

## Contact us

Christian Aid Sierra Leone is based in Freetown. We also draw on the expertise of colleagues from other Christian Aid teams across Africa, the UK and Ireland, as well as international networks in Sierra Leone and beyond.

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# Partnership for change Christian Aid in Sierra Leone

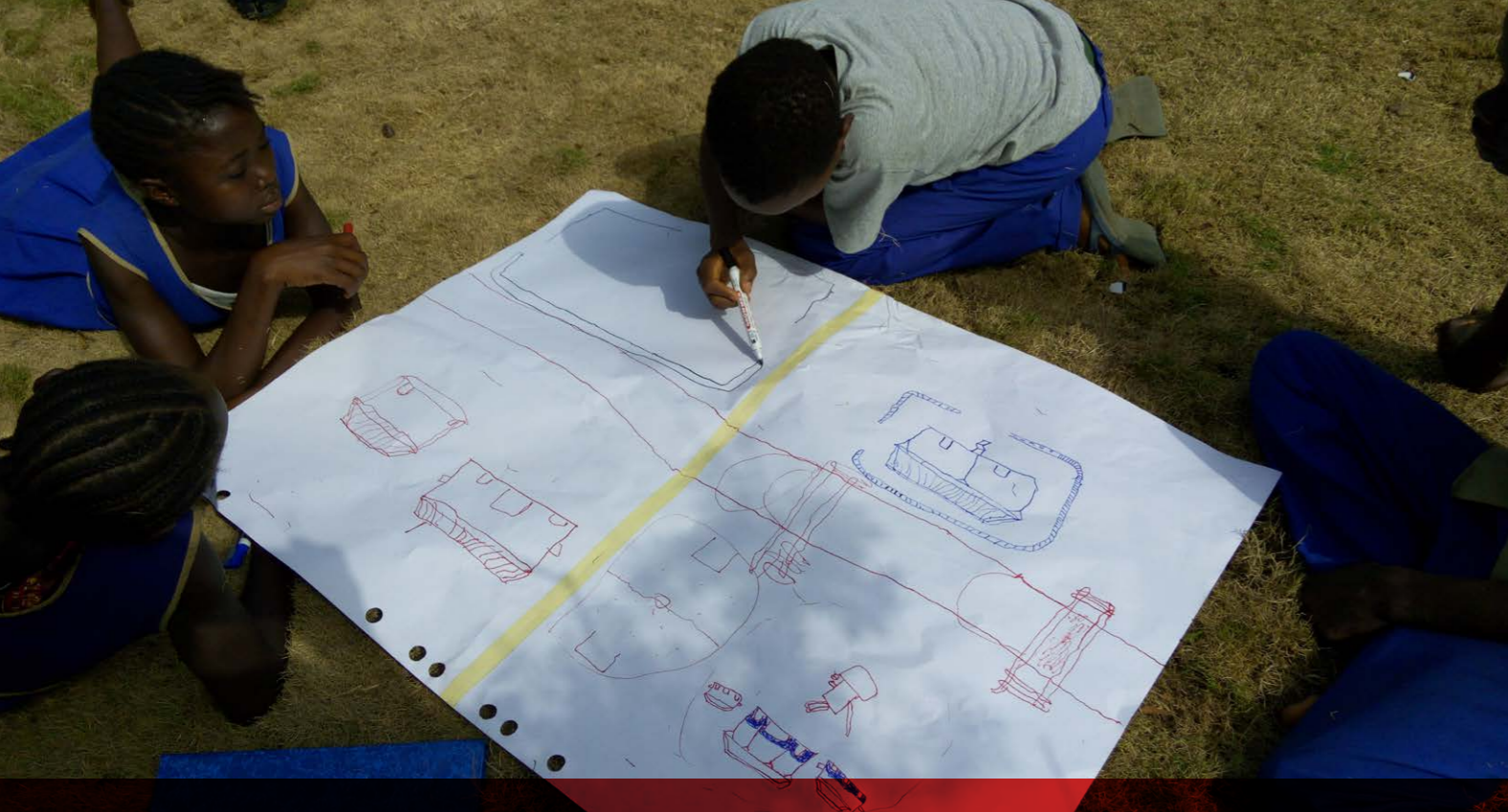


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Children draw the risks and hazards they face. This is part of the participatory vulnerability and capacity assessment process we use to involve communities in understanding and finding solutions to the challenges affecting them.

Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of dignity, freedom and hope, of power over their own lives.

Christian Aid has a vision – an end to poverty – and we believe that vision can become a reality. We urge you to join us.

[caid.org.uk/sierraleone](http://caid.org.uk/sierraleone)

## About Christian Aid worldwide

Christian Aid is an international organisation that insists the world can and must be swiftly changed to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty.

We work globally for profound change that eradicates the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality. We are part of a wider movement for social justice.

We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance where need is great – tackling the effects of poverty as well as its root causes.

We have an integrated approach to poverty eradication, working worldwide on humanitarian relief, long-term development, and specific advocacy issues and campaigns. We expose the scandal of poverty by challenging and changing systems and institutions that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

We work with, and through, partners – organisations rooted in communities, who understand what is required to lift women, men and children out of poverty – including civil society organisations, research institutions, churches, faith groups and social movements, as well as governments, the private sector and non-governmental organisations.

In 2016-17, we gave grants to 475 partner organisations across Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Our total income was £97m (\$137.8m), including £42.1m (\$59.8m) in funding from governments and other institutions, including the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID), Irish Aid and the European Union.

## Our global strategy

We believe human action is responsible for the underlying causes of poverty and that when people work together the world can be changed.

At the root of poverty is a lack of power – the power to have your say and be heard, or to know your rights and demand them. It is clear to us that poverty can only be eradicated through helping people secure power to help themselves.

## Christian Aid in Sierra Leone

Christian Aid's Sierra Leone programme started in 1988 with a focus on service delivery and humanitarian assistance. Since the civil war ended in 2002, we have had a greater emphasis on building the capacity of local partners to challenge the systems and structures that perpetuate poverty and inequality.

Our vision is a Sierra Leone where poor and marginalised women and men have equal access to resources and services and thrive within a responsible state.

We also work on governance, health, including HIV, sustainable livelihoods and resolving conflicts.

We work with organisations at all levels across the country, especially in the southern, eastern and western areas where we have been working for more than two decades. We have partners in very remote areas where few international organisations operate, due to the difficult terrain. We provide grants, technical and strategic support, mentoring and accompaniment to partners based on their needs.

Christian Aid Sierra Leone has expertise in strengthening civil society networks, accountable governance, community health, resilient livelihoods, and emergency preparedness and response. Gender sensitivity cuts across our programme.



We provide relief to people affected by disasters – in this case, flooding.

Christian Aid is a member of the

**actalliance**

Cover: Through its Power to Women project Christian Aid is supporting a new generation of women in government in Sierra Leone. Iye E.B. Mustapha, Juliet Scott and Rebecca Yei Kamara were all candidates in the 2018 elections. Rebecca Yei Kamara (right) was elected as Kono district's first ever female MP.



## Our priorities in Sierra Leone

### Accountable governance

We are working to strengthen civil society organisations, networks and coalitions, and to empower poor and marginalised people to demand accountability for equitable service delivery and resource allocation. This includes improving access to health services for poor and vulnerable people.

We work with coalitions and networks to facilitate citizen participation in national, regional and district level dialogue and decisions on issues that affect their lives.

### Community health and HIV

With our partners, we are working to make health services more transparent and accountable. We want to ensure that women and girls have the knowledge and power to make decisions about their own healthcare, and to make information on health available to everybody. And we are working to reduce the impact that inequitable social norms can have on people's lives by engaging with key players such as faith leaders and traditional leaders.

We also pursue a comprehensive national HIV response that is inclusive of people at the highest risk of contracting and transmitting HIV, to ensure that services are appropriate. We are using our experience in HIV programming to explore whether a lack of engagement of these key populations is a critical block towards achieving zero new HIV infections in Sierra Leone by 2020.

### Livelihoods

Our aim is to enable poor people to move beyond survival and subsistence, to enjoy thriving and dignified lives. This means making a living in ways that provide adequate and predictable food and income, safe and healthy living conditions, and the resources and confidence to take new opportunities.

Poor people face many risks and pressures that limit their ability to improve their livelihoods and wellbeing. These include disasters, climate change, resource degradation, conflict, diseases and poor governance. If poor people are to take full advantage of opportunities, they must be able to manage a variety of risks.

### Humanitarian response and preparedness

We promote resilience and build community capacity to prepare for, and respond to, humanitarian crises. We support community mobilisation, access to information, and participation of disaster-affected people and communities in decision-making around how they could best be supported. We support partners to provide humanitarian assistance to disaster-affected communities.

**'I thought [after surviving Ebola], I should not be bothered about HIV. I have learned a lot about HIV and I now know that everyone is at risk... I have taken the bold step to go for an HIV test and I have also taken my partner for the test.'**  
A male Ebola survivor in Pujehun District



The SABI programme is empowering communities to demand better health services.

## Key projects

### SABI

SABI – which stands for Strengthening Accountability, Building Inclusion – is a four-year (2016-2020) citizen-led accountability programme funded by UK aid and being delivered by a consortium of leading international and Sierra Leonean partners. Christian Aid Sierra Leone leads the programme and partners include BBC Media Action, Restless Development, Social Development Direct and Humentum.

SABI builds relationships between citizens and the state, and encourages citizens to fulfil their own responsibilities for social amenities. SABI recognises the integral role that communities played in the fight against Ebola. By once again placing communities at the forefront, SABI builds on the potential to make significant shifts in the role of citizens and the responsiveness of the state for improved service delivery in Sierra Leone.

SABI contributes towards creating a more informed and empowered citizenry which can hold effective and ongoing dialogue with better engaged and more accountable state service providers.

**'I can't thank you enough for the items Christian Aid provided for us. Since we have been brought to this camp, you are the only organisation that I know has provided items to beneficiaries directly, and we are happy about that.'** *Hawa M. Kanu, flood survivor, Kanigo*

### Irish Aid programme

Since 2003, Christian Aid Sierra Leone has received funding from Irish Aid for a project which aims to strengthen citizens' capacity and opportunities.

This project aims to transform public policy making, natural resource governance, budgeting and practice to be more in the people's interests. We particularly work on inequality issues around land rights, mining, oil and gas, access to basic services, and tax justice, and to ensure space for civil society is maintained or widened.

The project has been extended until 2020. In the immediate post-Ebola recovery period and beyond, Christian Aid Sierra Leone will implement, through its five partners, activities that will deliver change on all three of Irish Aid's objectives: accountable governance, tackling violence and building peace, and gender. We will contribute to conflict transformation, promoting women's empowerment, providing platforms for meaningful civic, state and policy dialogues, economic empowerment and improved social services delivery especially in the area of health.



SABI was launched in 2017.



### Health Legacy programme

This three-year project, funded by the Ellis-Hadwin Legacy Fund, focuses on testing Christian Aid's approach to community health. It will support Christian Aid and our partners to promote innovative and learning approaches and adapt these approaches to programme management. It supports us to take risks and learn, and provides an opportunity for innovative approaches within the health sector.

Through this project, we seek to work with local communities and duty bearers and our partners to ensure women and girls have the knowledge and power necessary to control decision making about

their health, particularly in relation to maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health and HIV. We also seek to increase the transparency, accountability and responsiveness of the health service, and ensure community-level health services are integrated, inclusive and resilient. The project ends in June 2020.

**'I came to learn that we can work amicably with persons living with HIV & AIDS to fight stigma. I have suffered from stigma at different points of my life, as a commercial sex worker and then as an Ebola survivor. I have now joined the fight against stigma.'** *Former sex worker and anti-stigma ambassador, Makeni*

### Escaping forced marriage

Our Power to Women programme tested ways to promote women's rights, nationally and locally. At the local level, it ran school clubs where boys and girls can discuss, among other topics, gender-based violence and ways of combatting and reporting it.

When sixteen-year-old Mariama Barry was forced into her marriage by her parents, her involvement in one of the clubs empowered her to take action.

Mariama's parents arranged her marriage to a rich businessman in secret. Despite her pleas to be allowed to continue her education, she was married and taken to live in another city.

Thanks to her training in the school club, Mariama knew how to contact a child rights organisation. Its manager called a meeting with her new husband and both sets of parents, where he told them about the legal penalties for underage marriage. All parties agreed to annul the marriage.

Mariama now helps to lead the school club, teaching her classmates about her experiences as she continues her studies, dreaming of one day becoming a doctor.

Mariama said: 'I'm not the only girl who has gone through this ordeal. There are many other girls of my age who face similar or worse situations than what I experienced.'



### Power to Women

In Their Lifetime is a seed fund that enables Christian Aid to pioneer new approaches to fighting poverty and to scale up the solutions that work best.

In Sierra Leone, In Their Lifetime supported the Power to Women project, which helped to bring about change for women in the Kailahun and Kono districts. Power to women addressed some of the root causes of inequality, which include low representation of women in decision making, high levels of violence against women and girls, weak networking among women, and the low capacity of women councillors to champion the fight against violence on women. We worked with communities towards improved women's participation in political governance in their districts.

This project ended in March 2018, when Sierra Leone held a general election. Our experience shows that women and girls suffer increased marginalisation during election periods, and that women who aspire for political offices are intimidated and abused. We therefore supported women's voice and participation in politics during the months leading up to and immediately after the election.

### Confidence to serve

Lucy K. Jibrilla is a local government councillor in Kailahun District, Eastern Sierra Leone.

Lucy joined our Kailahun Women in Governance Network project in 2010, and two years later, stood for a councillor seat, against nine male candidates, and won.

Lucy has helped to implement many projects, including the construction of public toilets and rice mills for women farmers.

Lucy decided to stand in the March 2018 general election, with the backing of the Network. She said:

'I have served enough in local governance; it is now time for me to go to the next level and I want to give a chance to other women to serve in local government positions. I think I am now mature enough to represent my people in Parliament.'



SABI carried out a citizen perception survey, gathering the views of people from every district of Sierra Leone to inform advocacy efforts.