.

PILLAR 4 GOVERNANCE

5.2. COMMITMENT: 67

5.2.1. Indicator 1: Existence of mechanism to integrate population data in development planning

Achievement: Statistics Sierra Leone provides government or development partners with population indicators. Population data from censuses and from surveys such as the Demographic Health Survey and the Multi Indicator Cluster Survey are examples of data sets used for planning purposes nation- wide.

The Ministry Planning and Economic Development and Statistics Sierra Leone with support from University of Sierra Leone (Institute for Population and Development) and UNFPA, offers technical and administrative support services for the coordination of population activities and the incorporation of demographic factors into socioeconomic planning policies and initiatives.

Challenges: Delay in conducting sensitive surveys such as agricultural census, lack of time bound surveys due to funding constraints, natural disaster (EBOLA, COVID 19, Mud Slide) and external shocks.

5.2.2. Indicator 2. Budget investments to integrate population data in planning.

Achievement: The Government provides funding for the integration of data into planning of national development. Such funding is provided for surveys and censuses such as 2015 Population and Housing Census, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, the Demographic Health Survey planning. Development partners such as the UN, USAID, FCDO, also contribute reasonable investment to ensure integration of population data in planning.

Challenges: Lack of time bound survey due to natural disaster affecting the appropriate allocation of such funding which has mostly been a challenge. (Language barriers between enumerators and respondents may sometimes be a problem).

5.3. COMMITMENT: 68

5.3.1. Indicator 1. Existence/ capacity of institutions to integrate population in development planning

Achievement

The National Population Desk hosted by the Ministry Planning and Economic Development act s as the focal point for coordination, collaboration and partnership building among various implementing institutions as well as for periodic monitoring and assessment of the application of the national population policy ICPD , AADPD, AU Roadmap on Development Demography, SDG in development and planning.

Challenges: Delay in transforming the Desk into a Commission, limited capacity and resources are some of the challenges for the realization of this indicator.

5.4. COMMITMENT: 69

5.4.1. Indicator 1 Existence of policies to foster population participation in all aspects/levels of governance.

Achievement: The National Population Policy, MTNDP, the National Youth Policy, Persons with Disability Act and the GEWE are all policies aimed at fostering the participation of the population in governance.

Challenges: Ineffective coordination, limited resources for the implementation of these policies and social norms and beliefs constrain the implementation of these policies.

5.5. COMMITMENT: 70

5.5.1. Indicator 1 Existence of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess performance

Achievement: The Government of Sierra Leone has established the Directorate of Service Delivery and Performance Management in MoPED, which works with the Cabinet secretariat, Human Resources and Management Office (HRMO), and Public Service Commission to assess performance. Government has also established the National Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (NAMED) under the Presidency to monitor government projects.

Challenge: Problem of Coordination.

PILLAR 5: DATA AND STATISTICS

5.6. COMMITMENT: 71

5.6.1. Indicator 1: Existence of institutions to undertake evidence-based and policy studies

Achievement: Institutions to undertake evidence-based and policy studies include, Statistics Sierra Leone, National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA), the Institute of Governance Reform, the Universities, and other MDAs - Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Sanitation.

Challenges: Coordination is a challenge.

5.7. COMMITMENT: 72

5.7.1. Indicator1: Existence of a functioning system of civil registration

Achievements: Government of Sierra Leone has established the NACRA mandated by the Civil Registration Act (2016) to provide compulsory mandatory registration for Births, Adoption, Marriages and Death in collaboration with other MDAs and other partners. **NCRA has successfully established** the identity management system into various categories such as; National Identification Cards, ID Cards for ECOWAS citizens**,** ID Cards for Non- citizens**,** NACRA has also established a Database which provides a unique identifier for citizens and tracking payers who are avoiding payment of tax and Semi-automated system in sharing information to other institutions in the country such as SLRSA, NRA.

Challenges: Overdependence of donor expectation in funding

5.8. COMMITMENT: 73

5.8.1. Indicator Existence of systems to collect and analyze social data for planning purposes

Achievements: Institutions to collect and analyze social data for planning purposes exist, and include, Statistics Sierra Leone, National Civil Registration Authority (NCRA), the Institute of Governance Reform, the Universities, and other MDAs - Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Sanitation.

Challenges: Poor internet connectivity especially in rural areas and provision of adequate technology requires additional funding.

5.9. COMMITMENT: 74

5.9.1. Indicator Funding for quantitative and qualitative review and policy studies
Achievements: The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to quantitative and qualitative review and policy studies with support of UN, World Bank, UNFPA and UNICEF

Challenges: Heavy dependency on donor funds for these studies for example, the SLDHS the MICS and the SLIHS.

5.10. COMMITMENT: 75

5.10.1. Indicator: Existence of adequate data on older persons and persons with disabilities for planning and review
Achievement: The 2015 census provides data on older persons and persons with disabilities for review and development planning.

Challenges: On the contrary data on disabled persons may not be adequate since their inclusion in censuses is not regular, data can only be estimates.

5.11. COMMITMENT: 76

5.11.1. Indicator: A funding and institutional mechanism to guarantee the regular conduct of national censuses, the rapid analysis of these data, and the inclusion of this information in the national development process

Achievement: The Government of Sierra Leone takes full responsibility for the funding of the National Housing Censuses with support from donor partners such as UN, UNFPA, World Bank and the EU. The census Act of Sierra Leone provides for the conduct of Population and Housing Census (PHC) at an interval of every ten years. The Government of Sierra Leones has mandated Statistics Sierra Leone, under the supervision of MoPED, to conduct censuses, carry out analysis of these data, and the inclusion of this information in the national development process.

Challenges: Coordination and donor dependency

5.12. COMMITMENT: 77

5.12.1. Indicator Existence of programs to assess/ improve national CRVSs

Achievements: With support from the Government of Sierra Leone, development partners, NACRA has reviewed and upgraded the integrated Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVSs) which now requires every citizen to have a National

Identity Number (NIN) to access public services including opening of bank account, driver license, national passport, and social security number. Also, NCRA has rolled out the National Identity Management System and securitized birth certification programme.

Challenges: Coordination and resources constraints.

LESSONS LEARNT:

1. Alternative methods can be useful in capturing data on older persons and persons with disabilities
2. Reducing the dependency on donor funds can be tackled with effective planning

RECOMMENDATION:

1. A small percentage of the revenue from the issuance of passports, ID cards, birth certificates, death certificates and marriage certificates be ring-fenced and used to reduce the dependency of the NCRA on donor funding.
2. MOF to plan and budget for the Census on an annual basis for the 10 years leading up to the next Census
3. The Census could capture data on old persons and disabled persons using the Washington method.

.PILLAR 6 INTERNAL COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

5.13. COMMITMENT: 78

5.13.1. Indicator 1: Formal agreements between government agencies and civil society organizations

Achievement: There are a number of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) signed between government agencies and CSOs under the leadership of MoPED. The Service Level Agreement (SLA) particularly for those CSOs on development initiatives and or service deliveries. These SLAs helps both the government agencies and CSOs to reduce duplication of work, accountability for the resources, over-concentration of activities or interventions in particular communities.

Challenges: Delays of some development partners to fill in the SLA, too much bureaucracy, missing information and or omission of documents by CSOs for completing the SLA.

5.13.2. Indicator 2 Formal meetings and consultations between government agencies and CSOs;

Achievement: There are District, Regional and National platforms where government agencies and CSOs meet to discuss national issues on human rights, democracy and good governance, rule of law, justice and accountability, social and economic rights.

Challenges: Most of these platforms are government led and they dictate timing, delays in holding consultations due to funding and or priorities of government agencies .

5.13.3. Indicator 3: Formal sharing of resources (data, training) between government agencies and CSOs

Achievement: Training and sharing of data has been largely achieved through CSOs who registered with MoPED. Information and data are shared through quarterly and or end of project report to MoPED**.** Training and data are shared between government agencies and CSOs in an informal manner upon request by either CSOs and MDAs

Challenges: No national policy or guideline on training between government agencies and CSOs.
Limited skills, expertise, and funding to conduct training and sharing of data

5.14. COMMITMENT: 79

5.14.1. Indicator 1: Formal agreements between government agencies and civil society organizations;

Achievement: Government of Sierra Leone has created political space for interaction and dialog with the CSOs and the media. Through Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the Registration of 25 Youth Serving Agencies, Civil Society Organizations and the establishment of the District Development Coordination Committees (DDCC) was made possible

Challenges: Timely reporting. Funds for monitoring and evaluation of their work.

5.14.2. Indicator 2 Formal meetings and consultations between government agencies and CSOs.

Achievements: Government of Sierra Leone has created political space for interaction and dialog with the CSOs and the media. Through the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the establishment of the District Development Coordination Committees (DDCC) was made possible. Also formal meetings and consultations between government agencies and CSOs include, the

SL Association of Journalists (SLAJ), the Inter-Religious Council, the SL Union on Disability Issues (SLUDI), the National Council of Paramount Chiefs, the SL Association of NGOs (SLANGO), the National Youth Council, Women's Forum, and the Children Forum Network to name but a few.

Challenges: Funds for monitoring and evaluation of meetings and consultations. Poor coordination.

5.14.3. Indicator 3: formal sharing of resources (data, training) between government agencies and CSOs.

Achievement: Training and sharing of data has been largely achieved through CSOs who registered with MoPED. Information and data are shared through quarterly and or end of project report to MoPED**.** Training and data are shared between government agencies and CSOs in an informal manner upon request by either CSOs and MDAs.

Challenges: No national policy or guideline on training between government agencies and CSOs.
Limited skills, expertise, and funding to conduct training and sharing of data.

5.14.4. Indicator 4: National budget investments to train youth in the process and methods of policy evaluation

Achievement: Through the Ministry of Youth Affairs, the Government of Sierra Leone development partners invested reasonable funding for the National Youth Policy Review and popularization process which brought together 30,500 Youths. For the effective monitoring and evaluation of youth development projects guided by the youth policy, 32 motorbikes procured and given to 16 district youth councils.

Challenges: Inadequate funds for the popularization of the national youth policy.
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5.15. COMMITMENT: 80.

5.15.1. Indicator 1: Existence of formal agreements between government agencies and private-sector institutions

Achievement: There have always been formal agreements between government agencies and private sector institutions which have promoted increased collaboration between government and private sectors. Examples include the Joule VS Gort & EDSA with Bumbuna 11, the Melil Energy & TLQ VS GoSL & EDA 148mw, the Planent Solar VS GoSL EDSA, the Sewa Energy, Betmai Hydro 27mw, the Solar Era VS GoSL EDSA, Kar power ship VS GoSL EDSA, Marish VS GOSL and the Taf Global VS MOLHCP **Capitol Foods Vs GoSL, Summa Airports Vs GoSL.**

Challenges: The process and procedures in getting these agreements could be time consuming, limited access to finance, country risk profile, debt sustainability Celling, inflation and exchange rate..

5.15.2. Indicator 2 Number of formal consultations between government agencies and private institutions in population and development programmes**;**

Achievement: There have always been formal consultations between government agencies and private sector institutions which have resulted to the increased collaboration between government and private sectors. These consultations have given birth to the formal agreements such as the Joule VS Gort & EDSA with Bubuna 11, the Melil Energy & TLQ VS GoSL & EDA 148mw, the Planent Solar VS GoSL EDSA, the Sewa Energy, Betmai Hydro 27mw, the Solar Era VS GoSL EDSA, Kar power ship VS GoSL EDSA, Marish VS GOSL and the Taf Global VS MOLHCP. The Office of the Vice President championed the setting up of a Health Private Sector group to support interventions in the health sector**.**

Challenges: It could be sometimes difficult in tracking particularly the informal sectors.

5.15.3. Indicator 3: Existence of public mechanisms of quality control in the private production/delivery of commodities and services

Achievements: Several agencies exist to provide the mechanisms of quality control in the private production/delivery of commodities and services. These agencies provide resources for information on food safety standards, product quality standards, and other standards related issues. They include i) The Sierra Leone Standards Bureau (SLSB), created by the Standards Act No 2 of 1996, is responsible for coordinating Standardization and Quality Management activities in Sierra Leone; ii) The Produce Monitoring Board (PMB), an agency of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, that is responsible for regulating the produce sector, monitors quality of all produce before shipment; iii) Competent Authority (CA), established under the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, and is responsible for EU Market Certification of Fish Products, Processing Plants and fishing vessels.

5.15.4. Indicator 4: Existence of public mechanisms of cost control in the private delivery of services

No Response

5.15.5. Indicator 5: Existence of public mechanisms of cost control in the private delivery of services Sierra Leone is a free market economy with prices that are determined by market forces. However, the Ministry of Trade and Industry does monitor prices and the

Petroleum Regulatory Agency of the government sets the price of petroleum products, mainly petrol, diesel, kerosene, and for heavy fuel oil.

Achievements

- Subsidization of electricity tariff (social tariff
- Subsidization through Direct Availability to suppliers.

5.16. COMMITMENT: 81

5.16.1. Indicator 1 Existence of mechanisms and forums of international collaboration and exchange between national population programs;

Achievements: There several mechanisms and forums for international collaboration and exchange between national population program. Such as; International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Commission on Population and Development (CPD), Other United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) programmes, National Transfer Account on Generational economy on Demographic Dividend.

Challenges:

5.16.2. Indicator 2. Number of formal, international, meetings between national agencies to exchange experiences;

Achievements: There have been eight international meetings where experiences are shared on population and development, including the National Transfer Account African Conference on generational economy. (Source: Population Unit at MoPED)

5.16.3. Indicator 3: Existence of mechanism of regular communication of experiences
Achievements

There are number of mechanisms of regular communication of experiences in the country. These include the following the Second Session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) Meeting on Health, Population, And Drug Control STC-HPDC-2, the Third Session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) Meeting on Health, Population, and Drug Control STC-HPDC-3, the 4th Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population, and Drug Control (STC-HPDC-4), 1-5 November 2021

Challenges: The third and fourth sessions of the STC were done virtually. Poor internet was an issue during the meeting. Effective participation and poor communication were experienced during meetings.

5.16.4. Indicator 4: Level of resources mobilized to foster international exchanges

Achievement: The ability of Government to fulfill International commitments and cooperation have unlocked significant international exchange opportunities.

Challenges: The resources mobilized cannot be quantified

5.16.5. Indicator 5: Exchange of technical expertise between countries.

Achievement: Sierra Leone has fully cooperated and benefitted from the exchange of technical expertise in the regional block (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU), with further collaboration within the South-South cooperation.

Challenges: Financial constraints to keep up with demands

5.17. COMMITMENT: 82

5.17.1. Indicator: AADPD mainstreamed in the work of the AU and UNECA

Achievement: Sierra Leone has been participating in all the ICPD Conferences since the inception of the AADPD. In support of the ICPD@25 and the Nairobi Summit, under the coordination of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development in partnership with UNFPA identified key stakeholders to participate at the Nairobi summit on 12 to 14 November 2019. The high-level delegation was led by The Minister of Planning and Economic Development.
During the Summit the Commitments for the Government were made. These ICPD25 commitments were drafted with the participation of MDAs especially the Ministries of Health, Basic Education, Social Welfare and Youth Affairs,
and Statistics Sierra Leone. Also critical is the support of Development Partners and Civil Society Organizations, including the Office of the First Lady and youth
organizations.

5.18. COMMITMENT: 83

5.18.1. Indicator: AADPD mainstreamed in the UN's post-2015 development agenda

Achievement: The AADPD has been fully integrated and mainstreamed into the UN post 2015 development agenda through the Global Agenda or SDGs outlining indicators that fully aligned with the AADPD indicators. Also, the UN Corporation frameworks, Strategic plans, and Development parameters fully account for the AADPD indicators.

5.19. COMMITMENT: 84

5.19.1. Indicator 1 Development of a monitoring framework.

Achievement: For the effective Monitoring and evaluation of the AADPD a framework was developed by the AU and other state representatives which have been guiding the implement, monitoring and evaluation for the past 10 years now. This monitoring has been done twice, first in 2018/2023 refers to as the AADPD+10 and ICPD@25, and the current exercise in 2023 capturing for AADPD+10 and ICPD@30. Both have been the collaborative effort Government of Sierra Leone through MoPED and her development partners; UNFPA, Institute for Population and Development studies Fourah Bay College and other MDAs.

Challenges: With the above progress, there remain constraints in the national and sub-national integration, monitoring and evaluation as this comes only after every five years and with limited funding.

Recommendation:
Monitoring and evaluation costs are to be planned and budgeted for on an annual basis and for annual and midterm reviews be done promptly. No need to wait till the end of 5 years

5.19.2. Indicator 2: Development of a monitoring guide.

Achievement: Guidelines have been developed and review regularly for the effective Monitoring of the AADPD framework and programmes by the AU and other state representatives which have been guiding the implementation, monitoring and evaluation for the past 10 years now.

This monitoring guidelines was integrated at national level into the National Population policy and Medium -Term National Development Plan 2018-2023.

Challenges: With the above progress, there remain constraints in the national and sub-national integration, monitoring and evaluation as this comes only after every five years and with limited funding.

5.19.3. Indicator 3: Allocation of resources to the monitoring process

Achievement: Government of Sierra Leone with Support from development partners, UN, UNFPA, other MDAs has provided resources both financial, technical human resources and others for the effectively monitoring the AADPD review and national progress reporting. For the 2-progress monitoring and reporting, Government of Sierra Leone through MoPED, UNFPA and other MDAs have invested into the monitoring process of AADPD+5 & +10 and ICPD@25, &@30.

Challenges: Government allocation of funding to this process is limited due to the economic instability and this has led to donor dependency.

5.20. COMMITMENT: 85

5.20.1. Indicator: Monitoring and evaluation of the AADPD

Achievement: For the effective Monitoring and evaluation of the AADPD a framework was developed by the AU and other state representatives which have been guiding the implement, monitoring and evaluation for the past 10 years now. This monitoring has been done twice, first in 2018/2023 refers to as the AADPD+10 and ICPD@25, and the current exercise in 2023 capturing for AADPD+10 and ICPD@30. Both have been the collaborative effort Government of Sierra Leone through MoPED and her development partners; UNFPA, Institute for Population and Development studies Fourah Bay College and other MDAs.

Challenges: With the above progress, there still remain constraints in the national and sub-national integration, monitoring and evaluation as this comes only after every fives years and with limited funding.

5.21. COMMITMENT: 86

5.21.1. Indicator1: Existence of a focal point/ responsible institution for population and development issues

Achievement: The National Population Desk hosted by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development is the focal point for coordination, collaboration and partnership building among various implementing institutions. Its also carries out periodic monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the national population policy and its relationship to development and planning.

Challenges: Delay in transforming the Desk into a Commission, limited capacity and resources, are some of the challenges affecting the achievement of this indicator..

5.22. COMMITMENT: 87

5.22.1. Indicator 1: Reviews of the outcomes of African regional conferences on ICPD post-2014

Achievement: The Voluntary Nation Review (VNR) has been used to review and monitor the ICPD Commitments and the Population Policy (NPP) indicators. On July 2020 a VNR Report on the Implementation of the Sierra Leone National Population Policy and the International Conference on Population and Development commitments was developed by the Government of Sierra Leone through funding from UNFPA.

Challenge: Limited funding to carry out a holistic review process.

5.23. COMMITMENT: 88

5.23.1. Indicator 1: The existence of a process to include the concerns of all stakeholders

Achievement: The Government of Sierra Leone with a support from UNFPA has developed the Voluntary National Review process which involves the participation of Key Population and Development stakeholders from MDAs in the districts head quarter towns, UNFPA Implementing Partners across the country, and UN Agencies.

Challenges: Inadequate funding to run the full operation of the national review process.

LESSONS LEARNT

(1) The success of population issues depends largely on the effectiveness of the coordination systems in place.
(2) Government and Civil Organisations can collaborate to see various aspects of development go on successfully.
(3) Funding is necessary to get CSOs to work well

Recommendations.

(1) Govt. should be more proactive in educating and sensitizing partners on the SLA

2: Develop consultation guidelines that make provision for CSOs to also take the lead when necessary

(2) The MoF shall consider setting up a Project Development Facility to prepare and package projects till they are ready to go to market.

(3) Proper planning should be done well ahead of online meetings.

(4) Key staff are to be trained in hosting and participating in Virtual Meetings.

(5) Monitoring and evaluation costs are to be planned and budgeted for on an annual basis and for annual and midterm reviews be done promptly. No need to wait till the end of 5 years

(6) We need more political will for the transformation of the Population Desk. The MDA responsible should consider going to Ghana for a study tour as they have succeeded in setting up their Commission.

CHAPTER 6
AN ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS ON THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

6.1. The Nature of the Demographic Dividend

The following characterize the demographic dividend situation in Sierra Leone.

1. The young population 0-14 years has been relatively large over time constituting 42.0 percent in 2015 based on the National Population and Housing Census
2. Declining fertility – The total fertility rate declined from 6.1 children in 2004 to 5.1 children in 2008 (Statistics Sierra Leone, 2008), a decline of one child. The SLDHS of 2019 indicate a Total Fertility Rate of 4.2 children per woman. Further decline is expected because the contraceptive prevalence rate has been on the increase moving from 7 percent in 2008 to 21 percent in 2019. Other social, economic and cultural factors such as levels of education achieved by girls, wealth status and the declining value of children could also be seen as militating factors.

Under such conditions of declining fertility and a large young population, UNFPA (2015) notes that "A country with both increasing numbers of young people and declining fertility has the potential to reap the demographic dividend".

But in spite of these two related results, the productive population 15-64 years has grown by only 1.8 percent between 1974 and 2015 (Weekes and Bah, 2017). This suggests that the working population has not grown enough to impact the productive sector. The EEE framework; Education, Employment and Empowerment could contribute to enhancing the demographic dividend. In other words, providing such opportunities to the large number of these young people could enhance their long-term benefits.

It has become clear now, that the large number of young person in Africa in general and Sierra Leone in particular can be economically useful in the long run provided the appropriate inputs are made. The importance of the DD is incontrovertible. Assessing a few but important views bring out some of the expected outcomes of harnessing the DD. Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank Group is of the opinion that harnessing the DD will stem migration and usher in economic dividend.

"We will keep African youth in Africa by expanding economic opportunities. This will help Africa to turn its demographic assets into economic dividend".

Apart from the clarity of purpose of harnessing the DD, the modus operandi is now well documented on how to achieve this goal. Paramount among these operations is investment in youth, as noted by Dr. Ibrahim A. Mayaki, as Chief Executive of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). But he also includes policy implementation as a critical aspect of the operation.. Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin noted that investments should be grounded in human rights, inclusive of all young people for whom opportunities are created in order to enhance change in the future at both a global and continental African level.

Dr. Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission fine tunes the path to sustainable peace and development and suggested that the goal would depend on the extent to which African Governments can transform education and skills development, health and wellbeing, empowerment, employment and entrepreneurship. Given these views, the question on how to harness the DD and turn it into positive gains, is no longer problematic.

Finally, harnessing the DD is a prelude to the levels of sustainable development targeted by the Agenda 2063 and that of 2030.

6.2. DD Activities in Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, some activities related to DD have been carried out between 2017 and now. These are listed below.

a. Stakeholder engagements: Efforts were made to involve relevant review institutions in the process of harnessing the DD. Assessing the Institutional readiness for harnessing the Demographic Dividend in Sierra Leone saw the development of a Consultancy Team from the Institute for Population and Development studies. The team was to carry out a scoping assessment aimed at determining the readiness of the central government and its partners to harness the DD potential in the country.

The specific objectives of the scoping exercise were:

i. Review existing national policies, plans and programmes relevant to harnessing the DD;
ii. Identify leading institutions for harnessing the DD and analyze their programmes since 2017;
iii. Examine the efforts that have been made towards profiling and monitoring DD;
iv. Highlight specific efforts made in domesticating and reporting progress in implementing the 2017 AU Roadmap on harnessing the DD in Country.

Part of the methodology of the Consultancy Team was the use of a data collection tool for MDAs and other units and organisations that could be involved in harnessing the DD. Apart from primary data collection, secondary data collection was also carried out together with consultations, for example, with the Technical Team trained in Ghana on modeling the DD.

Results of the scoping exercise however, suggested that efforts made so far are preliminary. The Report notes:

a. That government efforts have focused to a large extent in terms of comprehensive national policies involving the total population, comprising of both sexes, various programmatic areas of health, gender, youth, review and planning and cover subnational levels, as well as the relevant ages 0-14, 15-64 and 65 years and over.

The report however, notes that education and employment are less explicit in the policies. Table 1 of the Report describes the specific MDAS/UN Agencies/NGO/Units engaged in DD harnessing since 2017, the nature of the documentation and the AU Road Map Pillars they relate to.

The Scoping Report observes that the country has not yet created a National Transfer Account for profiling the country's DD, although training was done for 6 staff from Institutions engaged in DD in 2018. They were to work towards developing a DD profile for Sierra Leone. This Report using the NTA methodology now exists.

The Scoping Report describes a matrix of DD institutions, their specific programmes, projects and activities since the onset of DD discussion in 2017. In Table 3 of the Report, a total of 12 institutions, comprising Government Ministries, Statistics Sierra Leone, the Parliamentary Unit in Population and Development, the UNDP, UNFPA, Institute for Population and Development Studies have been identified as working on DD and covering all 4 pillars of the AU Road Map.
The Scoping Report established a link between three specific clusters of the MTNDP and the Pillars of the AU Road Map. As outlined in Table 4, Clusters 5.1, 5.2 and 6.1 which relate to Empowerment of Women, Children and Youth, respectively, are aligned to individual pillars of the AU.

In addition to this, the Scoping Report outlines the progress that has been made in terms of development regarding each pillar of the Road Map in Table 5.

The Scoping Report was therefore able to identify key institutions involved in the DD, their programmes and activities, the alignment of governments development areas /clusters with the DD pillars and how much effort has been made in improving the areas covered under the pillars.

6.3. Sensitization and awareness raising

Sensitization and awareness raising has also been part of the DD activities. This was part of the stakeholder engagement of the population of the East and Southern Provinces, specifically Kenema and Bo. The theme of the engagement was Stakeholders' Contribution to the Development of DD Profiling. The activities were held on the 24th and 25th of November 2022. They involved a total of 82 participants, 40 in Bo and 42 in Kenema. The participants held discussions on the individual four Pillars of the AU Road Map and made recommendations for each pillar. The activities were carried out by MODEP with sponsorship from UNFPA. This however, seems to be the only documented awareness raising activity on the DD with the general population.

6.4. The Youth Summit in November 2022

This was one of the largest collections of youths to discuss issues of the DD. It involves a wide array of dignitaries including the Vice President, the Minister of Development and Economic Planning, large members of United Nations Organizations such as UNFPA, UNICEF, UNAIDs, UNIDO, the International Organization of Migration, the World Bank, UN Resident Coordinator and the Ambassador of Ireland.

One of the key points of the Summit was the general support for youths and the DD provided by Guest Speakers. A second major point of the meeting was the experience youth had to work in groups, with the four pillars of the AU Road Map namely:

1. Employment and Entrepreneurship
2. Education and Skills Development
3. Health and wellbeing
4. Right Governance and Youth Empowerment

A third major point of the summit was the various recommendations youth made on each of the four pillars.

A fourth major achievement of the summit was the development of a manual containing basic concepts of DD for use by District Youth Councils and youth-led organizations. Apart from these three activities, not much has been documented on the DD; especially in relation to some other countries in the West African Region, for example as mentioned earlier, Sierra Leone is yet to have a NTA Profile.
However, Liberia has been able to produce a 'Liberia National Transfer Account Profile' (harnessing the Generational Economy for a dynamic economy and a resilient population, in 2021) as an ECA Publication.

A second shortcoming is the absence of an observatory to monitor the DD.

During the Senegal Meeting on NTA, the following recommendations on Sierra Leone were made:

1. Undertake a comprehensive demographic dividend profile and develop a DDMI framework (Like Nigeria, Togo and others) to monitor progress in harnessing DD in the country.
2. Systematically domesticate the AU Road map on harnessing the DD
3. Increase co-operation between MoPED, UNFPA, Institute for Population and Development
   Studies and other MDAs and Partners on Population issues and toward planning for a comprehensive DD profile and monitoring framework for the country.
4. Put our population policy into enhanced action and engage local councils in the process
5. Establish partnerships with sub-regional organizations and in activities on DD issues in West Africa and beyond.
6. Increase public and policy awareness about the critical importance of harnessing DD in Sierra Leone.

   The above analyses on progress on the DD have revealed that not much has been done with respect to the recommendations above.

6.5. Challenges and recommendations

One of the key challenges to progress with respect to the DD noted in the Scoping Report is the absence of a central governing or oversight body to coordinate the entire DD related programmes, projects and activities implemented in the different MDAs, Un Agencies, NGOs and Academic institutions. This has given rise to overlapping activities in various DD related MDAs organizations and units.

6.3.Recommendations

1. There should be an increased level of awareness of the concept of the DD across the county including various categories of the population including young persons and local governing bodies such as the district councils in the various 16 districts in the country.
2. The Youth Summit mentioned in this Chapter is considered as a success and there should be adequate follow-up because it has potentials for financial and moral support across funding bodies.
3. As recommended in the Senegal Meeting, there needs to be a major domestication of the AU Road map. Youths can be recruited in this respect since they already have a wide coverage and have had a greater exposure to the issues of the AU Road Map.

CHAPTER 7
PROGRESS OF THE NAIROBI COMMITMENTS

7.1. Background

These Commitments, in general, are from various African Governments and were made during the ICPD+25 Summit in Nairobi, Kenya, in November, 2019. The summit had a broad base coverage including governments, civil society organizations, academia, the private sector, faith-based organizations and so on. The common motivation for the participation of all of these organizations was their individual interest in the pursuit of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights. to which they made voluntary commitments. It is important to note that these commitments contribute to an international effort to ensure that the promise of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 agenda are achieved and that women have autonomy over their bodies and their lives (IPPF, 2020).

Sierra Leone's commitments cover the following: health budget for family planning, training of staff, use of modern contraceptives among adolescents, the unmet needs for family planning, the reduction of maternal mortality and child marriage.

Progress on some of these commitments are outlined below:

7.2.Indicator 1: Allocate at least 1 percent of the health budget to family planning.

The Government of Sierra Leone through the Health Sector Budget of 2023 allocated 1.0 percent of the health budget to family planning and this commitment has been affirmed by the signing of the Compact Agreement.

7.3.Indicator: Enact the prohibition of the Child Marriage Bill which will criminalize child marriage for all types of marriages.

In terms of progress, this indicator is ongoing. The Bill has not yet been enacted. However, issues involving Child Marriage have been incorporated into the review of the Child Rights Act of 2007 into a new Child Rights Act of 2023. This review has gone through various Parliamentary proceedings but could not have been enacted before the life of the last Parliament ended for the June 24 General Elections. It is hoped that the process would continue during the future sessions of Parliament. The Sexual Offences Act of 2019 and the GEWE Act 2022 have also ensured that child marriage and other harmful practices are prohibited.

7.4. Indicator: Reduce the adolescent birth rate from 125.1 per thousand women in 2013 to 74 per thousand.

According to the 2019 DHS report, there has been some improvement in this rate, reducing from 125.1 **per thousand women in 2013 to 101 per thousand** live births per one thousand women, a decrease of 19.3 percent in seven years.

7.5. Indicator: Reduce the unmet need for family planning from 24.8 percent in 2013 to 20 percent in 2025.

The 2019 SLDHS reported a rate of 21.0 percent, reducing from 24.8 percent in 2013.

Indicator: Reduce the Maternal Mortality Rate of 1,165 per 100,000 live births by 50 percent in 2028.

According to the SLDHS 2019 report, there has been a reduction of about 60.0 percent in maternal mortality rate, moving from 1,165 per 100,000 live births to 717 deaths per 100,000 live births. The new UN estimate of 2020, however, indicates that there has been a reduction from 1,682 per 100,0000 live births in 2000 to 588 per 100,000 live births 2021 and then to 443 per 100,000 live births in 2023. Maternal deaths for adolescents aged (15-19 years) has also reduced from 47 percent in 2013 to 20 percent in 2019. Maternal deaths for age 15-29 years) has also reduced from 36 percent in 2019 to 23 percent in 2019.

7.6. Indicator: Train and employ 1,000 midwives, 180 nurses anesthetists and 72 surgical assistants by 2025

With support from development partners including UNFPA and FCDO, the Government of Sierra Leone has trained 1,579 midwives, 26 nurses and anesthetists and 74 surgical assistants. In addition, 50 health care workers were trained in cervical cancer screening and management.

CHAPTER 8
ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABLE DATA ON SDGs FOUND ON THE AADPD PILLARS AND COMMITMENTS.

The following analysis looks at the achievements of various indicators on the Sustainable Development Goals. The indicators refer to those which are specified in the AADPD instrument and were available as of the period of data collection.

8.1. SDG Indicator 10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 percent of the median income

Level: According to the World Bank 7.5 percent of the Sierra Leone population in 2018 live below 50 percent of the median income level.

8.2. SDG Indicator: 5.5.2 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament and local council.

Level: Sierra Leone passed a law in 2022 requiring the number of female representations in Parliament to be at least 30 percent. In 2018 there were 12 percent of women in Parliament and this increased to 13.6 percent in 2020 although this was below the target of 18.5 percent in 2020. In 2023, the number increased to 32 percent of women in Parliament.

8.3. SDG Indicator 5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex.

Level: The recent Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy (GEWE), passed in Parliament in 2022 establishes a 30 percent quota for women's participation in government for both appointed positions, including cabinet ministry and ambassador roles, and elected positions such as parliamentary and local council seats

8.4. SDG Indicator 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions

Level: The 2015 National Population Census noted that a total of 1.0 percent of persons 15 to 64 years for both sexes were in occupations as senior legislators and managers. Women however, accounted for 0.36 percent whilst men made up almost 0.66 percent. This suggests that there were about two times more men in these occupations than women.

Alternatively, the 2019 SLDHS found out that there were 3.4 percent of women in professional, technical and managerial occupations. Men on the other hand made up 14 percent of the age group 15 to 49 years, the same for women. In both instances whilst the

managerial category cannot be isolated, the fact remains that the percentage of women is small, compared to men.

8.5. SDG Indicator Percentage of population living below the international poverty line

Level: Based on the international poverty line of $1.9, about 43 percent of Sierra Leone's population was living below the line in 2018 based on the Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey, constituting a decrease from 54.7 percent in 2011.

8.6. SDG Indicator 4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with ICT skills by type of skills

Level: According to the SLDHS 2019, 13 percent of women and 28 percent of men have internet skills and have used internet facilities in the 12 months prior to the survey.

8.7. SDG Indicator 11.7.2 Proportion of persons/victims of physical violence by age for women 15-49 in the 12 months prior to the survey as seen in Table 1

Table 1: Percentage of women aged 15 to 49 who have experienced physical violence since age 15

Age of women	Percentage who experienced physical violence since age 15
15-19	54.2
20-24	61.2
25-29	67.0
30-39	62.9
40-49	58.3

Source: SLDHS 2019 Table 16.1

8.8. SDG Indicator 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20-24 who were married or in a union by the exact age of 15 is 8.6 percent and by exact age 18 is 29.6 percent based on the SLDHS of 2019**.**

8.9. SDG Indicator 5.3.2 Proportion of women and girls who have undergone female circumcision by age level as in Table 2

Table 2: Proportion of women and girls circumcised by age

Age of woman	Number of women	Percentage of women circumcised
15-19	3,427	61.1
20-24	2.629	81.0
25-29	2,728	88.1
30-34	1,942	90.7
35-39	2.224	93.1
40-44	1,337	93.5
45-49	1.288	94.9

Source: SLDHS 2019 Report Table 17.2

8.10. SDG Indicator 3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age 15-49 years who had their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods

Level: According to the SLDHS 2019, 45.4 percent of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) had their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods'

8.11. SDG Indicator 3.7.2 Adolescent Birth Rate 10-14 years and 15-19 years

The Adolescent Birth Rate for age 0-14 years is 4 per 1,000 women; 15-19 years is 104 per 1,000 women. For the period 0-4 years before the SLDHS survey.

8.12. SDG Indicator 3.1.1 Level of the Maternal Mortality rate of 717 maternal deaths per one hundred thousand live births.

According to the DHS 2019 report, there has been a reduction of about 60.0 percent in maternal mortality rate moving from 1,165 per 100,000 live births to 717 deaths per 100,000 live births. The new UN estimate of 2020, however, indicates that there has been a reduction from 1,682 per 100,0000 live births in 2000 to 588 per 100,000 live births in and then to 443 per 100,000 live births in 2023. Maternal deaths for adolescents aged (15-19 years) has also reduced from 47 percent in 2013 to 20 percent in 2019. Maternal deaths for ages 15-29 years) has also reduced from 36 percent in 2019 to 23 percent in 2019.

8.13. SDG Indicator 3.1.2: Proportion of births attended by skilled attendants

According to the SLDHS, the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel is 87 percent.

8.14. SDG Indicator 3.2.1: Level of Under Five Mortality

The Under Five Mortality rate is 122/ 1000 live births

8.15. SDG Indicator 3.2.2: Level of Neo Natal Mortality

The Neo Natal Mortality Rate is 31/ 1000 live births

8.16. SDG 3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations

HIV prevalence rate stands at 1.7 percent among men and women aged 15-49 years. The rate among young people (15-24) stands at 1.0 percent. Prevalence rate among men and women varies (2.2 percent for women versus 1.1 percent for men). Among women and men combined, HIV prevalence is higher in urban areas than in rural areas (2.3 percent for urban areas and 1.2 percent for rural areas). Overall, 1.0 percent of young women and men aged 15 – 24 are HIV possible while the prevalence rate is higher among young women than young men (1.5 percent versus 05 percent)

8.17. SDG 3.3.2 Tuberculosis incidence per 1,000 population

According to WHO report 2017, Tuberculosis is a significant public health problem with an estimated three (3) new infections per 1000 people each year. Sierra Leone is making gradual progress in reducing the incidence of Tuberculosis from 298 per 1,000 in 2014 to 289 in 2020 according to the World Bank.

8.18. SDG 3.3.3 Malaria incidence per 1,000 population

According to the World Bank collection of development indicators, Sierra Leone Malaria incidence is 330 per 1,000 in 2021. Communicable diseases are the leading cause of death in Sierra Leone, of which Malaria is the single biggest killer accounting for 38 percent of all hospital admissions.

8.19. SDG 3.3.4 Hepatitis B incidence per 100,000 population

There are no comprehensive data on viral hepatitis from Sierra Leone. However, a huge disease burden has been observed in the sub-population. According the Royal Society on Tropical Medicine and Hygiene Review in October 2021, hepatitis prevalence is 8.7 percent (39/477) among health care workers, 11.3 percent (20/179) among pregnant women, 15,2 percent (6554/43163) among blood donors and 16.7 percent among school going children

8.20. SDG Indicator 5.6.1: Proportion of women 15-49 years who make their own informed decision regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care

The SLDHS 2019, indicate that:

a) 67.5 percent of women can say no if they do not want to have sexual intercourse;
b) 44. 5 percent can ask their husbands to use condom; and
c) 43.9 percent participate in making their own decision about their reproductive health care.

8.21. SDG Indicator 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age.

Table 3: Percentage of ever married women who have experienced Sexual violence by any husband/partner by age in the last 12 Months prior to the survey

Age	Sexual violence	Ever married women
15-19	8.5	170
20-24	7.0	498
25-29	7.2	719
30-39	6.6	1,361
40-49	3.9	862

Source: SLDHS 2019 Table 16.12

8.22. SDG Indicator: 1.4.2 Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure.

Level: 13 percent of women and 15 percent men have Title Deeds~~Deed~~ for land with their names on them. (SLDHS 2019)

✔ Indicator 16,a. 1 Existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles.

Level: Yes. The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) was established by an Act of Parliament No 9 of 2004. Its mandate is to promote and protect human rights throughout the country. These laws deal with basic rights, women's rights, children's rights, prisoners' rights, health conditions and others.

CHAPTER 9
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1.The Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development

The assessment of the 88 commitments across 6 pillars has been helpful as a process of determining how much developmental progress has been made between the last assessment in 2018 and the current situation, five years later, in 2023.

New policies have been enacted; some programmes have been energized; new concepts have been given greater emphasis. The demographic, social and economic situations have changed with new data, new findings and achievements. Greater efforts have been made by the government to allocate more funds to key ministries and programmes thereby upscaling such programmes and making them more meaningful in the national development process.

Key segments of the population, such as women and youth have received better attention from government and partners although more can be done.

One of the biggest achievements in the 2019-2023 period regarding data collection and planning, is the development of the Medium-Term Development Plan which systematically outlines government's policy areas in Clusters. More specifically, is the documentation of implementation efforts made in achieving the targets for each cluster and the challenges or reasons why set targets could not be met. This and other source documents from various ministries have provided invaluable data for assessing progress of the 88 commitments.

9.2. The Demographic Dividend

Assessing the progress made so far regarding the Demographic Dividend suggests that efforts have been made at achieving the preliminaries based on the Scoping Report. However, in comparison with other countries in the sub region a lot more has to be done. There has to be an upscaling of the level of awareness across the nation but more so among young persons. Greater coordination of the activities related to the DD could be a helpful input. The twin problems of youth are their large numbers coupled with their social economic and reproductive health needs as against the backdrop that they can contribute significantly to national development if adequately empowered and guided. Key needs of youth include empowerment, education, health, (including reproductive health), skills development, as outlined in the four pillars of the AU Road Map for the DD and Youth Development. During the period being reviewed 2019 -2023, the concerns of youth have become very important. These concerns are being addressed both internationally and locally. With respect to the latter, their issues fall appropriately under discussions relating to the DD. A Youth Policy exists and in government circles they are also given attention through the UNFPA Education Employment and Empowerment Framework. Job training and cash transfers have been utilized as steps to improve their status and to empower them.

9.3.The Sustainable Development Goals

An assessment of the SDG indicators aligned with those of the AADPD is important as a way of establishing a benchmark against which progress can be assessed in the future. The biggest shortcoming regarding the SDG indicators is the absence of data in the disaggregated form. For example, breakdown be sex, type and location. While this is a disadvantage for reporting precisely, it does provide adequate guidelines on the nature of data that is required to answer these indicators. Currently, an assessment of progress regarding the SGGs is not feasible because there is no baseline. The current work therefore sets the stage as the benchmark data as of 2023 for indicators which are available.

9.4.Specific Conclusions on Pillar 1 Dignity and Equality

The specific conclusion regarding the first Pillar on Dignity and Equality suggests that much has been done in the last five years to improve the status of both the general population and specific groups, such as Women and Youth. These were achieved through the implementation of programme, passing of new Acts and increases in allocation. Typical examples include the increased allocations to education and health, increase in the minimum wage by 60.0 percent, and improving strategies to reduce poverty. Passing of the Act to support women's access to ownership and control of resources, Schools' Radical Inclusion policy to improve enrolment rates and create opportunities to be educated, free quality education, efforts to reduce violence in schools, strides to generate employment and entrepreneurship, widespread social protection programmes, expanded child protection efforts and care for the aged.

Despite these achievements challenges are associated with implementation especially of new legal Acts as well as funding which threaten the implementation of government efforts.

9.5.Specific Conclusion on Pillar 2. Health

Progress has also been made regarding Pillar 2 on Health. As in Pillar 1, this progress has been diversified dealing with existence and implementation of laws and regulations regarding some issues such as rights and access to health facilities. In other cases, the implementation of specific programmes has been carried out such as training and recruitment.

Specific achievement under this Pillar include: a new comprehensive sexuality education programme; improvement in male involvement in SRHR programmes, important collaborative efforts in health, for example collaboration between NAS and MOHs to implement new programmes for people living with HIV/AIDs.Effort at integration are reported for example SRH, HIV/AID and family planning wide coverage of Health Centre providing services on complications of unsafe abortion, campaign on key health issues such as those for high-risk pregnancies; large numbers of one stop centres across the country providing support to GBV victims, financial support to health review. Across the commitments in the Pillar challenges vary but include cultural setbacks for example regarding male involvement in SRH and R, inadequate facilities such as the lack of forensic Laboratory for GBV cases, inadequate skills service providers for integrating programmes, funding to upscale health programmes such as the new CSE.

9.6.Specific Conclusion on Pillar 3 - Place and Mobility.

Pillar 3 deals with Place and Mobility. Judging from the achievements under this Pillar the biggest success appears to be the formulation of a National Migration Policy in 2022 to maximize the benefits of international migration and manage irregular migration. A second success is the incorporation of migration issues in national planning as evidenced in the MTNDP 2019-2013 with a specific strategic objective, three target areas to be met by 2023 and indications of some of the achievements.

Government's involvement in investment in the rural areas is also articulated in the MTNDP just as the case with migration.
Another potential success under the Pillar is the plan made by the Freetown City Council to attend to the land and housing needs of the poor (bike riders) and plans for the future growth and population needs.

International partnership on migration is also another existing success. However, there are some areas which are less obvious in which little or nothing seems to have been done. These include the creation of sustainable cities; no long-term urbanization plans, no plans to deal with the needs of people living in fragile ecosystems as well as forecasting climate change.
Whilst programme and policy issues appear to have made considerable progress spatial aspects of the Pillar appear to have lagged behind.

9.7.Specific Conclusions on Pillar 4,5 and 6. Governance, Data and Statistics and Internal cooperation and Partnership

Pillar 4,5 and 6 constitute Chapter five. Findings related to data, statistics and development have been accomplished to a large extent. For example, mechanisms exist for integrating population into development planning, although specific budget allocations are not indicated but the results point to the fact that the Government provides funding for population issues, a typical example is the national census over the years. As part of the achievements there is a focal point within MoPED for coordinating population and development issues, there is a MOU in government circles which foster population participation at all levels of Government.
Finally, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms exist to assess performance of government areas by MoPED yearly and evaluations are conducted every five years.

Challenges regarding the co-ordination of population and development issues are funding and adequate expertise. Regarding data and statistics, the conclusion based on the data collected is that the findings were more on the positive side. For example, the results indicate that there are institutions which carry out evidence-based review; there is a functional civil registration system which is being improved, systems exist for collecting and analyzing social data for planning; funding and mechanisms for conducting national censuses exist.
With respect to Pillar 6 on internal cooperation and partnerships the results are not quite impressive with respect to engagements involving mainstreaming of AADPD into UN's post

2015 development agenda, development of a monitoring framework and allocation of resources to the monitoring process.
In the same Pillar however, the achievements on the relationship between government and Civil Society organizations are good although there are challenges of funding, lack of capacity on the part of the CSO and excessive bureaucracy by government.

9.8.Recommendations -Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development

6. The timing of the review in the last but one and the current exercise has been inappropriate because of its simultaneity with the country's national election processes. During both times data collection has been greatly delayed. Subsequent reviews (Sierra Leone) should utilize more appropriate time lines.

7. Conducting interviews with respondents is a much more rewarding method of data collection and should be recommended over self- completion of the review instrument by respondents. The former leads to higher quality of response as the enumerator has the opportunity to probe and clarify conflicting issues.

8. Greater awareness about the AADPD and its importance should be disseminated across all MDAs so as to soften the ground for future data collection processes.

9. Feedback on the results of this study should be provided to MDAs who participated in the study as a way of getting them to know some of their 'low' areas so that further improvements can be made. This could be done by MoPED, as the coordinating Ministry.

9.9. Recommendations - The Demographic Dividend

1. Awareness raising or sensitization of the concept should be upscaled with young person's leading the process especially youths who have had prior experience in handling issues related to the DD..
2. The Youth Summit of November 2022 should be jointly followed up by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and the Population Commission of MoPED because it offered great opportunities for funding various activities relating to DD. It also provided for further work on the DD.
3. Every opportunity should be seized to fully collaborate with partners in the West African Region, especially those Nigeria, who are much advanced in various areas of the DD.
4. There should be more effective coordination of the implementation process of the DD. As noted in the Scoping Report, a vibrant central coordination mechanism is to be set up.

9.10. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Greater disaggregation of data collection and compiling is required to facilitate easy reporting of the SDGs.

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