

International Rescue Committee Sierra Leone: Strategy Action Plan



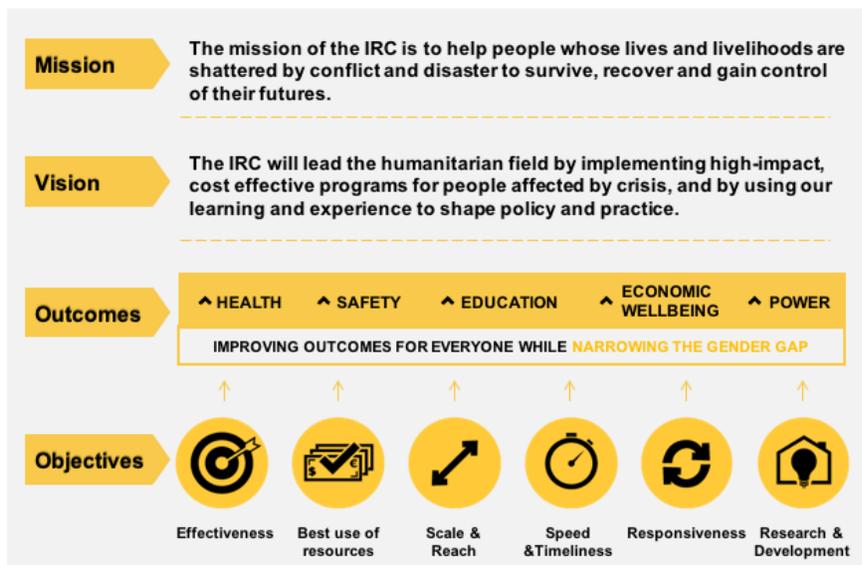
A Wade / IRC

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IRC2020 GLOBAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The International Rescue Committee's (IRC) mission is to help the world's most vulnerable people survive, recover, and gain control of their future. The aim of the global strategy, IRC2020 (see right), is to make measurable improvements in health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and decision-making power. Therefore, the IRC has made investments to design more effective programs, use resources more efficiently, reach more people more quickly and better respond to beneficiaries' needs.



SIERRA LEONE OVERVIEW

After a decade of growth following the end of its civil war, Sierra Leone experienced the largest Ebola outbreak in history. The disease infected 8,704 and took the lives of 3,589, including 221 health care workers.

As a result of the outbreak, schools closed, businesses collapsed, teenage pregnancy rose, and violence against women and girls reached new heights. Many hard-earned development gains since the war were lost.

The outbreak amplified pre-existing public health issues like extremely high infant, child and maternal mortality rates. The Ebola crisis further weakened Sierra Leone's understaffed, underequipped, and inadequately trained health system.

The government acted quickly to make up for educational losses, establishing accelerated curricula, yet major challenges remain. Most primary school children in the fourth year cannot read and over

55% of teachers are unpaid and untrained.

At schools as well as in the home, girls are vulnerable to abuse. Nearly all women in Sierra Leone have experienced gender-based-violence at least once in their lifetime.

The IRC's new strategy for Sierra Leone illustrates its commitment to adaptive, collaborative, and evidence-driven programming for a more educated, safe, healthy, and empowered Sierra Leone.

IRC'S STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING

Through the end of 2020, the IRC's new strategy in Sierra Leone will prioritize improving health, safety, and education (see Figure 1). The IRC will reach 1.5 million people in Sierra Leone by the end of 2020, specifically targeting women, school-age children (especially girls) and other vulnerable groups.

The IRC will support healthcare centers and their workers across Sierra Leone in order to prevent and treat disease and complications from pregnancy and childbirth. Integrated family planning and reproductive health services will help women and girls to exercise control over when and how they give birth, and provide support during pregnancy.

Furthermore, communicable diseases such as malaria, diarrhea, and pneumonia will be prevented and treated through the provision of high quality, accessible care, with a special focus on rural areas where access to services is poor.

Leveraging experience from successful education programs, the IRC will continue to lead a consortium of organizations to strengthen student learning across the entire country. The IRC will also integrate numeracy and expand improved learning opportunities into secondary education to ensure continuity.

The IRC's commitment to gender equality strives for equal outcomes for women and girls, and men and boys. The IRC will build a movement of actors within the country to join forces in advocating for large-scale change on issues identified by women and girls.

The IRC will further strengthen its programming to enable women and girls to be safe in their homes, schools, and workplaces. New approaches to mitigate gender-based violence while empowering adolescent girls will be launched and integrated into existing health and education programs.

Figure 1: Priority Outcomes and Future Programs

	Priority Outcomes in Sierra Leone	Future Programs
HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Women and adolescent girls are protected from and treated for complications of pregnancy and childbirth > Women and adolescent girls prevent unintended pregnancy > Children are protected from and treated for communicable disease 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Reduce infant and child mortality in hard-to-reach communities through Integrated Community Case Management with Community Health Workers > Improve supply and demand of reproductive, maternal and child health services across the entire range of care
EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 6 - 14 year olds have literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills, according to their developmental potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Improve early grade literacy through increased enrollment and retention of students and intensive teacher professional development > Strengthen enrollment, retention, and access to quality learning opportunities for girls
SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Women and girls are equally safe from harm as men and boys where they live, learn, and work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Empower adolescent girls through the creation of safe spaces, avenues to advocate for their priorities and challenge harmful social norms, and improved services > Mitigate gender-based violence by strengthening and expanding Women's Action Groups and improving referral mechanisms for survivors

COMMITMENTS FOR IMPACT

In order to maximize impact and achieve the priority outcomes, the IRC in Sierra Leone is making new investments to improve program effectiveness, use resources more efficiently, reach more people, and be more responsive to beneficiaries and partners. The IRC made the following commitments to strengthen programming and improve the lives of the people it serves in Sierra Leone.

Figure 2: Commitments to Ensure Impact



Effectiveness

- > Implement an enhanced monitoring and evaluation system to better generate and use evidence in programs
- > Ensure all program staff understand the evidenced interventions and theories of change to achieve the priority outcomes for beneficiaries



Best Use of Resources

- > Reform operations teams to be more service-oriented and systems-driven, leading to more efficient workflows, staffing, and management



Scale & Reach

- > Improve capacity to manage large-scale funding to serve more beneficiaries



Responsiveness

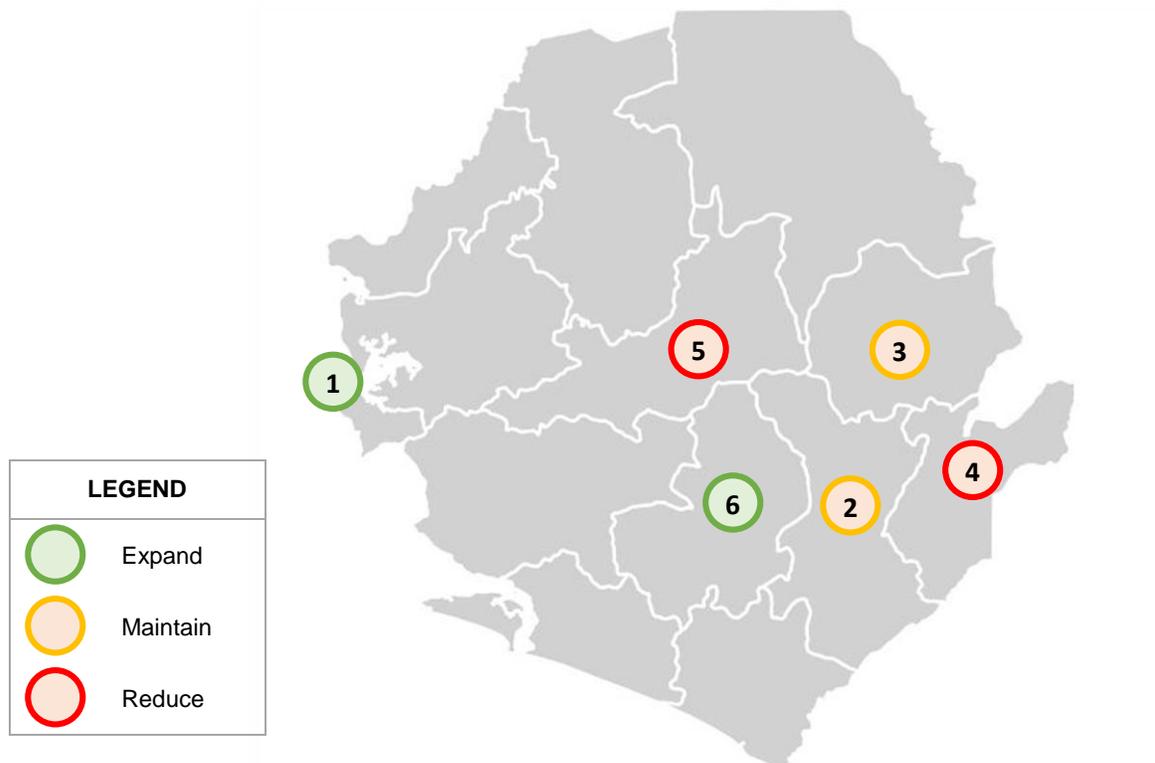
- > Regularly communicate impact created to beneficiaries in an accessible format
- > Deliver programs which adapt to changes in context and needs to ensure projects correspond to developments on the ground



IRC'S STRATEGIC PRESENCE

From now until the end of 2020, the IRC will maintain, expand, and reduce its presence in sites across Sierra Leone based on an analysis of where the greatest need is and where the IRC can create the biggest impact.

Figure 3: The IRC's Geographic Transitions in Sierra Leone



Location	Geographic Transition
1 Freetown	Develop a robust network of civil society actors to advocate for the interest of women and girls
2 Kenema	Continue to lead the NGO health, education, and gender sectors as the country recovers from the Ebola outbreak
3 Kono	Continue to lead the NGO health, education, and gender sectors as the country recovers from the Ebola outbreak
4 Kailahun	Gradually hand over education and women's protection and empowerment initiatives to NGOs and government
5 Tonkolili	Hand over health programming to partner NGOs and phase out education programs
6 Bo	Continue Ebola-related health projects. while expanding rural health services, integrated community health management, and early grade literacy programming



L. Miller / IRC

The IRC in Sierra Leone



Saffea Senessie, Country Director
Saffea.Senessie@rescue.org



Rescue.org/where/Sierra_Leone



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