

**EVALUATION SERIES NO. 81**

**EVALUATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT  
PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE TO SIERRA LEONE 1999 – 2005**

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## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Acronyms</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Background of the development of the Commonwealth Action Plan	4
1.2 Brief programme description	4
1.3 Background to the evaluation	5
1.4 Evaluation objectives	5
1.5 Evaluation methodology	6
<b>2. Action Plan Context</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 The post-conflict situation in Sierra Leone	7
2.2 Issues in post-conflict development aid delivery	8
2.3 Principles for post-conflict interventions	12
<b>3. The Commonwealth Action Plan for Sierra Leone: 1999-2005</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 Development of the Framework	15
3.2 Objectives and areas of focus	15
3.3 The operational plan and its implementation	17
3.4 Appropriateness of the operational plan to the approved Framework	21
<b>4. Evaluation Findings</b>	<b>23</b>
4.1 Assessment of the Action Plan's effectiveness	23
4.2 Assessment of the sustainability of the Plan's results	28
4.3 Assessment of how well post-conflict needs were met	30
4.4 The SASD Enterprise and Agriculture Programme	31
4.5 Assessment of the management of the Action Plan	38
4.6 Assessment of the Secretariat's collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone	41
4.7 Assessment of the collaboration with other donors	46
4.8 Comparison of the Secretariat's assistance strategy to those of other donors	49
4.9 Comparative advantage of the Secretariat's response to post-conflict needs	54
4.10 Lessons learned	55
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>59</b>

## Tables

1.	Post-conflict recovery context	11
2.	Secretariat Action Plan activities: August 2000	19
3.	Summary of the Action Plan's sustainability status as at December 2006	29
4.	Comparison of National Recovery Strategy with the Secretariat's programme of work	34
5.	List of task force meeting dates	39
6.	Project collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone: 1999-2005	42
7.	Official development assistance disbursements to Sierra Leone: 2000-2005	50
8.	Main sectors of donor activity	51
Annex 1:	List of Projects and Expenditures by Year	60
Annex 2:	Details of the Action Plan's Activity Results and Sustainability Status as of December 2006	64

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## List of Acronyms

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CMAG	Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group
CFTC	Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
DACO	Development Assistance Cooperation Office
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DfID	UK's Department for International Development
ECOMOG	West African Peace Keeping Force
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ELS	Secretariat's Economic and Legal Section (within SASD)
ELASD	Economic & Legal Advisory Services Division (former division of the Commonwealth Secretariat)
EU	European Union
FCO	UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FIRST	Financial Sector Reform and Strengthening
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
GIDD	Secretariat's Government and Institutional Development Division
GYAD	Secretariat's Gender and Youth Affairs Division
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDGs	Millennium development goals
MFA	Sierra Leone's Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MODEP	Sierra Leone's Ministry of Development and Economic Planning
NEC	National Election Commission
NGO	Non-government organisation / community based organisation
OAU	Organization for Africa Unity
OECD-DAC	The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee
PAD	Secretariat's Political Affairs Division
PCP	Primary Contact Point
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
POC	Point of Contact
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SALHOC	Sierra Leone Housing Corporation
SASD	Special Advisory Services Division
SECO	Switzerland's State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMEs	Small and medium enterprises
SPED	Secretariat's Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division
STPD	Secretariat's Social Transformation Programmes Division
TOR	Terms of Reference

TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNAMSIL	United Nations peacekeeping mission
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework. In Sierra Leone, the agencies involved are UNDP, UN Human Rights Commission, UN Children’s Fund, Food and Agriculture Organization, World Health Organization, World Food Programme, UN Fund for Population Activities, Joint UN programme on HIV/AIDS and International Organization for Migration
UNIOSIL	United Nations Integrated Office for Sierra Leone
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTO	World Trade Organization



## Executive Summary

This report assesses the support provided to Sierra Leone by the Commonwealth Secretariat from 1999-2005 under its Action Plan for Post-Conflict Recovery.

Sierra Leone became an independent country on 27 April 1967. Independence was achieved amid hopes for rapid development, based on the country's abundant natural resources, which include a wide variety of mineral, agricultural, forestry and marine wealth. These hopes were quickly dashed by the end of the first decade. Since the mid-1960s the country has suffered from dramatic economic decline and political instability – Sierra Leone has been through five military coups and a brutal armed conflict, which lasted just over 10 years from March 1991 until January 2002.

In April 1999, the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) requested the Secretary-General to prepare a Commonwealth Action Plan to support the government of Sierra Leone in its post-conflict recovery. Approved in July 1999, the plan was based on four principles:

- i. Recognition of the United Nations Security Council as the primary international body in conflict resolution and also of the valuable role being played by the Organization for Africa Unity (OAU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), amongst others, towards the resolution of the crisis in Sierra Leone;
- ii. The framework for action by the international community provided by the July 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement;
- iii. Concentration on those areas where the Commonwealth has specific comparative advantage through previous experience, or where it has a fund of particular expertise or responsiveness; and
- iv. Liaison and the potential for collaboration with other agencies to optimise the use of human and financial resources and to effect efficient delivery.

The Action Plan envisioned activities in three areas: (i) diplomatic and political initiatives; (ii) support to democratic processes and institutions; and (iii) support for reconstruction of the public sector and public services. From 1999-2005, the Secretariat funded 40 initiatives with a minimum budget of £3,676,517. Development assistance was delivered through four mechanisms: (i) long-term operational experts; (ii) short-term advisors, workshops, publications and training programmes; (iii) election observer missions; and (iv) assistance to establish small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The evaluation of the Action Plan was carried out in two stages during 2005 and 2006. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of the Secretariat's strategy for and support to post-conflict Sierra Leone, assess the sustainability of the results, to determine the comparative advantage of the Secretariat's response and to distil lessons.

The main evaluation findings were:

- i. The Secretariat successfully assisted the government of Sierra Leone in keeping government services running in areas where there were critical human resources shortages, namely in the judiciary through the provision of judges, legal advisors and prosecutors, and in the planning and conduct of the 2002 Presidential and Parliamentary elections and the 2004 local elections;
- ii. The Secretariat helped the government to prepare for reform through the preparation of three draft laws (the Companies Act, Customs Regulation and the Stock Market Regulations) and

contributed to reform by supporting diagnostic studies in Customs and Excise, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry;

iii. The Secretariat has considerably upgraded the skills base and capacity of the civil service through its training programmes, which were attended by 667 persons; and

iv. The Secretariat approved three major projects to support the development of 13 small and medium-scale enterprises. However, only two of the enterprises were operational as of December 2006 and had some prospects of sustainability.

Despite these uneven results, the majority of the Secretariat's assistance was high quality, and addressed priority needs as identified in the Government's National Recovery Strategy. The support was concentrated in those core administrative areas required to re-establish government authority and the rule of law. This included support to the police, the judiciary, the anti-corruption commission, the customs authority and the Ministry of Finance. The Secretariat also supported key gender and youth programmes through provision of technical expertise to ensure the nation's first Poverty Reduction Strategy was engendered and to help the newly created Ministry of Youth to develop its first National Policy for Youth. Where appropriate the Secretariat's initiatives were coordinated with other donors; one initiative involved joint funding.

The evaluation found that the Secretariat had several comparative advantages. Its political and diplomatic role in helping to bring about the end of the conflict was critical, and it was able to play a strategic role in providing high-quality support to strengthen the electoral process and the judicial system. More importantly, the Commonwealth Secretariat was one of the few donors to provide operational experts who functioned in line-staff positions, enabling the government to keep its public sector services functioning.

To help the stalled economy, the Secretariat changed one of its long-established policies and provided equipment to Sierra Leone in conjunction with technical advisors and training, with the plan to establish 13 SMEs (which comprised six oil palm mills, six pilot SMEs processing peppers, cashew nuts and cassava and wood products/furniture making, and a small-scale refined salt facility). In December 2006, only two of these businesses were successful – the wood processing plant and the cashew processing plant.

While there are a variety of reasons for the failures, which were particular to each business, common to all was that: the project plans did not include a business plan showing the financial costs associated with setting up and running the business, including the sources of capital; the business owners were inappropriately identified as 'the community' rather than as an individual or a firm; the machinery purchased was inappropriate to Sierra Leonean realities at the end of the war; the training provided was inadequate; and the projects lacked ongoing business coaching and monitoring to help the new business owners achieve success.

The post-conflict period in Sierra Leone's transition from civil war to sustainable development is now over. The next plan can be improved significantly, as the lessons learned have been incorporated into the Secretariat's development practice.

The four major recommendations of the evaluation are:

i. The Secretariat is to review the lessons from the implementation of the Action Plan in support of post-conflict recovery in Sierra Leone and make appropriate changes to its

- framework and modalities for designing development programmes and its implementation practices.
- ii. The Secretariat should continue the country plan for Sierra Leone for the next two to three years to then reassess its usefulness in order to inform a decision on the continuation of a country plan as a framework for its programme to Sierra Leone.
  - iii. The Secretariat should report its direct assistance to Sierra Leone to the country's Development Assistance Cooperation Office (DACO), and consider working with the office to develop a system to capture information on all technical assistance co-operation from all donors.
  - iv. The Secretariat Special Advisory Services Division (SASD) should consult the Government of Sierra Leone's Ministry of Development and Economic Planning (MODEP) to develop a workout plan for the projects that have unacceptable outcomes. The aim of the workout should be to provide the necessary business services to these communities in a financially sustainable manner. Possible suggestions as to how this might be done are provided in this report and in its technical annexes.

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background to the development of the Commonwealth Action Plan**

In 1995, an eight-member Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) was established to deal with serious and persistent violation of Commonwealth principles. At its first meeting Sierra Leone was placed on the agenda as one of three Commonwealth countries that remained under military rule. National elections were held in March 1996 and saw the peaceful transition of power to Sierra Leone's first democratically elected government in nearly 30 years. However, on 27 May 1997 the new government, which had been under President Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, was overturned in a coup led by the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF).

Immediately following the coup, the Commonwealth Secretary-General strongly condemned the illegal actions calling for the isolation of the military junta. In July 1997, CMAG suspended the participation of the junta in the Councils of the Commonwealth<sup>1</sup>.

By March 1998, less than a year after the take over, the deposed Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) had been restored to power. A CMAG ministerial mission<sup>2</sup> to Sierra Leone at the end of March 1998 recommended that Sierra Leone's suspension be lifted as the country was no longer in violation of the Harare Declaration. At its meeting on 29-30 April 1999, CMAG requested the Secretary-General to continue his good offices role as Sierra Leone was considered a fragile state vulnerable to the threat of recurring insecurity. As part of this continuing role, the Secretary-General was requested to prepare a Commonwealth Action Plan in support of the GoSL. This was to become the basis for Commonwealth Secretariat's assistance to Sierra Leone in the post-conflict recovery period.

### **1.2 Brief programme description**

CMAG approved the Commonwealth Action Plan in 1999 to support initiatives undertaken by the Government of Sierra Leone, the United Nations and regional organisations for the restoration of peace and security in that country. The plan envisioned activities in three areas: (i) diplomatic and political initiatives; (ii) support to democratic processes and institutions; and (iii) support for reconstruction of the public sector and public services. A Secretariat taskforce, comprising representatives from a number of divisions, provided oversight and policy co-ordination to the Plan, which was under the direction of the Deputy Secretary-General (for development).

From 1999-2005, the Action Plan supported 40 projects requested by nine of the GoSL's 24

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<sup>1</sup> Sierra Leone was not suspended from membership in the Commonwealth as such, only from participation in intergovernmental meetings. The Sierra Leone flag was permitted to fly on official Commonwealth occasions and the Sierra Leone nameplate remained at the conference table; however, the seat was vacant unless occupied by a duly accredited representative of the GoSL President. Secretariat programmes that were already in place could continue, but no new assignments were considered (Secretariat memorandum, 15 July 1999).

<sup>2</sup> The five-member mission included the Foreign Ministers from Zimbabwe and Ghana, a Special Envoy of the Malaysian Prime Minister, the Minister of State for Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Canada's Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa.

Ministries (38 per cent), which included Finance, Justice, Education, Trade and Industry, Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security, Development and Economic Planning, Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, Youth and Sport and Parliamentary and Political Affairs. It also supported projects with four independent agencies: the Inspector General of Police, the National Economic Commission of Sierra Leone, the Central Bank and the University of Sierra Leone. In addition, the Action Plan supported the participation of 676 Sierra Leoneans in national, regional and Pan Commonwealth training courses or workshops.

The estimated cost of the Action Plan was a minimum of £3.676 million from FY1999-2005<sup>3</sup>. Development assistance was delivered through four mechanisms: (i) long-term operational expert; (ii) short term advisors, workshops, publications and training programmes; (iii) election observer missions; (iv) and projects of assistance to the private sector, to both commercial and community-based organisations (NGOs). A list of the projects is provided in Annex 1.

### **1.3 Background to the evaluation**

Approved as part of the Secretariat's Evaluation Programme for 2004/05, this review was requested by the two Divisions that are the main players in the Sierra Leone post-conflict assistance programme: the Special Advisory Services Division (SASD), which implemented projects in natural resources and in the enterprise development sector; and the Government and Institutional Development Division (GIDD), whose focus was in the area of capacity building and institutional strengthening. The primary clients of the evaluation report are therefore the Commonwealth Secretariat's Policy Planning Committee, the Secretariat's Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division (SPED), SASD and GIDD.

### **1.4 Evaluation objectives**

The aims of the evaluation are to:

- Assess the effectiveness of the Secretariat's programme of support to post-conflict Sierra Leone, particularly the effectiveness of Secretariat's internal and external collaboration in the delivery of assistance;
- Assess how well the post-conflict technical assistance needs of Sierra Leone were met by the Secretariat;
- Assess the results and sustainability of the activities;
- Determine the comparative advantage of the Secretariat in responding to post-conflict situations and determine how the Secretariat's strategy for assistance in a post-conflict situation compared with that of other donors such as the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UK's Department for International Development (DfID) and the European Union; and
- Distil lessons that may be useful for future programming decision-making.

In relation to the SASD projects, the evaluation was also asked to examine the design quality and

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<sup>3</sup> The evaluation consulted several different financial records for the period, which provided differing amounts for annual expenditure and which often did not correspond to Secretariat project system records (PIMS). The amounts reported here represent 'best estimates under the circumstances' and would need to be confirmed through more detailed financial investigation of Secretariat's records to confirm accuracy.

the implementation effectiveness and to assess the likelihood of a sustainable impact in terms of the overall programme objectives.

### **1.5. Evaluation methodology**

The evaluation study covers work undertaken by the Secretariat in Sierra Leone from the period of 1999 to 2005. The evaluation was undertaken in two phases. Phase 1 involved a preliminary desk study undertaken by a research assistant in early 2005, which involved staff interviews in London and a review of the available programme documentation (from 27 of the 40 projects that comprised the Action plan – 68 per cent). In May 2005, the fieldwork investigations of the Strategic Gap-filling Evaluation team undertook a review of 14 GIDD projects implemented in Sierra Leone (36 per cent of the total plan's activities). This study contributed to the overall evaluation, and the reports from this and the desk study were made available to the consultants for inclusion in the second phase of the evaluation.

Phase 2 of the evaluation included a review of the Phase 1 documentation and information gathering and analysis during a field assessment in Sierra Leone from 11-24 December 2006. The field visit focused specifically on the projects supported by SASD in the enterprise development sector, the projects supported by the Political Affairs Division (PAD) and GIDD to strengthen the electoral process and the projects supported by GIDD, the Social Transformation Programmes Division (STPD) and the Youth Affairs Division (YAD) in the social sector, which were particularly aimed at young people.

The Phase 2 evaluation fieldwork was conducted almost 18 months after the Action Plan had officially ended. Many of the Secretariat officers who had worked on the projects were no longer available for interview (including the SASD project officer), and many of the project files were incomplete or not available. This made it difficult to reconstruct what happened over the Plan's lifetime. As a result, a large amount of the information presented in this report has had to be generated through other evaluators and researchers under different terms of references (TOR) and scopes of work, for which the current evaluation team is not responsible.

The evaluation comprises a main report and a technical annex, which includes summaries of the 40 projects with material combined from Phase 1 and from the Phase 2 fieldwork and research, further supported by information from other related reports sourced from the internet.

The evaluation was conducted by Ms. Isla Paterson (Ottawa, Canada) and Mr. Sorie Dumbuya (Freetown, Sierra Leone).

## 2. Action Plan Context

This section discusses the political context of the Action Plan and issues related to the design and implementation of post-conflict plans.

### 2.1 The post-conflict situation in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone became an independent country on 27 April 1961 and declared a Republic ten years later in April 1971. Independence was achieved with hopes for rapid development based on the country's abundant natural resources, which include a wide variety of mineral, agricultural, forestry and marine wealth. Unfortunately, these hopes were quickly dashed by the end of the first decade. From the mid-1960s the country suffered from dramatic economic decline and political instability and experienced five military coups and a brutal armed conflict, which lasted for just over 10 years from March 1991 until January 2002.

Compared to other conflict-affected developing countries, in which instability is caused by ethnic and religious rivalry, Sierra Leone's source of instability was primarily the result of poor governance, widespread corruption, the marginalisation of rural communities and inefficient delivery of public services. These problems were compounded by the collapse of local government administration shortly after independence, and by the worsening terms of trade for the country's limited export commodities.

In the late 1980s, the government introduced a series of macroeconomic and structural reforms aimed at stabilising the economy and restoring growth. However, the civil war that ensued derailed this programme and between 1990 and 2000 the country's growth rate plunged negatively downward each year. As the economy declined, poverty increased and by 2000 per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) stood at just US\$142.

Sierra Leone has a population of 5.4 million (as of 2005), with 70 per cent living below the national poverty line, which is defined as 2,111 leone (SLL) per day (or US\$0.75/day).<sup>4</sup> Poverty is most pervasive and deepest in rural areas, where the estimated number of persons below the poverty line was 79 per cent in 2005 compared to 15 per cent in Freetown and 70 per cent in other urban areas. Since UNDP began its Human Development Reports in 1996, Sierra Leone has ranked among the least developed countries; since 2002 it has ranked at the bottom of the index (177<sup>th</sup> position). The poverty situation has been worsened by the rising incidence of HIV/AIDS, typhoid, malaria and communicable diseases including tuberculosis.

The social and economic impact of the ten-year civil conflict was devastating. The brutal attacks by the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) that began in March 1991 left a trail of human tragedy. An estimated 20,000-50,000 people were killed and thousands more injured or maimed. Over 2 million were displaced (500,000 fled to neighbouring countries). There was a mass exodus of skilled professionals to Freetown or out of the country altogether, leaving most of the country without a skilled workforce. The damage extended to significant loss of public and private property and the abduction of women and children for sex, labour and combat. Most of

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<sup>4</sup> Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2005: 2003/04 Household Surveys, p.11.

the country's social, economic and physical infrastructure was destroyed. Local community social and productive infrastructure such as markets, stores, rice mills and community service buildings were completely vandalised. At the height of the civil conflict there was almost a complete breakdown of civil and political authority in the country, which gave rise to serious human rights abuses. Mining and agriculture activities, the lifeline of the country, were essentially brought to a halt. Farms were invaded and overrun or abandoned altogether, while the livestock population was almost entirely wiped out.

National elections in March 1996 saw the peaceful transition of power to Sierra Leone's first democratically elected government in nearly 30 years. The new President, Dr. Kabbah, quickly commenced talks with the rebels, which resulted in the first peace agreement – signed in Abidjan on 30 November 1996. However, this agreement and the peace process collapsed in May 1997, and peace was not restored until 7 July 1999, when the second peace agreement was signed in Lomé, Togo. These agreements ushered in the arrival of the West African Peace Keeping Force (ECOMOG) and later the UN peacekeeping mission (UNAMSIL).

The final phase of disarmament and demobilisation of combatants got underway from May 2001 to January 2002, with the support of the multi-donor funded Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programme. These events paved the way for peaceful national elections (both legislative and presidential) in May 2002, in which the RUF participated as a political party, and there was gradual restoration of civil authority throughout the country.

A Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was set up as a mechanism to help heal war-related social divisions and wounds. The commission successfully concluded its work in June 2004, after two years of hearings. A UN-sponsored Special Court was established in 2003 for prosecuting those that bore the greatest responsibility for the war damage. In 2004, the UN Security Council commenced a gradual withdrawal of UNAMSIL, which was completed by December 2005. This was succeeded by a new mission – the United Nations Integrated Office for Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) – which was established by the Security Council to help consolidate peace in the country.

The urgent need for Sierra Leone's post-conflict economic, social and political rebuilding stems primarily from the devastating civil war (1991-2002) and decades of economic mismanagement, widespread corruption, inefficient state control over economic activity, and lack of investment in critical infrastructure, all of which have severely constrained the government's ability to sustain current reform. The challenge for the citizens, the government and the country's donors in 1999 was to restore national security, re-launch the economy and undertake necessary governance reforms, while at the same time providing social services to citizens with an emphasis on the poorest.

## **2.2 Issues in post-conflict development aid delivery**

It is the responsibility of the Sierra Leonean leadership and its people to find a lasting exit from civil war, decades of poverty, corruption and government mismanagement. International donor assistance can affect this outcome in both positive and negative ways, but by itself cannot end the current state of fragility. The long-term vision of international assistance to governments is to help national reformers build effective, legitimate and resilient state institutions capable of delivering

core state functions – that is, territorial control, safety and security, the management of public resources, delivery of basic services, and the ability to protect and support the way people sustain themselves economically with attention to the poorest. In the post-conflict situation, the partnership between the GoSL and its donors was crucial in supporting the fragile peace process. Ideally, this partnership will help to create conditions for political stability, security, justice and social equity.

*Why is post-conflict aid delivery different to usual development programming?*

Post-conflict development assistance has a unique set of challenges. It has come to be recognised as a specialised phase of development between the provision of humanitarian assistance during conflict and the delivery of longer-term development assistance. This latter phase is usually evidenced by the development of a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and generally lasts from two to three years, but can be longer, guided by medium-term (two to five years) and long-term (five to ten years) perspectives.

Post-conflict periods are characterised by the simultaneous presence of humanitarian and recovery needs. In this period efforts are generally orientated towards achieving political stability, security and respect for human rights, reduction of social exclusion and social healing, and giving people access to basic services especially in the conflict areas<sup>5</sup>. Post-conflict assessments for the donor community are typically carried out by the World Bank and UN agencies, with the plans presented to an international donor conference to raise funds for the recovery. These plans typically:

- Provide support to the objectives and sequences of priorities established in the peace accords;
- Provide the population with an early peace dividend;
- Address the humanitarian issues generated by the conflict itself, such as the needs of refugees and displaced persons, the demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants including women and child soldiers, with attention to those wounded and widowed;
- Address the reconstruction of the physical infrastructure damaged by the conflict;
- Address the minimal state<sup>6</sup> requirements, so that it can quickly assume its legitimate role, beginning with:
  - the institutions related to core functions – state legitimacy (elections), security (the army and the police) and public financial management (the Central Bank, The Ministry of Finance, the National Revenue Authorities, the Customs Authority);
  - the functioning of Parliament; and
  - improving the capacities of its core service functions – education, health, judiciary, transportation and an enabling environment for economic development; and
- Prepare for medium- and long-term government machinery reform, modernisation and development to support a reactivated economy.

Post-recovery plans also present an overview of financial requirements and proposed delivery

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<sup>5</sup> World Bank (2004) *Practical Guide to Multilateral Needs Assessments in Post Conflict Countries*, Paper No.15, p.2.

<sup>6</sup> The state is defined as the executive branch of the central and local government, as well as the legislative and judiciary arms of government.

mechanisms that donors might use. Overall, international development assistance aims to consolidate peace on the premise that without peace there can be no development. The World Bank's research findings are that post-conflict countries face a 45 per cent chance of reverting to conflict during the first five years after the onset of peace unless there are visible signs that the issues that led to the conflict are being addressed<sup>7</sup>.

One of the lessons from experience implementing post-conflict plans is that there is a need for more detailed information about their implementation and delivery than is usually seen in peacetime plans; clear institutional responsibilities must also be assigned, which need to be monitored and supervised more closely because of the collapse of many state functions. This requires higher budget allocation than usual for supervision and monitoring, as well as dedicated personnel<sup>8</sup>.

Typically, a post-conflict plan places more emphasis on social concerns rather than on macroeconomic issues<sup>9</sup>, as the first priority is to address the massive human and social dislocation, including disarmament and rehabilitation of ex-combatants. The large volume of humanitarian aid provided outside the government budget framework, through NGOs and multilateral institutions, is mainly because of the lack of state capacity in post-conflict situations.

Commonly, post-conflict plans are not aligned with poverty reduction programmes<sup>10</sup> or with achieving the millennium development goals (MDGs). Also, such plans need to ensure that the strategies and initiatives selected do not harm the already fragile situation and must guard against elite capture of funds or reinforcing a status quo that may have contributed to the conflict in the first place. Moreover, international assistance that is provided to state institutions must guard against merely re-creating existing institutions (that is, business as usual). Aid programmes need to focus on laying the foundations for fundamental reform of functions, management and administrative systems, recognising that such reforms have to take place within a government-wide system of budgeting, reporting and civil service norms and standards, which would not normally be addressed in the post-conflict plan period. Hence, a key lesson is the need for caution – as major reforms planned before the system-wide government reforms have started, or which do not take into account the reform changes, are likely to have a high degree of failure or will be at best temporary.

When dealing with the communities, the participatory process underlying the development of these plans is very different from the process during peacetime, as communities have little experience with the participatory process after years of violence and mistrust.

The gender dimension of the conflict also requires attention. The challenge is to better understand the role that gender played before the conflict, build on any positive changes in social structure and norms brought about during the conflict, and provide support to gender equality both during reconstruction and in the longer-term development processes. Research has indicated that demobilisation programmes often overlook women and girls. In Sierra Leone, an estimated

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<sup>7</sup> World Bank (2006) *The Role of the World Bank in Conflict and Development*, p.8.

<sup>8</sup> World Bank (2006) *The Role of the World Bank in Conflict and Development* p.14.

<sup>9</sup> Macroeconomic issues are still included, but are not among the first priorities.

<sup>10</sup> That is, it does not have an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy (IPRS) or a PRS.

30 per cent of the ex-combatants were women and girls, suggesting a primary focus had to be on this group if social stability and gender equality was to be achieved.

The context of post-conflict recovery in the broader development time frame is outlined in table 1.

**Table 1: Post-conflict recovery context**

Element & Phase	Post-conflict	Transformation & institution building	Consolidation
Time period	12 months	12-36 months (1-3 years)	36-120 months (3-10 years)
Absorptive capacity	Low	Rising	High
Economic growth	Low	Low	High
Indicative priorities	Security, political framework, macro-economic framework, support to national capacities, consolidation of a small civil service, restoration of essential infrastructure, restoration of essential services, meeting humanitarian needs, return of refugees/internally displaced persons (IDPs), dialogue and trust between former conflicting parties	Political reform, economic reform, judicial reform/rule of law, institutional capacity building, security sector reform, disarmament, mobilisation and reintegration, restoration of important infrastructure, restoration of productive capacities, extension of essential services, social safety nets, food security, continued return of refugees/IDPs, reconciliation process & social healing	Continuing and deepening of the reform process, institutional capacity building, extension of infrastructure & services, reconciliation & social healing, inclusive policies

Post-conflict plans are usually concluded at the time an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy or a Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan has been approved. In Sierra Leone, the IPRS and the PRSP were approved in June 2001 and March 2005 respectively.

*What are the usual aid practices during post-conflict periods?*

Assistance during the post-conflict period is typically high profile, both in terms of the number of donors and the volume of funding, as the country is at the centre of international attention during the conflict and immediately afterwards when the peace accords are signed. Research findings on the role of aid to post-conflict countries suggests that: (i) aid can be effective and can augment post-conflict reconciliation and initiate growth; (ii) the level of assistance should be approximately double that provided prior to the conflict (in real terms) to meet the costs of physical infrastructure costs and humanitarian assistance; and (iii) the pattern of disbursements

generally rises gradually during the first four or five years, but returns to usual levels by the end of the first post-conflict decade. Most of the increase in aid is delivered off-budget through NGOs, multilateral institutions and Project Implementation Units because of the lack of government capacity for both management and financial accountability and reporting. After five or six years, aid disbursements usually return to post-conflict levels *unless* there is a marked improvement in public sector financial management, civil service reform, governmental machinery reform and policy reform related to poverty reduction targets. Slow but steady improvements in government performance and poverty reduction outcomes usually result in annual increases in long-term aid commitments. Lack of reform shows the reverse trend.

There are two important milestones in post-conflict programming: reforming the security sector so it can take over from the international security forces; and overhaul of the public financial management system. Reforms in these areas are usually led by a small change management team of professional, long-term experts (expatriates and nationals) located within ministries who oversee systemic change and gradually hand over the new systems and responsibilities to appropriately trained staff.

Capacity building is carried out on two levels:

- A system-wide approach – for example, adoption of government-wide budgeting and expenditure reporting systems, structural reforms of government machinery (e.g. reducing the number of ministries, privatising state enterprises and streamlining state functions), and civil service reform to counter patronage and corruption (e.g. payroll reform, transparent hiring practices and the introduction of performance assessments); and
- Internal ministry reform to create a lean, efficient, effective and service-orientated capability and to eliminate waste and fraud.

The system-wide reforms require large technical assistance teams and budgets and a comprehensive plan. Reforms within each individual ministry can be addressed with a small amount of technical assistance, using internal cost savings, provided there is adequate political and bureaucratic leadership. Except for core state functions, governmental reforms are generally not included in post-conflict plans.

In the absence of public services immediately after a conflict, support to communities is often provided through social development funds or NGO programmes.

### **2.3 Principles for post-conflict interventions**

In 2002, the World Bank funded seminal research into aid and post-conflict countries by Paul Collier and Anne Hoeffler<sup>11</sup>. They concluded that aid to post-conflict countries was an important exception to the generally accepted rule that aid should be lower in countries with poor policies, and demonstrated that doubling aid would more likely help prevent countries from falling back into conflict. Although civil wars have become more frequent in the past 40 years (349 instances of civil war in 62 developing countries from 1965 to 2005), post-conflict programmes still represent a minority of development experience and are no longer generally studied as isolated

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<sup>11</sup> Collier, P. and A. Hoeffler (2002) *Aid, Policy and Growth in Post Conflict Countries*. Policy Research Working Paper 2902. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

development phenomena. Rather, attention is now focused on ‘fragile states’, defined as ‘states that cannot or will not deliver core state functions for the majority of their people, especially to the poor’. The reasons for fragility are many, but generally include armed conflict, state collapse, partial territorial control, political instability, dysfunctional governance structures, repressive or isolationist governments or states controlled by elites with little commitment to poverty reduction<sup>12</sup>. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) has developed 10 principles for international engagement with fragile states<sup>13</sup>. These are:

- i. **Take context as the starting point.** Some political analysis is needed to adapt international responses to the country and regional context. International actors should sequence their aid instruments according to context and avoid blueprint approaches.
- ii. **Do no harm.** International interventions can inadvertently create societal divisions and worsen corruption and abuse, if they are not based on strong analyses of the issues surrounding the conflict and governance systems, and are designed with appropriate safeguards.
- iii. **Focus on state building as the central objective.** International engagement must be sustained and focus on building the relationship between state and society through engagement in two main areas. First, supporting legitimacy and accountability of the states by addressing issues of democratic governance, human rights, civil society engagement and peace building. Second, strengthening the capacity of the state to fulfil its core functions, including ensuring security and justice, mobilising revenue, establish an enabling environment for basic service delivery and achieving strong economic performance.
- iv. **Prioritise prevention.** International actors must be prepared to take rapid action where the risk of conflict in instability is highest. Greater emphasis on prevention means looking beyond quick fix solutions to address the root causes of state fragility, strengthening indigenous capacity – especially of women – and considering political measures to help avert crisis.
- v. **Recognise the links between political, security and development objectives.** These three objectives are interdependent. While there may be tensions and trade off among these in the short run, international support needs to focus on security and peace building in the short term to lay foundations for progress to address the millennium development goals in the long term.
- vi. **Promote non-discrimination as the basis for inclusive and stable society.** Real or perceived discrimination is associated with fragility and conflict and can lead to service delivery failures. Measures to promote the voice and participation of women, youth, minorities and other excluded groups should be included in state building and service delivery strategies from the outset.
- vii. **Align with local priorities.** When governments demonstrate political will to foster development but lack capacity, international actors should seek to align assistance behind government strategies, and include plans to build systemic capacity. Where capacity is there but limited, alternative aid instruments can be used to facilitate responsibility for execution between national and international players.
- viii. **Agree on practical co-ordination mechanisms between international actors.** Where

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<sup>12</sup> DfID (2002) *Fragile States: Defining Difficult Environments for Poverty Reduction*. Working Paper.

<sup>13</sup> OECD-DAC (2007) *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States & Situations*.

possible, it is important to work together on upstream analysis, joint assessments, shared strategies and co-ordination of political engagement. Practical initiatives can take the form of joint donor offices, an agreed division of labour among donors, delegated co-operation arrangements, multi-donor trust funds, pooled technical co-operation and common reporting and financial requirements.

- ix. **Act fast but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance.** Assistance to fragile states must be flexible enough to take advantage of windows of opportunity and respond to changing conditions on the ground. At the same time, given low capacity, international engagement may need to be of longer duration – of at least 10 years. Destabilisation can flow from inconsistency in engagement.
- x. **Avoid pockets of exclusion.** International actors need to address the problem of ‘aid orphans’ – states where there are no significant political barriers to engagement, but few international actors are engaged. This also applies to neglected geographic regions within the country, as well as neglected sectors and groups within society. When international actors make resource allocation decisions about the sectoral or regional focus for their assistance, they must be alert to creating unintentional exclusionary effects.

### 3. The Commonwealth Action Plan for Sierra Leone: 1999-2005

Given the preceding overview of strategic and developmental issues relevant to a post-conflict scenario, this section describes the Secretariat's Action Plan for Sierra Leone, discusses its development and implementation, and compares planned activities to the approved Framework.

#### 3.1 Development of the Framework

The Deputy Secretary-General prepared the first draft of the Framework for a Commonwealth Action Plan and circulated it to Secretariat officials for comments<sup>14</sup>. The second draft incorporating internal comments was presented to a 2 July 1999 meeting of CMAG officials, who suggested substantial changes<sup>15</sup>. The third draft of 16 July 1999 was circulated to CMAG ministers and the Government of Sierra Leone (High Commission) with a request for comments within one week, by the close of business on 23 July. Comments were received from two governments, New Zealand and the UK (Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)), and were incorporated into the fourth draft. This was then submitted as documentation for the third meeting of the International Contact Group<sup>16</sup> convened by the UK government and held on 28 July 1999. Following this meeting, the Framework was prepared in its final version, dated 30 July 1999, and on August 3 1999 was sent to members of the Commonwealth (via their High Commission offices in London<sup>17</sup>).

#### 3.2 Objectives and areas of focus

The Commonwealth Framework for an Action Plan was based on four principles:

- i. Recognition of the United Nations Security Council as the primary international body in conflict resolution and the valuable role being played by the Organization for Africa Unity (OAU) and ECOWAS, amongst others, towards the resolution of the crisis in Sierra Leone;
- ii. The framework for action by the international community provided by the July 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement;
- iii. Concentration on those areas where the Commonwealth had a specific comparative

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<sup>14</sup> The first draft was not found in the files, only referred to.

<sup>15</sup> The major changes between the second and third drafts were the addition of five paragraphs in the preamble linking CMAG to the 1995 Millbrook Commonwealth Action Plan arising from the 1991 Harare Commonwealth Declaration. In this preamble, the CMAG decision in December 1995 to place Sierra Leone on its agenda as one of the three remaining military regimes in the Commonwealth was also noted (para 1-4 & 6). Also added were paragraphs referring to the Lomé Peace Accord signed on 7 July 1999 (para 8) and paragraphs identifying the role of the ECOWAS foreign ministers in seeking peace (para 11). Under possible technical support, assistance to political parties was also added (para 14).

<sup>16</sup> The International Contact Group on Sierra Leone was first convened by the UK Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office in November 1998. Its purpose was to build up support for Sierra Leone's efforts to restore peace, democracy and human rights, to encourage further assistance to ECOMOG and to encourage contributions to the UN Trust Fund for Sierra Leone. Its membership included the five permanent members of the Security Council plus donors with those attending the first meeting being representatives of the governments of Belgium, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Sierra Leone, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the USA, the Commonwealth, ECOWAS, the European Commission, the UN and the World Bank. Essentially, the Contact Group has been replaced by the Consultative Group for Sierra Leone, which held its first meeting in November 2002.

<sup>17</sup> There were no differences in the text of the 16 July version of the plan and the final version of 30 July.

- advantage through previous experience, or where it had a fund of particular expertise or responsiveness; and
- iv. Liaison and the potential for collaboration with other agencies to optimise the use of human and financial resources and to effect efficient delivery.

The five-page Action Plan, with 24 paragraphs, envisioned activities in three areas: (i) diplomatic and political initiatives; (ii) support to democratic processes and institutions; and (iii) support for reconstruction of the public sector and public services.

Under the **diplomatic and political initiatives** three actors were identified: the Secretariat, regional Commonwealth members and CMAG. The Secretariat committed the continued engagement of the Secretary-General in the International Contact Group, and the continuation of Dr. Moses Anafu as the Commonwealth Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Sierra Leone<sup>18</sup>. The regional Commonwealth members pledged support for the role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Committee of Seven Foreign Ministers in support of peace, as well as wider Commonwealth support. CMAG was encouraged to remain engaged in Sierra Leone.

Under **support to democratic processes and institutions** two initiatives were proposed: (i) support to the new elections which, according to the Lomé agreement, were expected to be held before April 2001; and (ii) assistance to all political parties in collaboration with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Electoral support included assistance to the election commission, the provision of expertise in election-related legislation and technical advice on the preparation of the elections<sup>19</sup>. The plan indicated that there would be positive consideration of any request for Commonwealth observers of the electoral process.

Under **support for the reconstruction of the public sector and public services** three initiatives were proposed: (i) reactivation of the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force for deployment to Sierra Leone as soon as possible<sup>20</sup>; (ii) a workshop for ministers and permanent secretaries to support the reconfigured political directorate incorporating RUF members and focusing on the issue of public sector delivery in the context of post-conflict reconstruction; and (iii) a municipal regeneration task force which comprised a team of multi-disciplinary Commonwealth experts to nine municipalities<sup>21</sup> to undertake audits and develop profiles for local regeneration. The teams were to comprise experts in five areas: public administration of local government, civil engineering, public health, housing and food supply systems.

The Secretariat proposed that the next steps would be to hold consultations among Commonwealth members countries to establish their level of interest in the proposals, and to start forward planning, including the search and selection of experts, logistical and administrative

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<sup>18</sup> Dr. Anafu was a member of the international mediation talks between the GoSL and RUF held in Lomé from 24 May to 7 July 1999.

<sup>19</sup> The possibilities were assistance in boundary delimitation, voter registration, logistics, voter education, recruitment of election personnel, and political party and media liaison.

<sup>20</sup> The Action Plan also mentioned the commitment by DfID to fund the recruitment of an expatriate Commonwealth Inspector General of Police.

<sup>21</sup> These were: in the north: Kabala, Kambi, Makeni and Port Loko; in the east: Kailahun, Kenema and Koidu/Sefadu; and in the south: Bo, Bonthe and Pujehun.

arrangements (para 24).

### 3.3 The operational plan and its implementation

The Secretariat began to implement the Framework almost immediately, placing a technical advisor at the National Election Commission by March 2000. Two months later, due to events in the country and the capital, that advisor was evacuated. In April, 50 UN soldiers from Kenya came under attack in the east of the country and 500 newly arrived UNAMSIL soldiers from Zambia were ambushed and abducted near Makeni. Towards the end of May, the RUF rebels closed in on Freetown with the result that the UK sent 800 paratroopers to Freetown to evacuate British citizens and to secure the airport for the UN peacekeepers. Further implementation of the Secretariat's Plan of Action was placed on hold.

Three months later in August 2000 the Secretary-General sent a staff mission (Roy Rodriguez and Ade Adefuye) to assess the situation and confirm the needs identified in the July 1999 Framework. Restricted exclusively to Freetown, their six-day mission from 18-24 August 2000 ended one day before 11 British soldiers were captured by a renegade militia group called the West Side Boys. On 10 September 2000, British paratroopers freed the hostages, killed the gang members and captured their leader. In September 2000 the UN authorised an increase in troop strength to 13,000 (which later was expanded to nearly 23,000) providing Sierra Leone with the largest UN force ever deployed in the organisation's history. By early 2001, when sufficient troops were on the ground, the mission began to have some effect and the disarmament programme announced in May 2001 was accelerated, drawing officially to a close in January 2002 when the President announced the end of the war and the plan for Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

With the enhanced UN presence in country as of 2001, the Secretariat resumed its work on the Action Plan, revised by the Rodriguez/Adefuye mission, and fielded its first two technical assistance assignments – a special advisor to the National Election Commissioner in January 2002, followed by a legal advisor in March. During 2002, all Secretariat divisions made Sierra Leone a top priority.

The plan developed following the August 2000 Rodriguez/Adefuye visit served essentially as the Framework's operational plan. It included 20 project requests, all for public sector ministries of the government or its agencies based in Freetown, with the exception of six initiatives: the five projects put forward by the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning (MODEP) for the provinces, which were for private sector development, and the conduct of a population census. The 20 initiatives comprised:

- Six short-term training or work attachment projects (under one month);
- Five long-term technical assistance assignments, either as advisors or operational experts taking staff positions (one year or more);
- One short-term advisor (two months);
- Four requests for projects involving short-term training and machinery;
- One request for short-term training and a capital transfer for a credit fund; and
- Three requests for consultancies in which the output was a diagnostic report for decision-makers.

Table 2 summarises the operational plan activities proposed by the Secretariat as of August 2000 to respond to the CMAG approved Action Plan Framework.

**Table 2:  
Secretariat Action Plan activities: August 2000**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Requesting ministry</b>	<b>Type of assistance</b>
<b>SECURITY AND PEACE CONSOLIDATION</b>		
Commonwealth Police Development Task Force - additional police members	Inspector General of Police	Long-term operational experts/advisor
In-country training for community policing		Short-term training (1 month)
Structured work attachments with Botswana and South Africa police forces		Short-term training (2-3 weeks)
<b>SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES AND INSTITUTIONS</b> <i>Strengthen the institutional administrative capacity of the National Election Commission (NEC)</i>		
Special strategic & management Advisor to the Commission	National Election Commissioner	Long-term advisor
Legal advisor		Long-term staff position
Voter education advisor, IT advisor		Short-term advisors
Training for NEC commissioners		Short-term training (1-2 weeks)
<b><i>Reform of the legal and judicial process</i></b>		
Review of judicial system	Ministry of Justice	Institutional assessment by a short-term consultant
Provision of judges, magistrates and legal counsels for quick dispensation of justice		Long-term operational staff positions
Training and development of the magistracy		Short-term training
Nomination of judges to sit on the Special Court		Long-term operation staff positions
<b><i>Institutional strengthening of the House of Representatives</i></b>		
Training of Parliamentary committees to improve Parliamentary		Short-term training

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Requesting ministry</b>	<b>Type of assistance</b>
supervision of government activities		
<b>Post-conflict reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation</b>		
Development of low-cost building materials industry & a micro project for youth development in Freetown	Ministry of Development & Economic Planning	Short-term training & equipment
Development of SMEs		Short-term training & equipment
Development of Commonwealth youth credit initiative (in relation to disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes - DDR)		Short-term training & capital funds
Development of the construction aggregates industry for houses and roads		Short-term training & equipment
Advice on the development of a mortgage finance scheme		Feasibility study - short-term consultant
<b>CAPACITY BUILDING</b>		
Diplomatic practice & protocol procedures training	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Short-term training
Debt management	Ministry of Finance	Short-term training & software transfer
Conduct of a population census for PRSP	Ministry of Development & Economic Planning	Short-term advisors & local staff

### 3.4 The appropriateness of the operational plan to the approved Framework

The Framework's purpose was to provide guiding principles to Secretariat staff to develop an operational plan. In most cases, the Framework served its purpose as 14 of the 20 proposed initiatives (70 per cent) fell within the Framework's criteria.

There were notable exceptions, however. The July 1999 Framework included diplomatic and political initiatives as the first component, yet Secretariat activities under this component were absent from the August 2000 operational plan, even though a case could be made for continued activity by the Secretary-General's good offices to bring about lasting peace in the Mano River area<sup>22</sup>. A case could also be made for continuing relations with the other moral guarantors of the Lomé Peace Agreement, namely the Republic of Togo, the UN, the Organization of American States (OAS) and ECOWAS, to ensure the agreement was respected. Yet the operational plan contained no diplomatic or political initiatives.

Moreover, within the Framework's second component – support to democratic processes and institutions – assistance to political parties had been planned through the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). Although this was specifically added by the CMAG ministers, it was apparently dropped without further explanation. An examination of the CPA website suggests it has not been involved in Sierra Leone. This was unfortunate, as the efficient and effective functioning of the 13 political parties who contested the elections was an essential part of the democratic process, yet they received little technical support or training prior to or after the elections. This oversight by donors, including the Secretariat, was noted by the Commonwealth legal advisor to the NEC in nearly every one of his five bi-annual progress reports.

Under the Framework's third component – support for the reconstruction of the public sector and public services – the Secretariat's operational plan dropped previously proposed activities for nine municipalities and a workshop for ministers and permanent secretaries on improving public services, again without explanation. Instead, new areas were added that were outside the CMAG's approved Framework. These related to economic development by the private sector in the provinces and comprised a low-cost building materials project, support to SMEs, the development of a mortgage financing scheme and a youth credit initiative. The operational plan had no rationale or explanation as to why support to private sector activities, an area where the Secretariat has little programming expertise, was added. Furthermore, these additions were made without first-hand information on the situations in the provinces, as no visit could be made that would have enabled a more accurate assessment of the appropriateness of these additions.

When the 2000 operational plan was circulated among the Secretariat's divisions for comment, there was no inquiry into the reasons for the differences between the Framework and the operational plan<sup>23</sup>. Neither was there any inquiry into why the Secretariat was venturing into support to the private sector in the provinces, where the essential infrastructure for private sector development (roads, electricity, water service and markets) had been destroyed. Nor did anyone ask the fundamental question as to why the Secretariat was proposing to support the private sector when

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<sup>22</sup> The Mano River originates in the Guinea highlands and forms the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia. Parts of the boundary between Liberia and Sierra Leone remain under dispute even today. The Mano River Association includes political representatives from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

<sup>23</sup> Sierra Leone Task Force meeting minutes of 12 September 2000.

its expertise and comparative advantage was in support to the public sector and helping to create an enabling environment for the private sector. It is most likely that few questions were asked because every division essentially works only on its area of the portfolio, specifically focusing on its own area of technical expertise; this is compounded by the tendency not to challenge the work of another division or to question its professional decisions.

## 4. Evaluation Findings

### 4.1 Assessment of the Action Plan's effectiveness

The evaluation was asked to assess the effectiveness of the Commonwealth Secretariat's strategy and its support to post-conflict Sierra Leone. For the purposes of this evaluation, 'effectiveness' is defined as 'the extent to which the various activities supported by the Secretariat from 1999-2005 produced the expected outputs and therefore the intended objectives as set out in the 1999 Framework and the 2001 Operational Plan'.

#### *4.1.1 The Action Plan's goal and purpose*

Neither the Framework for the Action Plan nor its Operational Plan had a clearly stated goal and purpose. The Framework had four guiding principles and three areas of activities, but no clear goal and purpose statement. Neither was there a clear picture of what the plan results would look like if it was successfully implemented – it was not designed using logical framework analysis<sup>24</sup>. This being so, this evaluation has selected two global goals as the intent of the Secretariat's plan. These were to:

- i. Support the implementation of the Lomé Peace Accord; and
- ii. Restore the capacity of the Government and communities to rebuild and recover from the crisis and prevent relapses.

#### *4.1.2 Assessment of the Secretariat's contribution to the implementation of the Lomé Peace Accord*

##### *Diplomatic and political contribution*

The 33-page Lomé Peace Accord signed on 9 July 1999 is divided into eight chapters, which deal with:

- i. The cessation of hostilities;
- ii. Governance, including transformation of RUF into a political party and its sharing in the government;
- iii. Pardon and amnesty, review of the constitution and national elections;
- iv. Post-conflict military and security issues related to ECOMOG and UNAMSIL;
- v. Humanitarian, human rights and social and economic issues, covering the release of prisoners, the return of refugees and displaced persons, the setting up of the human rights commission, attention to child combatants and humanitarian relief;
- vi. The timetable for the implementation of the accord;
- vii. Moral guarantors and international support; and
- viii. Official registration and publication of the signed accord.

In its Framework for the Action Plan, the Commonwealth identified itself as a moral guarantor of the Lomé Accord (para 9), although the agreement does not list the Commonwealth as a guarantor per se. The Political Affairs Division's (PAD) special advisor, Dr. Moses Anafu, who was nominated as the Commonwealth Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Sierra Leone, signed the agreement as 'a representative of the Commonwealth of Nations', not of the Commonwealth Secretariat per se. The

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<sup>24</sup> The logical framework is a tool for the conceptualisation, design, execution and evaluation of plans and projects. Its purpose is to give structure to the process of planning.

other listed guarantors are the Republic of Togo, the UN, OAU and ECOWAS (para 9).

This situation may be because of the controversial nature of the agreement. The Lomé Accord announced the cessation of all hostilities and granted amnesty to all parties involved in the war, and for all crimes committed during the war. To negotiate the accord Foday Sankoh, the leader of the RUF who had been in jail and condemned to hang for treason by the High Court of Sierra Leone, was released. The Accord made Sankoh Chairman of a Commission on Strategic Minerals, which was 'charged with the responsibility of securing and monitoring the legitimate exploitation of Sierra Leone's gold and diamonds, and other resources that were deemed to be of strategic importance for the national security', effectively giving him control over the country's diamond mines. The position also gave him the status of Vice President of Sierra Leone, thus making him answerable only to the President. In addition, the Lomé Accord gave Sankoh and all combatants and collaborators during the decade-long war an 'absolute and free pardon in respect of anything done by them in pursuit of their objectives, up to the time of the signing of the Lomé agreement'. The agreement scandalised Sierra Leoneans, as it did human rights proponents around the world.

The UN added a disclaimer to the article granting amnesty, but agreed with the Accord's other provisions. There did not appear to be any similar disclaimer issued by the Commonwealth. The GoSL signed the agreement because it was likely that without the amnesty the RUF would have refused to sign the agreement and would have continued fighting. The agreement was seen by many not as a peace agreement, but rather as a power sharing deal that involved buying off RUF leaders with amnesty and prime jobs.

This evaluation is unable to assess the effectiveness of the Secretariat's diplomatic and political contributions to the implementation of the Lomé Accord. The Secretariat staff who had been involved with Dr. Anafu were no longer working at the Secretariat, and documentation relating to the assignment was not available for review.

Given this, the authors of this report believe it would be important for PAD to identify the lessons learned from this experience and to have a documented protocol to be signed whenever persons are appointed in similar roles to prevent any misrepresentation or misunderstanding. The Accord did not specify what were the duties and obligations of a moral guarantor; hence it is difficult to determine whether or not the Commonwealth and the Secretariat acted appropriately in carrying out this role.

#### *Practical contributions to ensure the Accord's implementation*

Most of the Accord's provisions required actions beyond the Secretariat's expertise and budgetary resources. Despite this, the Secretariat had an active role in helping to carry out two provisions: (i) support to the elections and (ii) sponsoring a national reconciliation workshop.

##### (i) The 2002 Parliamentary and Presidential elections

In this area the Secretariat supported four key interventions. The first was the provision of a special advisor to the National Election Commission (NEC) to help with planning and preparations for the elections. The expert was the former Ghanaian Election Commissioner, who had ten years of practical experience. He worked with International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), which

was supported by donors to assist the NEC.

The second intervention was the recruitment of a legal advisor, who functioned as an NEC staff lawyer for two-and-a-half years. The legal advisor assisted the NEC to achieve two major results: the passing of the 2002 Electoral Law and the Code of Conduct for Political Parties. The legal advisor drafted the Electoral Law within the framework of the 1991 Constitution, basing it on the consolidation of existing election laws since 1967. This consolidation created one document containing all the rules concerning electoral process, a great improvement on the previous situation in which one had to consult 30 different documents for the required information. The revised law is simple in its format, easy to reference and will serve as a solid platform upon which future amendments can be based. This law is publicly available from the Government Bookstore and on the internet. The Code of Conduct for Political Parties was the first such document in the history of Sierra Leone elections. All three observer groups covering the elections commented on the excellence of this code and its importance in assisting the election process. The advisor also functioned as the NEC's legal officer.

The third initiative was support to experts, who trained 125 Sierra Leoneans as trainers and who in turn trained 2,200 Sierra Leoneans to act as election observers, thereby creating a national election observer force. The fourth intervention was to send an 11-person Commonwealth observer team to observe the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in May 2002 and a seven-person team to observe the local elections in May 2004. The Commonwealth team was one of three teams for the May 2002 elections and the only observer team for the 2004 vote. Both teams added to the credibility of the election results nationally and internationally.

(ii) Sponsorship of a national reconciliation workshop

The Commonwealth also sponsored a National Workshop on Women and Men in Partnership for Post-Conflict Reconciliation. Two hundred (200) people attended the four-day national event including six ministers, eight traditional chiefs, high-ranking civil servants, NGOs, media personnel and citizens of whom one-third were from the provinces. Fifteen background papers were presented at the workshop and 43 recommendations were developed.

#### ***4.1.3 The Secretariat's contribution to assist the Government rebuild and recover from the crisis and prevent relapses***

The Secretariat's initiatives in support of this goal fell under the Framework's component entitled 'support for the reconstruction of the public sector and public services'. In this regard, the Secretariat provided two types of support: the provision of operational experts to keep essential government services running, and the provision of advisors to upgrade planning capacity, to diagnose change requirements and to contribute to specific aspects of the reform process.

##### *Keeping government services running*

The largest number of technical assistance assignments were made to keep essential government services running. This assistance was required because of the lack of local personnel, the absence of budgets to pay for staff recruitment to these positions or because many qualified persons were unwilling to work for low government wages. From 1999-2005, ten Commonwealth experts worked

in staff (line) positions. These experts were:

- the legal advisor to the National Election Commission;
- the gender specialist in the Poverty Alleviation Strategy co-ordinating office of MODEP;
- the trade policy advisor who worked as a Director of Policy, Planning and Research in the Ministry of Trade;
- the Director-General who worked in the Ministry of Agriculture;
- three judges who served with the High Court for criminal cases and one judge who served with the Court of Appeals; and
- two prosecutors who worked for the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Only one of these experts was given an explicit change mandate – the Director-General at the Ministry of Agriculture. However, despite this mandate, he was still unable to move this agenda forward due to differences of opinion about reform within the Ministry and his role in the reform process.

From various reports and interviews, this evaluation found that these operational experts functioned successfully in their line positions and were able to model more efficient work skills, clearing up significant backlogs in the courts and addressing neglected trade policies. The experts remained in their positions for varying periods, ranging from one to two-and-a-half years.

#### *Upgrading the skills of public servants*

Another feature of the Secretariat's support was to upgrade the skills of public servants, improving job performance through training. This is the preferred method of skills transfer as it enables opportunities for a significant number of persons to be trained together, thereby maximising the possibility that the skills can be easily adopted in the workplace. There were five assignments relating to this type of short-term training:

- i. Study tours on community policing to Botswana for 40 Sierra Leonean police officers;
- ii. The training of 14 new recruits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- iii. Support to the University of Sierra Leone in three faculty areas: Physiology, Histopathology & HIV/AIDS and the College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences (June 2003);
- iv. Training on Modern Teaching Skills, Research & Evaluation (Forah Bay College – July to August 2003); and
- v. University staff training on Management, Modularisation and Modern Teaching (June 2004).

According to the Inspector General, the study tours for the police were useful to those who attended and many of the practices seen in Botswana have been implemented in Sierra Leone. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) also reported that the course was useful to the new recruits. The evaluation authors did not have time to meet with university officials about the other assignments, and the documents relating to these courses were not available for review.

#### *Helping the Government to prepare for reform or contributing to reform*

The second group of advisors worked primarily designing and delivering practical products related to governmental reform or diagnostics preparing for reform. These advisors were:

- Advisors to the Central Bank Stock Exchange Committee, who produced a draft revision of

the 1929 Companies Law and draft legislation on the establishment and functioning of a stock exchange;

- Advisors who prepared a draft customs law in alignment with World Trade Organization (WTO) standards and other treaties to which Sierra Leone was a party;
- Advisors who helped with the implementation of the Commonwealth CD 2000+ debt management information system and training Ministry of Finance personnel to manage that system;
- Advisors who prepared the functional and organisational review of the Ministry of Trade, including recommendations for reform;
- Advisors with UNCTAD, who prepared the diagnostic for the Customs and Excise department, including recommendations for reform; and
- Advisors who conducted an institutional diagnostics of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including recommendations for reform while preparing their training course.

Of these services, the three draft laws prepared by the Secretariat's advisors have yet to be reviewed by the Cabinet for forwarding to the Parliament for review and adoption. As of December 2006, there had been no change or impact as a result of this support. Nonetheless, the installation of the debt management system accompanied by the staff training enabled the Ministry of Finance to have a complete record of the country's external debt arrears for the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative decision in December 2002, at which point US\$600 million was forgiven.

Of the three completed organisational diagnostics, few if any of the proposed reforms appeared to have been implemented at the time of this evaluation. The year after the customs diagnostic was completed, the World Bank began implementation of a major project with the Customs and Excise Department and the National Revenue Authority. To plan this project, the Bank completed its own diagnostic thereby somewhat supplanting the recommendations of the Secretariat's advisors. The two other diagnostics for Ministries of Trade and Foreign Affairs had sound recommendations for modernisation and reorganisation, but in both cases insufficient personnel and lack of funding prevented the implementation of the reforms.

The TOR for these three assignments were prepared inappropriately. The advisors were not required to examine the ministries' annual budgets and existing workforce as part of the review, nor were they asked to propose ways each ministry could achieve its priorities by generating internal savings through eliminating internal waste and redundancies. The three organisational reports seem to have been prepared to attract donor funding for institutional, programme or project support, rather than to contribute to the overall recovery and reform goal of modernising government through greater efficiency and effectiveness.

#### ***4.1.4 The Secretariat's contribution to assist communities rebuild and recover from the crisis and prevent relapses***

The 1999 Framework for the Action Plan did not include initiatives related to support for communities. These were added later, and without any contributing rationale, to the 2000 Operational Plan. Over the 1999-2005 period four (4) projects were supported valued at £1.649 million – some 45 per cent of the total Secretariat support from 1999-2005<sup>25</sup>. Training, advisory

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<sup>25</sup> These were all SASD projects: Development of Affordable Housing Construction Industry, £324,657; The Small-Scale

support and industrial machinery were provided to 37 businesses, of which 35 were to create new businesses and two were to support existing ones<sup>26</sup>. The new businesses were owned by a variety of entities: a legally incorporated private company, a sole proprietor, a family, the University of Najala, NGOs, the government and several communities. Thirty-five (35) of the 37 businesses supported under this project failed (95 per cent); they were not operational as of December 2006. The reasons for these failures are discussed in section 4.4, below.

The two businesses that remain operational are a wood products and furniture manufacturing plant in Lumley, Freetown, and a cashew processing plant at Kambia. The wood product business, established in 2000, was provided with six new industrial machines and a generator to replace obsolete machines. The company had established customers and a backlog of orders. The cashew plant was owned by a retired Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture with substantial financial means to fund the company's start up after the Secretariat supplied his factory with the machines for a new plant<sup>27</sup>. The furniture company employs 30 young men, and has done so consistently over the past six years, while the cashew processing plant has employed a workforce of 14 (part-time, mainly older women) during its growth stage.

#### ***4.1.5 Other assistance***

In addition to the above contributions, the Secretariat funded the attendance of Sierra Leoneans at universities and colleges outside of the country for short-term training courses and for diploma, masters and postgraduate courses (the exact number could not be determined from the available records). The Secretariat funded the training costs for a total of 676 Sierra Leoneans to participate in short courses in the country, in the region and in other Commonwealth countries during the 1999-2005 period. Details of these courses, the participants and the outcome of the training were not available to the review.

#### ***4.1.6 Summary of the Action Plan's effectiveness***

The Secretariat was most effective in helping the GoSL maintain key government services through the provision of operational experts (the placement of qualified persons in line positions within the civil service). It also provided critical and timely support to the electoral process. The Secretariat's support to governmental reform through the provision of advisors was most effective when applied to a discrete product of the reform process, such as producing a draft law or upgrading an important system like debt management, rather than in the preparation of analytical or diagnostic reports. The Action Plan's support to communities in terms of funding for business start-ups was not successful.

## **4.2 Assessment of the sustainability of the Plan's results**

The evaluation was asked to assess the sustainability of the Action Plan's activities and their results. For the purposes of the evaluation 'sustainability' refers to 'the continuation of the benefits of the

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Salt Refinery, £329,264; Development of SMEs, £357,614; and the Oil Palm Plants, £637,723.

<sup>26</sup> The existing businesses were the state-owned construction material production units of the Sierra Leone Housing Corporation (SALHOC) in Freetown, and the privately owned Furniture Making Firm in Lumley, Freetown. The 35 new businesses were six oil palm plants, five new SMEs; a salt facility; and 23 brick and roof production plants.

<sup>27</sup> The manufacturing plant's building and warehouse was funded by a grant from DfID.

activities after the Secretariat's support ceases'.

Sustainability is a crucial aspect of development work and to ensure effective and sustainable outcomes, these must be planned for in advance of expenditure and resource transfer. However, not all development activities are intended to be sustainable and in these instances, approval documents should state this.

In the Sierra Leone programme, there appeared to be some confusion in the Secretariat about the sustainability of operational experts, as almost all project approval documents for these positions stated that the foreign expert would train local counterparts to take over his/her work. This was not realistic. The skills and knowledge required in these highly specialised professional positions, such as lawyers and judges, could not be transferred through 'on-the-job' training as the necessary skill set comes from many years' university training and considerable on-the-job experience. In the case of local staff, they either had the necessary skill set already or they did not. Sustainability planning for professional experts would involve holding a recruitment process at the end of the assignment period to fill the vacancy; ideally, there would also be a one or two month overlap between the foreign expert's term and that of the new incumbent.

Annex 1 provides a detail assessment of activities under the 1999-2005 Action Plan, including an assessment of sustainability, as of December 2006. Table 3, below, provides a summary of this detail showing that of the 12 projects that were planned to be sustainable, only four could actually be considered to have achieved some degree of sustainability by 2006 (33 per cent). This clearly demonstrates the need for closer, more critical examination by the Secretariat of its project design and planning for sustainability to ensure that a more realistic and appropriate approach is adopted in future.

**Table 3**  
**Summary of the Action Plan's sustainability status**  
**as at December 2006**

SUMMARY OF STATUS	NUMBER OF PROJECTS	%
<b>PROJECTS PLANNED TO BE SUSTAINABLE</b>		
Projects that were planned to be sustainable & were found to be sustainable as of December 2006	4	10
Knowledge and skills were successfully transferred, but the organisations require core funding for activities to continue. Not sustainable as of December 2006	2	5
Draft legislation was produced, but is waiting on Cabinet & Parliamentary approval. As no impact results have been produced, these projects are not sustainable as of December 2006	2	5
Projects were planned to be sustainable, but were not as of December 2006	6	15
<b>PROJECTS NOT PLANNED AS SUSTAINABLE</b>		

One-off activities	7	17.5
Filling of government staff positions	7	17.5
NO REPORT AVAILABLE	12	30
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF INITIATIVES SUPPORTED</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

### 4.3 Assessment of how well post-conflict needs were met

Unlike other countries emerging from conflict, Sierra Leone did not have a ‘post-conflict plan’ per se. When the conflict was declared over in January 2002, the President set up a National Recovery Committee chaired by the Vice President, which issued a partial recovery strategy and plan in May 2002, covering eight of the 14 districts that were accessible. This strategy/plan was followed by a National Recovery Strategy when access to the entire national territory was possible<sup>28</sup>. These plans were similar in content to a typical post-conflict plan, as discussed in section 2.2 above. As security and access had improved significantly during the disarmament period, there was a progressive extension of humanitarian assistance to newly accessible districts as well as the gradual restoration of state authority. This initial recovery plan, based on a rapid needs assessment, served as the bridge between the emergency humanitarian assistance and the longer-term government poverty reduction programmes that were reflected in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which was finalised in March 2005. The goal of the National Recovery Strategy was to contribute to the consolidation of peace and the stabilisation of the country, while at the same time laying the foundations for longer-term development.

The strategy had seven basic objectives: (i) establish a core administrative structure and re-establish the rule of law; (ii) consolidate local civil authority; (iii) facilitate resettlement, repatriation and reintegration; (iv) promote reconciliation and rights; (v) provide humanitarian assistance and basic services; (vi) stimulate economic revival; and (vii) improve access throughout the country.

*How well did the Secretariat’s Action Plan and the results of its programme align with the country’s needs as expressed in the National Recovery Strategy?*

The Secretariat’s programme was highly aligned to one of the seven objectives of the National Recovery Strategy: support to the public sector so as to establish a core administrative structure and re-establish the rule of law. The Secretariat dedicated the greatest number of its technical assistance assignments to this priority through support to the police, the judiciary, the anti-corruption commission, the customs authority and the Ministry of Finance (debt management assistance). All areas of the Government of Sierra Leone’s priorities within this objective were supported to some degree, except strengthening the army. While the Secretariat’s initiatives were few compared to other donors, they were considered to have filled important gaps. The Secretariat also had a major role in one other of the government’s five priority areas – consolidating the civic authority – with support for the elections. Here the Secretariat’s support was well co-ordinated within a multi-donor

<sup>28</sup> National Recovery Committee (2002) *Sierra Leone: Recovery Strategy for Newly Accessible Areas* Vol. 1. This plan covered eight districts, which were the ones accessible in May 2002, with performance indicators for these districts. A second volume, entitled *National Recovery Strategy 2002-2003*, was issued after the elections based on assessments in all districts and with benchmark targets for 2003. The strategy and plan was to last until the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) was approved, which was estimated for late 2003 though it was not approved until March 2005.

programme.

The Secretariat had planned to work at the municipal and district level in its initial Framework of July 1999, but these plans did not materialise. In the other five areas of national priorities, the Secretariat's activities were minor or non-existent.

Two areas of noted Secretariat programming were in the cross-cutting themes of gender and youth, not so much in terms of integration as in providing specific initiatives targeting women and youth. The Ministry of Youth and Sport was created in 2000 to address the issue of the alienated youth, a major factor initiating the civil war. An important Secretariat initiative was the support provided to this ministry to create a national youth policy: this policy was published in 2003. The Secretariat also funded the gender advisor to the PRS to ensure gender issues were factored into the government's first poverty reduction plan.

The Secretariat invested approximately £1,649 million to stimulate the economy. However, this investment did not address the country's priority needs as outlined in the National Recovery Strategy, which were to reassert government authority in the mining sector and to stimulate basic production in the agriculture and fishing sectors. The government strategy was to supply basic equipment, such as seeds, tools, boats or nets, to restock farms and to restore agriculture extension services and credit for small producers. The Secretariat did provide investment in the productive sector to address these stated needs, but it was less than an estimated 5 per cent of the overall programme aimed at economic stimulation.

The following activities were supported:

- 28 oil palm hand presses were provided to 28 communities (owners unknown);
- An oil palm seed nursery was established with 3,660 seedlings at Najala University;
- 100 farmers, including two farm co-operatives, received 6,340 oil palm seedlings; and
- 250,000 cashew seedlings were distributed (to an unknown number of farmer recipients).

Nearly all of the Secretariat's investment towards economic growth was dedicated to the purchase of industrial machinery and equipment for small-scale manufacturing and industrial agro-processing. These types of activities were eventually identified as priorities in the Poverty Reduction Strategy of March 2005, but this was six years after the peace agreement was signed; this sort of equipment was not nominated in the National Recovery Plan as being priority for post-conflict assistance.

There were three priority areas of the National Recovery Plan, which absorbed 75 per cent of the total funding requirements of the Plan<sup>29</sup>: (i) investment in infrastructure; (ii) restoration of basic services in health and education; and (iii) humanitarian assistance. The Secretariat had no significant involvement in any of these areas. The alignment of the Secretariat's plan and its results are shown in Table 4, below.

#### **4.4 The SASD Enterprise and Agriculture Programme**

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<sup>29</sup> An estimated US\$167 million or 75 per cent of the estimated US\$212 million National Recovery Plan budget was for humanitarian, basic services and infrastructure, with 10 per cent allocated to the core administrative structure and a further 15 per cent for stimulating the economy, almost all for agriculture production – cash crops (not agro-business). *National Recovery Plan 2002-2003*, page 96.

The Special Advisory Services Division (SASD) provides practical assistance to member countries in four areas: economic and legal services; international trade; enterprise and agriculture; and debt management. Within the Action Plan, the Secretariat's management committed £1.325 million to cover the costs of technical expertise, training and machinery for three major projects which were to result in the establishment of 13 small manufacturing plants, of which six were pilot projects. These projects were:

- i. The development of six small pilot enterprises in pepper processing, cashew nut processing, two cassava processing plants and a wood/furniture manufacturing plant (£357,614);
- ii. The establishment of a small-scale refined salt facility (£329,264); and
- iii. The development of six small-scale palm oil processing facilities (£637,723).

While there were many reasons for the lack of success of most these projects, those that failed shared five common areas of weakness: (i) inadequate planning; (ii) inappropriate identification of business owners; (iii) inappropriate identification of machinery and its procurement; (iv) inadequate training of owners and plant workers; and (v) inadequate business coaching and project monitoring. These are discussed below with more detail provided in the technical annexes.

*(i) Project plans:* The inclusion of assistance to small and medium enterprise (SME) development in the Secretariat's Action Plan first emerged from discussions during the August 2000 Rodriguez-Adefuye mission. Following these meetings, the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning (MODEP) wrote to the Head of SASD (then called EIDD – the Export and Industrial Development Division) requesting assistance to develop the sector, identifying 15 different priority industries<sup>30</sup>. The Secretariat agreed to consider support to the SME sector and approved a three-year project for £287,000 in two phases. During the first phase, the sector assessment and strategy formulation was conducted; in the second, the strategy was implemented. A technical expert from the Secretariat and an SME consultant carried out an in-country review to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the sector and concluded that the overall benefits of working in the sector outweighed the risks. The study also narrowed the priority industries from 15 to seven. Two industries: the salt refinery and the oil palm processing facilities were considered to be technically more complex than the others, thereby warranting a separate project for each sector, which was subsequently approved.

Once the Division and MODEP had determined the number of priority sectors, the number of plants to be established, the locations and the business owners the project moved into the second phase of implementation. From the Secretariat's point of view this involved recruiting technical advisors and procuring the machinery for shipment to Sierra Leone.

However, the Secretariat's implementation plan failed to include the development of the next critical set of plans. These are 'the bottom-up plans' which should be developed with the business owners (the recipients) to ascertain business viability for each particular owner at the specific plant location. The assessment also needed to consider: potential sales revenue and operating costs (raw material, transportation, wages and fuel); the costs to be financed for the plant construction; its start up and operation *before* the it makes a profit (the break-even analysis); and to identify the amount of financial capital needed to meet these costs and how to source that capital (bank loan, savings, family, government grant, subsidy etc.). These plans are essential if the owner is to have a full

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<sup>30</sup> MODEP 2000 Letter to Secretariat (EIDD), October 27.

understanding of the total financial requirements and the business risk, and so that the Secretariat can have some confidence that if the machinery, training and advisory services are provided, the business has a reasonable probability of success and financial sustainability. *None* of the 13 businesses supported had such ‘bottom-up plans’<sup>31</sup>. Those feasibility studies and plans that were found in the files were general sectoral documents, which were not at all helpful to any one particular business owner in a specific location and were more like ‘top-down plans’.

Consequently, it was only when the machinery arrived in country that the Secretariat realised some of the issues it had overlooked during design. Neither the owner/beneficiaries nor the GoSL/MODEP had the financial means to transport the machinery from the port entry to the plant location; nor did they have the means to pay for the construction of the building for the plant production sites. In addition, the owner/beneficiaries did not have the working capital to finance the plant’s operating costs, even after the Secretariat provided additional funding for transportation and construction costs on an exceptional basis<sup>32</sup>. Had each operation prepared a business plan that had been discussed with the owners/beneficiaries in advance, these financial constraints would have been realised and clarified and development solutions appropriate to their financial means could have been proposed.

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<sup>31</sup> The salt plant had a preliminary study and design report dated April 2003, with some of the necessary financial information. This report was prepared by the consultants upon their return to India and sent to the Secretariat. The plan had not been discussed with the Rotifunk Women’s Association who had requested the project, although the report was sent to the MODEP.

<sup>32</sup> There was one exception to this: the cashew plant owner, whose plant construction costs were provided by a DfID grant. He was also a wealthy individual who could afford to use his own capital to fund the operating costs until break-even.

**Table 4:**  
**Comparison of National Recovery Strategy with the Secretariat's programme of work**

National Recovery Strategy: 2002 to PRSP (2005)	Secretariat deliverables: 1999-2005
<i>Establish a core administrative structure and re-establish the rule of law:</i> strengthen government-wide financial & budgetary systems; restructure the National Revenue Authority; set up the Anti-Corruption Commission; strengthen the judiciary & legal systems; begin civil service reform; institutional strengthening of the police & the army	Commonwealth Police Development Task Force Community Policing Training Judges at the High Court for Criminal Cases & the Court of Appeal Prosecutors at the Anti-Corruption Commission Technical Assistance in Customs Modernisation Debt recording & management; Advisor to HIPC
<i>Consolidate civic authority:</i> ensure the core administration team is functioning in all districts <sup>33</sup> ; reinforce police deployment; ensure peaceful Presidential and Parliamentary elections; rehabilitate prisons; reactivate local government	Special & Legal Advisor to National Election Commission (NEC) Short-term advisors to NEC Two election observer teams Training of local election observers
<i>Resettlement, repatriation and reintegration:</i> facilitate resettlement & repatriation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) (210,000) and returnees (100,000); continue programmes for 63,000 ex-combatants and 6,500 child soldiers	225 ex-combatants trained in house construction & use of building materials. Training is not likely to lead to employment or income
<i>Reconciliation and rights:</i> establish the Special Court; establish the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; set up the Office of the Ombudsmen; set up National Committee for Democracy and Human Rights; develop & promote reconciliation initiatives; strengthen the protection of human rights; accelerate family tracing and reunification programmes	National Workshop on Women & Men in Partnership for Post-Conflict Reconstruction
<i>Humanitarian assistance and basic services:</i> expand primary health care to all chiefdoms; established referral health care at the district level; expand rehabilitation of traditional wells & boreholes; accelerate construction of latrines; expand the construction & rehabilitation	Development of affordable housing construction (did not deliver on planned outputs)

<sup>33</sup> The core administrative team is made up of the Senior District Officer, the District Medical Officer, the Inspector of Schools, the District Agriculture Officer, and the District Land and Housing Officer (National Recovery Strategy, p.10).

National Recovery Strategy: 2002 to PRSP (2005)	Secretariat deliverables: 1999-2005
of primary and secondary schools; provide house construction materials to areas with high levels of destruction; develop food & cash for work schemes	
<i>Stimulate economic revival:</i> provide tools & seeds for vulnerable families; rehabilitate nurseries & restore agriculture extension services; provide restocking of livestock; support fishing communities with boats & nets; assert government authority in the mining areas; extend micro-credit services	Director-General, Agriculture Trade Policy Advisor Sub-regional workshop on micro-credit management for youth 28 hand oil presses distributed & 100 farmers, including three farm groups, received oil palm seedlings 4 initiatives not successful in their results: development of SMEs, small-scale salt refinery, oil palm plants, development of the stock exchange
<i>Improve Access:</i> rehabilitate priority roads, bridges and ferries; rehabilitate energy infrastructure	No involvement
<b>CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES</b>	
<i>HIV/AIDS:</i> establish national HIV/AIDS programme	Regional Youth Forum Workshop in HIV/AIDS
<i>Youth:</i> create new Ministry of Youth & Sports; develop national youth programme, including job creation, practical skills training, life skills learning & values education	National Youth Policy Review Sub-regional workshop on National Youth Policy & National Youth Councils Diploma consultations & evaluations
<i>Gender:</i> full participation of women in all political, social, & economic activities & processes, especially agriculture, leadership, political representation & decision-making	Advisor to Minister of Social Welfare, Gender & Children Gender Expert for PRSP
<i>Environment:</i> strengthen environmental protection mechanisms	Not applicable

*(ii) Business owners:* Research has shown that SMEs are most successful when they are owned and operated by an individual, a family or a firm who takes hands-on responsibility for all aspects of the business. It has also been shown that community-owned businesses, with dispersion of decision-making, have a high probability of failure, unless they are set up under the co-operative governance model.

Under the plan agreed with the Secretariat, the MODEP was responsible for identifying the business owners. The Secretariat accepted MODEP's decisions, without any follow-up technical assessment to determine whether these proposed business owners could actually run and operate the SME that they were to be given. MODEP proposed nine communities, one individual, one firm, one family and one university as business owners. These decisions appeared to be based more on political criteria than technical merit. An assessment by MODEP or SASD should have been undertaken focusing on a number of critical aspects:

- Had the proposed owner operated a successful business before? The evaluation found that out of the nine communities visited, most had been given community-owned and operated wells by NGOs that no longer functioned, suggesting they may be poor candidates to handle business responsibilities. Only the furniture making firm had previous business experience.
- Did the owner have adequate funding and technical personnel to run these plants? The evaluation found that most communities did not have the necessary financing nor essential technical and managerial personnel, such as a resident bookkeeper and a mechanic, to operate the business. Only one individual – a well-off, retired Permanent Secretary – and the existing firm had adequate human and financial resources.
- Would a business be financially viable at the specific locations? Twelve of the 13 businesses were new start-up businesses. They needed business plans, as typically four out of five new businesses fail without such plans. Only the wood products/furniture firm was an existing business. The six machines provided to this firm replaced obsolete models. As the firm had been operating successfully with the obsolete machines, the newer ones enabled the firm to increase sales, reduce costs and produce a better quality product, thereby enhancing its viability.

*(iii) Machinery issues:* The Secretariat purchased all of the machinery for the 13 SMEs from Indian and Malaysian suppliers. There was no participation by the Sierra Leoneans (the business owners or MODEP) in reviewing the technical specifications of the machinery, in the tendering process or in the selection of advisors.

From the files it appears as if little (if any) effort was made by Secretariat staff (or its Indian and Malaysian technical advisors) to investigate what machinery might have been available locally, which might have met the business owners' needs more appropriately. The evaluation identified simple machines manufactured in Sierra Leone to European standards, and designed to meet the local conditions for MODEP's seven priority industries (processing cassava, peppers, cashew nuts, rice milling and palm oil fruit) with a price range of US\$1,500-4,000 per machine. These machines have been available in Sierra Leone since 2001<sup>34</sup>. The purchase of local machinery would have

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<sup>34</sup> Less than 1 per cent of rural Sierra Leone has access to electricity outside of the provincial towns. Therefore in the rural areas, all machines have to be hand operated or powered by locally available generators. For this reason, a typical

saved thousands of pounds in freight and transport costs, and the national SME owners would have had local access to assistance for training, technical advice, spare parts and repairs. None of these are currently available.

In relation to the six oil palm processing plants, instead of purchasing machinery that was already functioning and in use the Secretariat commissioned the design of new machinery specifically built for Sierra Leone<sup>35</sup>. As frequently happens in machinery design, there were ‘engineering bugs’ in the new machines, which were apparently not discovered until the machines were assembled in Sierra Leone. By this time the Malaysian company had exhausted its budget for machine design and consulting services, so the design problems were left to the Sierra Leonean business owners to fix. The inevitable result was that none of the six oil palm processing plants were ever commissioned or became operational. These plants have no technical manuals or machinery specifications, further complicating the ability of the owners to make repairs.

The machinery for the salt refining plant was designed to process raw material from 50 acres of salt ponds, which were to be constructed near the Rotifunk village. While defined as ‘small’ by the Indian engineers, the plant was in fact a large undertaking by Sierra Leonean industrial standards. The 10 acres required for the manufacturing site required five buildings to be built<sup>36</sup>: a plant and warehouse complex, a machinery repairs workshop, an office building and a laboratory, plus a back up generator and a fresh water well. The plant was to eventually employ 36 people of whom 32 were to be university or college graduates. The other four unskilled workers were security guards and packagers. Approximately 50 large machines were purchased for the plant and sent to Sierra Leone following approval by the Secretariat, but before confirmation that the 60-acre industrial site had been prepared and the GoSL’s contribution had been finalised.

According to the feasibility study, the GoSL was to provide the infrastructure, which included a road, electricity, fresh water and a loading dock. However, the Secretariat had no signed agreement with any GoSL Ministry to provide this infrastructure – upon which the plant’s operational success depended. The Rotifunk Women’s Association, the supposed plant owners, is a group of 200 women, most of whom are illiterate and who process salt manually. They earn less than US\$1.00/day over four months of seasonal work. The plant was entirely inappropriate to this beneficiary group, for their village or for the country. The machinery donated by the Commonwealth is now scattered throughout this village in plain view – the community has no storage facilities. Neither MODEP nor the communities have the resources to complete the plant, to assemble the machinery in one location or to sell it.

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rural manufacturing process (i.e. a number of different machines in sequence) is frequently set up as a series of individually owned machines with a cash transaction to each machine owner each time the raw product moves from one machine to another throughout the manufacturing process. Sierra Leone has very few western style manufacturing plants in rural areas where the entire plant and all of its machinery are owned by one person/firm, and everyone who works at the plant is an employee under the supervision of a plant owner and paid daily wages. The locally available machines identified by the December evaluation team were made to accommodate this individual small business characteristic of the rural manufacturing process. The local company is FINIC, e-mail [finicone@yahoo.com](mailto:finicone@yahoo.com). The business owner is a Sierra Leonean who had worked for 10 years as a machinist in Germany for Mercedes Benz, before returning home in 1999 (when the peace treaty was signed) to make appropriate machines for local agro-businesses.

<sup>35</sup> This was described by one of the plant owners as a scaled down version of a large Malaysian processing plant.

<sup>36</sup> None of the original engineering drawings were available for review. The dimensions or the size of the five buildings could not be determined from the photocopies of the reduced original drawings included in three technical reports issued by the Secretariat.

*(iv) Technical assistance issues:* According to the Secretariat's project approval document, each business owner and all plant workers were to be provided with training by technical experts during the period of the plant commissioning. According to the owners/workers interviewed, this was inadequate for two reasons. First, most of the time set aside for commissioning was spent in installing and testing the machines, meaning that little time was left over for actual training<sup>37</sup>. Second, the technical advisor gave training only on how to operate the machines. The business owners also needed instruction in marketing, product costing, financial management and in businesses thinking and decision making – none of which was provided. Technical manuals were not provided to the plant mechanic, nor was specific training provided on how to maintain and fix the machines should they break down. Compounding these difficulties, few of the business owners were provided with information on how to order spare parts.

*(v) Business coaching/project monitoring:* The Secretariat's project design did not include any in-country coaching for the 12 new business owners to help them successfully complete the start-up and to operate the business from start-up to its break-even (profitability) stage. This type of business coaching (also called project monitoring) is absolutely necessary for any new business to ensure that the business owner acquires the business thinking necessary to successfully manage the enterprise.

The Secretariat does not normally provide machinery in its projects. An exception was made for Sierra Leone, unfortunately with disastrous results. One of the principles of post-conflict programming is 'to do no harm'. These projects have seriously violated this principle and left the business owners, their communities and MODEP frustrated and demoralised. As of December 2006, the Secretariat had officially closed all of the SME project files and all approved funds were spent (Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation, CFTC). The 'white elephants' left in Sierra Leone as a result of these pilots, however, continue to tarnish the good reputation of the Commonwealth and its relations with MODEP.

This evaluation strongly encourages the Secretariat to address these problems by either: (i) completing the plant commissioning and training; (ii) removing and selling the inappropriate machinery and donating the funds to the communities for a development project; or (iii) replacing the complex machines with simple/appropriate technologies and identifying an industrious business owner and providing him/her with an appropriate local machine. In the case of the salt factory, the machines should be assembled, stored in an appropriate warehouse and sold by the Privatization Commission; the Rotifunk Women's Association should then be provided with appropriate machines from local dealers (see footnote 37).

#### **4.5 Assessment of the management of the Action Plan**

This section examines the Secretariat's overall management of the Sierra Leone Action Plan.

*The Action Plan task force:* In the Strategic Plan, the Secretariat organises its technical assistance

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<sup>37</sup> Of the 13 businesses set up, only two had actually been successfully commissioned: the cashew plant and one cassava plant. The machinery for the furniture plant did not need commissioning as it was replacing existing machines. The other ten plants had problems with the set up and testing of their machines, and were never formally commissioned, even though this was a part of the advisors' contract with the Secretariat. According to the Secretariat's records, the technical advisors were paid in full even though this crucial task was not carried out.

around specialist divisions (seven technical divisions) rather than country desks. There are generally no country plans and there are no organisational processes and procedures to encourage country programming. To better co-ordinate the Sierra Leone programme among these divisions, the Secretariat formed a task force to promote dialogue and information sharing. The aim was to increase the effectiveness of its assistance to Sierra Leone through the participating programming divisions. The task force met eight times between 1999 and 2002 (see table 5).

**Table 5: List of task force meeting dates**

Year	Task force meeting dates
1999	16 July, 3 Dec
2000	29 March, 12 September
2001	8 January, 8 May, 20 June
2002	15 July

The meeting of 8 May 2001 was a combined meeting of the task force for Sierra Leone and Mozambique, while that of 15 July 2002 was a combined meeting of the task force for Sierra Leone and West Africa. The file review found agendas for all eight meetings, but only three records of minutes for 3 December 1999, 12 September 2000 and 20 June 2001.

In general it was found that the task force with responsibility for the Action Plan did not function well as a unit and was of limited benefit in creating a strategic thrust for the assistance programme in line with the changing needs and conditions of the country. The Plan would have benefited from a periodic reassessment of progress and country needs. In addition, there was no evidence that the Secretariat was managing to the CMAG-approved Plan, nor was there evidence that it was aware of the need to report back or to maintain the Action Plan as a Secretariat priority. The lack of task force meetings after 2002 seems to confirm the loss of momentum and priority.

**Action Plan time frame:** The Action Plan itself had no stipulated time frame. Plans are best realised within a specified time period, so the absence of a time frame was not helpful. The Secretariat’s Post-Conflict Action Plan covered five fiscal years of Secretariat funding (30 July 1999 to 30 June 2005). While this is the time frame used for the evaluation, the post-conflict period in Sierra Leone was not five years. Neither should the post-conflict period include the period between the peace accords and the approval of the Interim PRS (i.e. July 1999 to June 2001) as this period saw resumed hostilities. The post-conflict period was essentially the same time frame as the National Recovery Plan – from the end of the elections until late 2003. It is surprising that the Secretariat’s Action Plan was not reviewed or revised in the light of these changing circumstances.

**Action Plan scope:** The Action Plan supported 40 initiatives for a total funding of £3.676 million. The initiatives were approved within the Secretariat’s procedures and regulations for project funding and technical assistance with one exception: the four proposals sponsored by SASD, which combined both advisory services, training and machinery purchases. Under the CFTC, the Secretariat can only provide technical assistance and cannot normally fund machinery or equipment<sup>38</sup>. However, an exception was made due to the special circumstances of post-conflict

<sup>38</sup> Briefing notes, visit of the Secretary-General to Sierra Leone, 2-10 May 2004. ‘As a rule, the CFTC does not fund equipment and machinery. However, well aware of the special circumstances of post-conflict Sierra Leone, the

Sierra Leone, though this evaluation was unable to find any documented rationale for setting aside of normal Secretariat policy. This policy change had unfortunate consequences, as any post-conflict period puts constraints on delivery time frames – especially for high risk economic investments, as discussed above.

***Gender strategies and activities within the Action Plan:*** There were no gender strategies in the August 2000 Plan, although by June 2005 three gender specific activities had been funded. Two of these involved the provision of short-term advisors to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs and one the provision of a long-term gender advisor to MODEP to develop the gender framework for the PRS.

Following the September 2000 task force meeting discussing the first operational plan, the Secretariat’s division responsible for gender programmes – the Gender and Youth Affairs Division (GYAD) submitted a nine-page document to the Deputy Secretary-General listing the 20 Action Plan initiatives and providing suggestions as to how these activities could be brought into compliance with the Commonwealth’s gender policy and principles. Fourteen (14) of the suggested activities involved GYAD being requested to ‘engender’ the TOR and/or be involved in the selection of the experts to ensure that they had an adequate understanding of the gender issues in their assignment. It would appear that few (if any) of these suggestions were actually incorporated into the experts’ TOR. In addition, GYAD sponsored a gender mission to Sierra Leone in November 2000, out of which 28 programme recommendations were made<sup>39</sup>. Many of these recommendations were not well formulated and were beyond the scope of the Secretariat’s programming ability; of the 28, only one was eventually implemented. The National Reconciliation workshop for men and women was held the next year in May 2001<sup>40</sup>.

***Environmental assessments:*** Two projects sponsored by SASD – the salt facility and the six palm oil plants – normally would have had environment assessments undertaken prior to approval. However, this evaluation found no such assessments in the feasibility study documentation and none were presented to the GoSL, though these were required under the 2000 Environment Protection Act.

***Reporting on the implementation of the Action Plan:*** The Secretariat provided one report to the GoSL/MODEP over the Action Plan period. This four-page report took the form of a letter (dated 13 October 2000) and confirmed the activities discussed in the August 2000 scoping mission that were to be implemented<sup>41</sup>. In February 2002, the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Unit (SPED) published a Sierra Leone Country Report, which provided summary information on the projects sponsored by the Secretariat from the financial year (FY) 1997/98 to FY 2000/01, two years of the

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Secretariat has made an exception to the rule’ (p.5).

<sup>39</sup> Notes and recommendations from visit to Freetown by Lesley Abdela, 10-19 November 2000.

<sup>40</sup> The 28 recommendations and follow-up actions were general, not targeted to any organisation or Secretariat division. Many were for programmes and projects beyond the Secretariat’s expertise in technical assistance assignments.

<sup>41</sup> All activities in the August 2000 scoping mission were confirmed and three new ones were added: in-country training programmes with the Sierra Leone Institute for Public Administration and Management (IPAM) were to be resumed, and an Aid Co-ordinator advisor was proposed. In addition, it was reported that the review of the judicial sector was being carried out by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative and that the Secretariat would wait until this report was completed to determine its future actions.

Action Plan implementation<sup>42</sup>. This report provided only general information and could not be considered adequate for results reporting<sup>43</sup>.

**Action Plan monitoring and evaluation:** There were three monitoring visits made to Sierra Leone after the initial 2000 scoping mission to assess Secretariat performance in implementing the Action Plan. These were: visits by the Secretary-General on 17 February 2001 and from 2-10 May 2004 and a visit by the Deputy Secretary-General from 18-25 November 2004. The Secretary-General's visits were largely concerned with the Plan's strategic direction and the Commonwealth's assistance to the GoSL in general; that of the Deputy Secretary-General was concerned with the checking on the Plan results and sustainability. In addition, country visits were undertaken by divisional project managers throughout the period to assess the progress of individual technical assignments and to meet project partners. Unfortunately, only one of these monitoring reports was made available to the evaluation. The task force files did not contain a full list of the number of monitoring missions conducted over the Action Plan's period.

Fourteen technical assistance assignments completed over the period were evaluated as part of the Strategic Gap Filling Evaluation study through the evaluation team visits to Sierra Leone in July 2005. According to that evaluation, four technical assistance assignments were very successful, five were quite successful, four were problematic and one was a definite failure<sup>44</sup>. Unfortunately, the task force was no longer operational by the time of the evaluation.

**Collaboration within the Secretariat:** The evaluation examined how well the Secretariat divisions collaborated internally in the delivery of assistance to the GoSL. Based on the documented meeting summaries of the task force (three meeting records) and the record of Secretariat staff interviews (from the evaluation desk study) there was regular dialogue among the divisions. However, this seemed to be mostly on the basis of a short (5-10 minute) oral briefing during task force meetings and at other times took place on an informal basis. There was no evidence of specific meetings to discuss strategic programming options for Sierra Leone, nor to discuss appropriate types of assistance to the country during the post-conflict period and which might have informed divisional choices of projects. There also did not appear to be any effort made to collect and share lessons learned among the task force members.

Overall, the Action Plan process could have benefited from more active leadership and management.

#### 4.6 Assessment of the Secretariat's collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone

**The Scope of collaboration:** The 1999 to 2005 Action Plan provided support to 40 projects requested by nine of the 24 ministries in the Government of Sierra Leone (33 per cent) and four state agencies (see table 6). This is a relatively large number of ministry partners given the

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<sup>42</sup> *Commonwealth Secretariat Assistance to Sierra Leone: 1997/98-2001/02* (February 2002).

<sup>43</sup> The report provides the project name, number, its current status (completed or ongoing) and a one or two sentence summary of its aim. There is neither budgetary information nor any reporting on results. The report also includes information about the training of nationals per fiscal year on a gender disaggregated basis per course, and a list of regional and pan-Commonwealth projects through which Sierra Leone benefits (although how it benefits is not always clear). Only five of the 53 pages (9 per cent) deal with country-specific activities.

<sup>44</sup> *Final Report: Evaluation of Strategic Gap Filling Programme of the Commonwealth Secretariat*, June 2006 (p. 58).

Secretariat's limited budget, the wide breadth a reflection of how responsive the Secretariat was to requests. The largest number of projects was provided to core functions; these were also the projects of highest value. Five of the Secretariat's collaborating partners – the Ministries of Finance, Justice and Education, the Inspector General of Police and the National Election Commission – had significant institutional support from major donors over the Action Plan period. This meant that the Commonwealth's contribution in these cases was niche or gap-filling assistance within the reform initiatives. For the eight other government partners the Secretariat was considered a more substantive development assistance partner.

**Table 6: Project collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone: 1999-2005**

GOSL INSTITUTION	NO. PROJECTS	EST. TOTAL EXPENDITURE (£)	RANKING: HIGH-LOW (10-1)45
<b>ASSISTANCE TO CORE STATE FUNCTIONS: LEGITIMACY, SECURITY, PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING</b>			
Ministry of Development and Economic Planning (MODEP)		1,723,771	13
National Election Commission	10	306,865	11
Customs and Excise	2	170,959	10
Inspector General of Police	2	109,134	8
Central Bank	1	83,987	5
Ministry of Finance	1	17,247	2
Ministry of Parliamentary and Political Affairs	1	13,000	1
<b>ASSISTANCE TO PUBLIC SECTOR SERVICES</b>			
Ministry of Justice	3	388,695	12
Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs	3	154,465	9
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1	100,394	7
Ministry of Trade and Industry	2	85,248	6
Ministry of Agriculture	1	71,553	4
University of Sierra Leone	6	35,000	3
Ministry of Youth and Sports		not available	
Ministry of Education	1	not available	

**Plan ownership – less than optimal:** A key to successful collaboration between the Secretariat and the GoSL was government ownership of the Action Plan. There was a high degree of political discussion and exchange of documents among the Secretariat officials, the Sierra Leonean High Commissioner in London and the President and his office in Freetown during the preparation of the Framework. The Commonwealth's pledge to be a moral guarantor of the Lomé Accord, which

45 With the lowest cost project ranked 1, the highest ranked 13.

had been signed by the President, was the likely stimulus of this consultation process.

However, the same attention to consultation with the GoSL at the operational level was not in evidence. The Commonwealth's designated liaison person in the GoSL, the Acting Deputy-Secretary in MODEP, had heard of the Action Plan, but neither she nor her staff had a copy of it. Furthermore, the Plan was not known by officials in other sectoral ministries interviewed for the evaluation. This limited awareness may have been due to the virtual collapse of the government machinery in the 1999-2000 period; nonetheless this unfamiliarity with the Plan and its priorities would have been a serious constraint to dialogue and collaborative planning.

The Acting Deputy-Secretary indicated that all donors to Sierra Leone had plans of some nature, including other agencies with responsive programming whose plans are prepared every two to three years to take account of changing circumstances in the country. She was of the view that the existence of a plan significantly improved her department's ability to carry out its role and responsibilities in relation to Commonwealth's development co-operation. However, without the GoSL's knowledge of the Action Plan's Framework and its priorities at the working level, it was difficult for GoSL/MODEP to assume any kind of leadership to ensure the effective and efficient use of the Commonwealth's resources within the country's complex donor assistance panorama.

***The usual system for project design and collaboration was not followed:*** Four of the ten projects, with approved budgets totalling £1.649 million, did not conform to the Secretariat's procedures for project identification. For these projects there were no officials in sectoral ministries identified as being Points of Contact (POC).

As the Commonwealth does not have field offices, the Secretariat has designed an alternative system for the identification of development interventions. The responsibility for the identification, the design, implementation and monitoring of assistance is undertaken by the ***point of contact (POC)*** in the sector or line ministry. These POC officials work with the Secretariat's divisional experts to clarify the design, but the essential responsibility for project design rests with the POC<sup>46</sup>.

In Sierra Leone overall co-ordination across the government machinery and liaison with the Secretariat was the responsibility of the ***primary contact point (PCP)*** within the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning (MODEP). The PCP is responsible for determining the strategic alignment of the proposed initiative, and for deciding among competing priorities when the Secretariat is not able to meet all country requests. Within this system, the PCP has no direct design, implementation and monitoring responsibilities except for projects that are related to its own ministry's mandate. MODEP also provided general oversight to all Commonwealth-sponsored activities in Sierra Leone at a policy level consistent with its ministerial mandate for planning and donor co-ordination.

The four projects approved by the Secretariat without POC sponsorship shifted the responsibility for project design work to the Secretariat. This was in some contrast to the general principle of

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<sup>46</sup> Commonwealth Secretariat (2006) *Programme of Assistance: A Manual for Primary Contact Points, Points of Contact and Others in Commonwealth Government and Organizations*, Fifth Edition, p. 22. Although the latest version of the manual was used as reference, this system is the same as the one that has been in place since 1999, when the first manual was issued clarifying the role and responsibilities between the points of contact (POC) and the primary contact point (PCP).

country ownership and leadership for development assistance. These four projects were:

- Development of affordable housing construction industry (£324,657), which should have been under the sectoral supervision of the Ministry of Land and Housing;
- Development of small and medium-sized enterprises (£357,614), which should have been under the sectoral supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture with all of the SME's relating to agro-processing;
- The small-scale refined salt facility (£329,264), which should have been under the sectoral supervision of the Ministry of Trade and Industry; and
- The development of small and medium-scale palm oil and palm kernel processing facilities, which should have been under the sectoral supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture (£637,723).

These projects were highly technical in nature and required design authorisation and review of plant layouts, equipment specifications, a review of set up costs and operating costs, clarification of project governance and business ownership, risk analysis, environmental assessments and, in some cases, accompanying government extension services. They also required assistance in project set up, monitoring, evaluation and infrastructure investments. These were all services that MODEP, listed as the POC for these four projects, could not provide because its mandate and functional responsibilities were for planning and donor co-ordination, not project design and supervision.

Both the GoSL and the Secretariat erred with the approval of these projects. MODEP should not have proposed projects outside the technical competence of the relevant ministry to implement, and the Secretariat should not have commissioned consultants to assist in a technical design and procurement process without a sectoral ministry partner. The results of operating outside the system are evident in the assessment of negative viability and impact. Virtually all four projects had serious technical deficiencies (35 of the 37 businesses<sup>47</sup>). MODEP had neither the financial nor the human resources to address the problems, requiring the Secretariat essentially to cope as best as it could from its London headquarters.

***Collaboration with the GoSL regarding technical assistance assignments was good in general, but needs to be improved:*** All requests for assistance were appropriately channelled to the Secretariat through the designated POC and PCP system. For long and short-term experts, the POC developed the job description for the staff (line) position or the TOR for advisors, which were discussed and confirmed with Secretariat divisional officials. The Secretariat handled the recruitment and identification of suitable candidates and the preparation of the short list, which was discussed with MODEP and the POC. Both the Secretariat and the POC were involved in the checking of references and in candidate interviews over the phone. This high degree of collaboration was valued by GoSL officials.

However, this collaboration broke down in some cases during implementation. When the experts arrived in country, MODEP and the hosting ministry did not always have a copy of the expert's contract in which the responsibilities of the expert, the Secretariat and the host government were set out. Without knowledge of the expert's terms and conditions of service, the host government

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<sup>47</sup> These were the 24 brick and roofing production units, the six SME's, the salt manufacturing plant, and the six mini palm oil processing plants. Of these, only two are operating: the wood and furniture production shop and the cashew producing plant.

was unable to exercise its agreed role. In addition, it was not always clear: (i) who was the designated reporting officer responsible for day-to-day supervision; and (ii) the rules and regulations governing the appointment, especially in relation to travel, vacation, sick days and performance appraisals<sup>48</sup>. Also, when GoSL staff rules and regulations differed from those in the contract, the resolution of these differences was not clearly understood among all parties. This was particularly acute when the GoSL was asked to sign and approve requests for leave, travel or sick days without a clear understanding of the entitlements, or how to report when an expert was not performing as expected.

There was also a problem with reporting. According to the service contract, Secretariat long-term experts are required to submit to the Secretariat an inception report shortly after taking up their posts, a half-yearly progress report and a final report. According to Secretariat policy, these reports are not considered confidential; however, in many instances the reports were submitted directly to the Secretariat without a copy provided to the designated reporting officer or to the MODEP. This meant that it was extremely difficult for the GoSL to assume its management responsibility for these technical experts. Moreover, the Secretariat did not consistently ask the hosting ministries to provide written assessments of each expert's work. While this may not have been necessary when the ministry was satisfied with the expert's performance, it became critical when there was a difference of opinion.

The Secretariat's most common type of long-term technical assistance is introducing an expert to work *in situ* as advisor or as an operational expert. This is essentially introducing an expatriate officer into a workplace with established norms and procedures. In such cases, the roles and responsibilities of all the parties need to be clearly documented and understood by all parties – that is, (i) the Secretariat as recruiter and funding agent; (ii) the host ministry as supervisor and client of the services; (iii) the expatriate officer as service provider and employee; and (iv) the PCP as liaison officer with the Secretariat and the host ministry.

Usually this information would be found in the Secretariat's point of contact manuals. The current manual (2006) does not outline roles and responsibilities for each party in the handling of technical experts<sup>49</sup>. While the PCP may have been familiar with the co-ordinating role from the general Memorandum of Understanding with the Secretariat, the host ministry who managed the experts was generally unaware of these details.

Both MODEP and the POC officials from the five ministries hosting long-term technical experts made specific requests to have copies of the expert's contracts with personnel financial data blackened out, and to have an operational expert's guide given to all concerned parties setting out the roles and responsibilities of everyone concerned. In addition, the MODEP and the hosting ministry had little information about the project-related assistance included in the contract, such as

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<sup>48</sup> Long-term advisors in staff (line) positions, i.e., operational advisors, are to follow the GoSL staff rules and regulations, but these were not always provided.

<sup>49</sup> The evaluation discovered that MODEP programme staff were using the January 1994 *General Technical Assistance and Service Programme Operating Procedures* guide as their reference manual for working with the Secretariat. Between 1999 and 2006, this manual had been updated five times. Comparing the older version to the 2006 version, the older version is much more operational than the newer one as it includes instructions on the selection, service conditions, project reports, liaison and evaluations which the newer versions do not have, hence the preference for the older and more practical guide. The newer version is more strategic and programmatic.

the visual aids, computers, reference books etc. that were provided to the expert to assist in his/her assignment, and which at its conclusion were to become the government's property. In several instances it was reported that this property did not always accrue to the ministry. There did not appear to be any follow up by the Secretariat to inventory these items and to send an official letter to the ministry to ensure that the formal handover of these items occurred at project completion.

It is the Secretariat's working assumption that the ministry recipient of the technical assistance services will provide basic office facilities such as desk, chair, computer and printer, internet access, telephone and office supplies, as well as secretarial assistance, transportation at the posting site and will cover country visits including hotel and accommodation costs. While this is ideal and likely possible under normal circumstances, these working assumptions need to be carefully examined in post-conflict situations.

Virtually all long-term experts under the Commonwealth Action Plan for Sierra Leone had additional budgetary allowances for some of these necessities, as the GoSL could not provide them. These additions were often added after the contract was signed and the expert was at the work. The lack of these items prevented optimal job or task performance from the first day of reporting for duty. In post-conflict situations the working assumptions about the government's capacity to support assignments should be carefully checked, as in most such cases there is little or no support capacity. The Government and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) might even develop a checklist that is to be filled out with each request to verify that the necessary tools and conditions to carry out the assignment are available.

This also applies to professional accreditation. The Secretariat did not adequately investigate these requirements and the time needed to have lawyers and judges accredited, causing delays of up to six months in some instances. During this period high-salaried experts were paid in full, but were not able to perform optimally because of the lack of planning for these requirements. It would have been better to submit the necessary papers in advance and field the expert only when accreditation was secured.

In general, collaboration with the GoSL was good, but could have been improved.

#### **4.7 Assessment of the collaboration with other donors**

One of the four principles of the Framework for the Commonwealth Action Plan was a requirement to liaise with other development agencies and to seek opportunities for collaboration to optimise the use of human and financial resources and effect efficient delivery<sup>50</sup>. The evaluation reviewed the Secretariat's collaboration with other donors.

There is a wide range of collaborative arrangement in development assistance, each modality having both strengths and weaknesses. The main forms of collaboration include:

- the sharing of knowledge and experience;
- the exchange of technical and project documents;
- the co-ordination of development projects (similar areas of work with separate plans and budgets);

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<sup>50</sup> Secretariat (1999) *Framework for the Commonwealth Action Plan for Sierra Leone*, July 30, p. 2.

- complimentary development projects (a common strategy with each donor responsible for a component of that strategy having separate plans and budgets);
- co-financing with joint management or a lead donor manager;
- donor harmonisation as elaborated in the 2005 Paris Declaration, which includes joint analysis and assessments, common plans and strategies, common procedures for project administration, pooled funding, use of the same reports and reporting systems and joint evaluations.

There was a high degree of discussion and exchange of documents in London between the Secretariat and the UK government (DfID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) in the development of the Commonwealth's Action Plan and its various drafts. Additional instances of exchanges of knowledge and experience took place during the missions to Sierra Leone as Secretariat officials met with donors (such as the 2000 Rodriguez & Adefuye scoping mission), with the British High Commissioner, officials from USAID and DfID and, with the Deputy Secretary-General's visit in 2004 during which meetings were held with the British High Commissioner and DfID officials.

There was one example of co-funding a project. Four projects involved Secretariat-recruited experts or advisors placed within another donor's institutional capacity building project. These four projects were:

**The Commonwealth police development task force:** In 1998 in response to the President of Sierra Leone's request for Commonwealth assistance in police reform, the Secretary-General contacted DfID to initiate police reform. He also used his good offices role to recruit five senior police officers from Commonwealth countries to join the task force. After this recruitment, the Secretariat had no further role.

**Prosecutors at the Anti-Corruption Commission:** The Secretariat recruited two prosecutors for the Anti-Corruption Commission, an independent body established by Sierra Leone's Parliament and jointly funded by DfID and the GoSL. There was no evidence that these Commonwealth experts' progress reports were shared with DfID or that the Secretariat received any institutional reports from DfID.

**Judges at the High Court:** The Secretariat co-funded with DfID three judicial positions for Sierra Leone's High Court (High Court Judges). According to files, the funding was shared 50:50 with DfID paying the Secretariat a 10 per cent management fee. This arrangement appeared to be satisfactory to both parties. The Secretariat shared the inception and progress reports on these positions with DfID, the co-financing partner. However, there was no reciprocity by DfID with the Secretariat with respect to the larger programme of judicial institutional reform.

**Support to the National Electoral Commission:** Co-ordination of the four major donors supporting the NEC (DfID, the EU, UNDP and USAID) was led by the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES). In October 2000, the IFES Sierra Leone project manager met with the Secretariat to discuss Commonwealth's contribution for two key positions: the legal advisor and the special advisor. As other donors had expressed an interest in funding technical assistance, IFES consulted these donors to confirm their support for a continuation of Secretariat support for 12 months.

Other than agreements about personnel, there was no programmatic collaboration with other donors, largely because the Secretariat had no representatives in Sierra Leone. The Commonwealth advisor's reports were not shared with the NEC donor group, nor were the donor group's documents (meeting minutes, strategies and annual plans) received by the Secretariat's NEC programme officer. The Commonwealth was not part of the Development Partners Memorandum of Understanding, which is the common framework for the GoSL, NEC and the international donor partners supporting the commission. When the Commonwealth-funded legal advisor's services to the NEC were terminated, there appeared not to have been any consultation by the Secretariat with the donor group about how these essential services would be replaced<sup>51</sup>. This should have been done, as the termination of this position affected the NEC's institutional strength, as well as donor support.

Within the Action Plan the Secretariat made one attempt to initiate donor collaboration in a programmatic sense, but this was not successful.

**Development of the affordable housing construction industry:** The aim of this project was to produce construction materials (bricks and roof tiles) suitable for mass affordable housing while at the same time employing young people. In September 2001, the Deputy Secretary-General organised a meeting in Freetown to discuss the housing sector and to present the Secretariat project. Donor collaboration and support was also sought. The meeting was attended by five donors (DfID, the EU, the World Bank, the African Development Bank and GTZ), five NGOs (Plan International, Cause Canada, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Action Aid and Forut-Norwegian) and representatives from the President's Office, the Ministries of Finance, Development and Economic Planning, Works, Housing and Technical Maintenance and the Central Bank. According to the minutes, there was widespread interest expressed in collaborating with the Commonwealth project.

However, none of this interest materialised into donor collaboration. This was probably because the offer for co-ordination was made at a general information meeting by donor officials and NGO staff, which required follow-up by the Secretariat with additional meetings to discuss design and implementation issues and to prepare concrete plans and draft collaboration agreements. This could not happen within the limited one-week country visit.

There was one example of the Secretariat working in contradiction to the work of other donors with the **establishment of a stock exchange**. The request to help establish a stock exchange was made by the President of Sierra Leone and the initial appraisal by the Secretariat (May 2003) supported the request. In November 2003, the Financial Sector Reform and Strengthening (FIRST)

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<sup>51</sup> The Commonwealth supported the services of a lawyer to the NEC for 30 months. Although the position was called 'a legal advisor', the person recruited functioned as the NEC's in-house lawyer, and was the only legally trained person on their staff. The files show that the Secretariat was concerned about the advisor training a local counterpart. This concern was inappropriate in this organizational context, as the services and knowledge of a lawyer are acquired at law school and through on-the-job experience, and cannot be transferred by training during a technical cooperation assignment. When the Secretariat's legal advisor left the NEC, the donor group adjusted the NEC's annual budget to allow for the outsourcing of legal services to private law firms in Sierra Leone. Although this solved the problem of the lack of legal services, it is not ideal as most National Election Commissions worldwide have their own in-house legal services due to the specialised nature of this area of law. The Secretariat discussed the ending of this assignment with the MODEP, but apparently not with the donor group.

initiative – a multi-donor grant facility managed by the World Bank on behalf of its donors<sup>52</sup> – supported the preparation of a strategy for the development of capital markets in Sierra Leone. The report’s conclusions were that establishing a stock market in Sierra Leone was too early and would be too costly to maintain, as there were insufficient trades to cover the exchange’s operating costs. In support of this recommendation the report pointed to evidence that the country had only one broker that it had very few public companies with shares in public hands (four firms) and very few shares were being traded on the secondary market. Usually a stock market emerges from an active secondary market. Instead, the FIRST report recommended a series of initiatives to build up the country’s capital markets, and these were eventually supported by other donors. Despite the report’s findings the Secretariat continued to work with the Central Bank’s Stock Exchange Committee to draft legislation to establish the stock market, though no business plan for the exchange’s operations had been prepared to determine its financial viability and the source of its operating funds had yet to be clarified.

There was very little contact between the Secretariat staff and staff from other major donors to Sierra Leone, namely the EU, UNDP, the African Development Bank, the World Bank and the IMF, during the period of the Action Plan. In addition, the Secretariat’s development assistance support to Sierra Leone was not reported in the GoSL’s *Annual Report on Development Assistance to Sierra Leone* over the Action Plan period<sup>53</sup>.

**Analysis:** As a result of the new modes of aid financing to support progress towards the millennium development goals (MDGs), nearly all donor collaboration originates and is actualised by officials working in-country. As the Secretariat does not have offices in country, its prospects for donor collaboration are extremely limited (except for contacts with DfID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which can be made via the headquarter offices in London). Besides this, Secretariat staff can continue their sharing of knowledge and experience by meeting with donor agencies on their annual in-country visits.

In a programmatic sense, the Secretariat’s strength was to recruit key personnel for transactional positions<sup>54</sup> as operational experts within other donor-led institutional reform initiatives. The management of such personnel needed to be discussed with the donor (or donor group) leading the institutional reform, as well as with the GoSL point of contact at MODEP.

#### 4.8 Comparison of the Secretariat’s assistance strategy to those of other donors

**Development assistance to Sierra Leone:** Official development assistance to Sierra Leone reflects the typical pattern of post-conflict countries, rising with the declaration of the end of the war and then tapering off as the country moves from emergency humanitarian assistance to sustainable

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<sup>52</sup> The FIRST donors are the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), DfID, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Netherlands, Switzerland (SECO), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the World Bank.

<sup>53</sup> These reports are produced annually by the Development Assistance Co-ordination Office (DACO) within the Office of the Vice President, and contain information on the major bilateral, multilateral and international NGO donors. They are available online.

<sup>54</sup> Transactional positions are ones that assist the organisations to perform their service functions in established (or line) posts such as judges or staff lawyers. These are commonly called operational experts to distinguish them from advisory experts, who have no line responsibilities.

development, as shown in table 7.

**Table 7: Official development assistance disbursements to Sierra Leone: 2000-2005<sup>55</sup>**

Calendar Year	Amount US\$M
2000	115.58
2001	166.83
2002	225.28
2003	208.30
2004	162.63
2005	130.43

**Sources of funding:** For a small country with low absorptive capacity, Sierra Leone has a large number of bilateral and multilateral donors: 16 in total (excluding the UN agencies) of which six have offices in the country. Sierra Leone's seven multilateral partners are the World Bank, the IMF, the Islamic Development Bank, the African Development Bank, the Kuwait Fund, the European Commission and the Arab Bank for Economic Development with Africa (BADEA). Since 2000, the multilateral partners have provided about 50 per cent of Sierra Leone's annual funding – mainly through soft loans with the exception of the EC, which provides grant funding. Only one multilateral organisation, the EC, has an office in the country.

Sierra Leone has nine bilateral donor partners<sup>56</sup> whose grant funding is contributed mainly through stand alone sectoral programmes or projects, usually by establishing a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) within a sector ministry or department, or by contracting the World Bank, the UNDP, an NGO or a private firm as implementing agency. As the national government systems for procurement, financial management, budgeting, parliamentary oversight and auditing improve, several donors are moving towards sectoral budgetary funding. Given the country's level of corruption and the lack of transparency, however, this change will take some time. Approximately 36 per cent of the country's donor assistance is provided by donor programme and project support<sup>57</sup>. Four bilateral donors have in-country offices: DfID, USA, Japan and China<sup>58</sup>.

The UN family is very active in Sierra Leone, grouping nine agencies under one common plan (UNDAF). These agencies are UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, FAO, WHO, WFP, UNFPA, UNAIDS and IOM. UNDAF provides grant funding and usually implements programmes and projects that are off-budget. The funding comes from the agencies' core budgets as well as mobilising funds from non-resident donors. Together the UN family contributes approximately 12 per cent of the total

<sup>55</sup> OECD DAC Official Statistical Report, Chart 2a

<sup>56</sup> UK-DfID, USA, Germany, Switzerland, Ireland, Japan, Italy, China, and South Korea.

<sup>57</sup> DACO 2003-2004 Development Assistance Report. p 10.

<sup>58</sup> Eight countries have honorary consuls in Sierra Leone, providing general oversight to their capital's development assistance programs but are not usually involved in active management of development assistance programs. These are Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Ireland, Italy, Belgium, France and Spain.

donor assistance to the country. Sierra Leone also has a large number of international NGO supporters including World Vision, Care International and Catholic Relief Services.

Bilateral and multilateral donor assistance is provided through six delivery channels: balance of payments support; direct budgetary support; sectoral programme funding; project funding; technical assistance and equipment support managed from outside the country; and funding to international and national NGOs. During the National Recovery Programme, most funding support was off-budget through programme and project mechanisms with funding to the government to meet civil service salaries and minimal operating costs.

**Uses of funding:** Sierra Leone's 11 major donors work across all sectors, as shown in table 8.

**Table 8: Main sectors of donor activity**

Donor	Principal sectors of activity
The World Bank	Social, education, health, infrastructure, community development, the governance sector
African Development Bank	Social, infrastructure, governance/security, agriculture & natural resources
European Commission	Institutional capacity building with the Ministry of Finance, the social sector, infrastructure, governance, security, agriculture, humanitarian food aid. (The EC is the largest donor; 42 per cent of its budget was for infrastructure & road construction)
Islamic Development Bank	Construction of primary schools & health care centres in the provinces, rehabilitation of infrastructure for agriculture processing & storage
Kuwait Fund	Road construction
BADEA	Road construction, rehabilitation of Najala University College
DfID	Governance, security, public financial management reform, support to the Anti-Corruption Commission, support to the decentralisation process, security sector reform (army & police)
China	Provision of agriculture machinery to the Ministry of Agriculture, a technical co-operation team for the national stadium, provision of office equipment to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, renovation of the Parliament & government office buildings, investment in state-owned enterprises, support to hydroelectric power projects, construction of an office building for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
USA	Funding for the UN peacekeeping mission & the Special Court, agriculture & local economic development
Italy	Completion of the Bumbuna Hydroelectric project, rehabilitation of hospitals & technical schools
Japan	Rural power & water supply

*Comparison of the Secretariat's assistance strategy to those of other donors:* The Secretariat's

post-conflict assistance strategy was similar to other donors. There was general agreement on the importance of consolidating the peace and laying the groundwork for long-term sustainable development. Where the Secretariat's programme differed from those of other donors was in its tactical and operational aspects according to its expertise and comparative advantage.

**A distinct Secretariat feature – the political and diplomatic role:** A distinct feature of the Secretariat's assistance was the political and diplomatic role played by Commonwealth members and the Secretary-General in helping to bring about the end of the conflict. Key among these actions was the Commonwealth Heads of Government denouncement of the illegal regime and their decision to suspend it from the councils of the Commonwealth. As well, the Commonwealth gave visible support to the exiled President by inviting him to the October 1997 Edinburgh Heads of Government meeting. In addition, the Secretary-General appointed a special envoy to attend the Lomé peace talks, and the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth members of ECOWAS (Ghana, Nigeria and Gambia) encouraged ECOWAS to play a leadership role in resolving the conflict. So important was the Commonwealth's influence that it was named as one of the five moral guarantors of the Lomé Accord, along with the Republic of Togo, ECOWAS, OAS and the UN. Except for the UN, no other bilateral or multilateral donor was active in both the peace negotiations and in post-conflict development assistance as the Secretariat was. Also, the parties to the peace accords specifically urged the Commonwealth to send an observer mission for the elections to be held after the war ended.

**The Secretariat was not involved in the main donor-funded activities:** Most major bilateral and multilateral donors supported: emergency humanitarian assistance; the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme; and investment in infrastructure (roads, hydroelectricity, the rebuilding of schools, clinics, hospitals, government office buildings and the Parliament). This assistance is beyond the Secretariat's financial means and it wisely did not involve itself with any diagnostics, plans or the sending of experts related to these activities. This was the same for budgetary support to the government. Again, the Secretariat made no financial commitment and did not send experts for any planning or monitoring of this assistance.

**The Secretariat provided support to the public sector strategically:** The major donors were involved in support to public sector reform with the initial attention on core government functions: the Central Bank, the Ministry of Finance, the National Revenue Authority, the judiciary, and security (army and police). The Secretariat also provided support to these core functions, but approached its work using one of four basic strategies:

- i. Providing its assistance within the institutional reform programme of the donor-GoSL (e.g. providing operational experts such as judges and prosecutors in line positions), some of its assistance co-funded with the lead donor;
- ii. Assuming responsibility for a discrete activity of the overall reform programme (e.g. the comprehensive review of the existing customs laws and the drafting of a new bill for presentation to Parliament, bringing national laws up to WTO standards);
- iii. Acting independently of the donor-GoSL's ministerial reform plan, but complementing its long-term aims by providing a quality product and service for which the Secretariat had proven in-house expertise (e.g. the debt recording system CS-DRMS 2000+)<sup>59</sup>; or

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<sup>59</sup> Funded by the EC, the Ministry of Finance's financial management reform has as its long-term goal an integrated Financial Management Information System for all ministries and agencies. This includes a treasury function, whereby

- iv. Deciding not to participate in a sector even if requested as there was insufficient synergy with the Secretariat's corporate strategy, its comparative advantage or its competencies.

These four strategies were to become more evident when looking back as to what had been accomplished in retrospect in 2005.

**The Secretariat provided support to ministries that were orphaned by the other donors:** Bilateral and multilateral donors focused almost exclusively on core public sector functions and on ministries related to social services delivery and economic development. As a result, several of the 24 GoSL ministries and agencies received little, if any external support. Because the Commonwealth is a membership-based organisation, it can respond to member's requests that are of lesser interest to other donors. An example of this was the training programme provided to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), which also included a semi-informal institutional diagnostic and support to the newly established Ministry of Youth and Sport to develop a National Youth Policy. From 1999-2005 the MFA had no major donor supporter, which made the Secretariat's assistance appreciated<sup>60</sup>.

**The Secretariat has a comparative advantage in providing technical assistance to initiatives dealing with elections and with judicial systems:** Because of the Commonwealth's shared history and traditions and the commonalities in electoral and judicial systems, the Commonwealth can bring a comparative advantage and considerable expertise to initiatives in these two areas, as shown in Sierra Leone.

**The Secretariat's support to setting up businesses run by private groups, communities and civil society was less successful than support in this area by other donors:** Most donors fund programmes and projects to help support local businesses and industries. This is done by support to micro-credit agencies, small business counselling and training services, or by ensuring that there is an enabling environment for this sector. Rarely, do OECD-DAC donors fund the establishment of small businesses or an industry through the donation of machinery and equipment. The Secretariat adopted this mode, though as discussed this did not deliver the positive outcomes planned, as 95 per cent of these initiatives failed.

**The Secretariat's initiatives have fewer organisational measurable results than similar initiatives supported by other donors:** The Secretariat specialises in technical co-operation, which mainly involves short- and long-term advisors and operational experts, plus funding for workshops, training and publications. Most of these initiatives are not connected with others and are not

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the country's bank accounts, foreign exchange, bank reconciliations, cash management and debt management are integrated with its budgeting and expenditures. The GoSL began the implementation of this system in December 2004. Eventually the information from the CS-DRMS 2000+ will be integrated into the new system so a free-standing debt recording system like CS-DRMS will no longer be needed. For the moment, however, the Secretariat's system ensured that the country had reliable records for the HIPC debt conversion exercise.

<sup>60</sup> Over the period, the MFA did receive significant material support from China in terms of new office equipment and computers, with a commitment to construct a new building in the near future. This support did not include training or assistance to carry out its mandate more effectively and efficiently, which was needed. For example, although MFA had new photocopiers, they did not have operational funds to purchase paper and toner. What MFA needed was a diagnostic to help them accomplish their mission within their existing annual budget by reorganising their spending priorities.

connected to an institutional reform plan or an annual staff training plan. These projects should be embedded in an organisational capacity building or institutional reform plan where there are concrete and measurable organisational performance indicators for results related to the application of the new 'know how' and skills acquired. It is difficult to determine any impact at the organisational level from Secretariat support, although there may be considerable individual benefit.

**The Secretariat's consultation with other donors, the GoSL and reporting can be improved:** Most donors attended the annual Consultative Group Meetings but, notably, the Secretariat did not. This is most likely because, apart from the first meeting held in London, all subsequent meetings were held in Freetown, which was less convenient for the Secretariat. In terms of reporting, donors have reported their annual development assistance expenditures to the Vice President's Development Assistance Co-ordination Office (DACO), though the Secretariat did not do this. Information on Secretariat assistance was not included in the DACO annual reports of 2003, 2004 or 2005. There is not even mention that the Commonwealth was a donor to Sierra Leone. In terms of planning, according to the MODEP, all donors have plans with strategies, priorities, time lines and budgets, which are discussed annually with MODEP. Although MODEP knew of the individual initiatives supported by the Secretariat, it had no idea of the Secretariat's overall Action Plan priorities, time frame or budget.

#### 4.9 Comparative advantage of the Secretariat's response to post-conflict needs

The results of the implementation of the Secretariat's Action Plan for Sierra Leone provides important insights into the comparative advantage of the Secretariat's assistance in addressing post-conflict needs.

*Areas of need where the Secretariat has a comparative advantage:* One of the greatest needs arising from a post-conflict situation is to re-establish the core public sector administrative structure, the rule of law and the government's legitimacy and authority. This involves support to state security (the army and the police), to the state's financial agencies (the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, the National Revenue Authority and the Customs Administration), to the judiciary (Ministry of Justice, the courts and the prison system) and to democratic institutions (elections, political parties and the functioning of Parliament).

The Secretariat has a comparative advantage in meeting the technical assistance and advisory needs that arise in these areas. With the collapse of government services during the war, the placement of operational experts to ensure that key public services were continued was an area of great priority. The Sierra Leone experience shows that such personnel shortages are usually significant and that the presence of Commonwealth foreign experts can have the effect of clearing backlogs and ensuring critical services are met until the state authorities address their labour resources needs in a more systemic manner through civil service reform. The Secretariat has shown that it can quickly recruit and deploy professional experts of a high calibre who can function either within a donor institutional support programme, or independently. Support for operational experts for one to three years would not be unreasonable. This support should be fully funded by the Secretariat, including local transportation, computer support and reference materials/job aids as the government's fiscal capacity to cover local costs after a war is non-existent.

The second area where the Secretariat has a comparative advantage is through the use of short-term advisors who are requested to work with their public sector partner to develop a specific output such as a draft law, a new policy or conduct an institutional diagnostic. These services are practical, targeted and specific to an overall reform goal. When experts are requested to carry out a programme review, a functional analysis or an institutional diagnostic, the TOR should include an analysis of the annual budget and the workforce composition to help the ministry leaders generate savings through the elimination of waste, redundancies and inefficiencies, which can be used to support new priorities. The Secretariat can be a leader in helping state organisations to use existing resources more effectively and efficiently, thereby reducing their donor dependency.

The third area where the Secretariat has a comparative advantage is in identifying and supporting orphan ministries and agencies that are vital for government functioning, but which may not be the priority of the international community, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and in the case of Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Assistance is best provided in helping these ministries undertake necessary reforms, including the development of new policies.

Finally, the Secretariat can assist the government machineries dealing with women's role in the society by providing expertise to the Ministry of Women's Affairs, and helping engender key processes such as the preparation of the PRS.

***Areas of need where the Secretariat has no comparative advantage:*** An estimated 70-80 per cent of any post-conflict plan addresses areas where the Secretariat has no comparative advantage and insufficient funding to make a difference. These areas are humanitarian assistance, restoration of infrastructure (roads, bridges and hydro-electricity), restoration of basic public services (health and education) and the resettlement, repartition and reintegration of refugees, internally displaced persons and ex-combatants. The Secretariat's role here is more productive in advocacy and networking among other donors to support these areas, but not to fund them itself.

Based on the experience in Sierra Leone, the Secretariat does not have the expertise to support programmes or projects in the area of direct poverty reduction, targeting individuals, firms or communities. Projects involving technical assistance, training and machinery should be left to NGOs and private investors, with the Secretariat's assistance focused on the public sector's role in stimulating the economy, creating the enabling environment for private sector investment and development.

In terms of donor co-ordination, the Secretariat's ability to improve donor co-ordination is limited, as it does not have an in-country presence. Nearly all donor harmonisation happens through GoSL-led programmes within the harmonisation framework of the 2005 Paris Declaration. It is difficult for the Secretariat to be a key player if it does not attend the donor consultative groups meetings, which are usually held in the country concerned. The Secretariat has the comparative advantage of its London location to develop joint initiatives with DfID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the UK government, where practical.

#### **4.10 Lessons learned**

The following is a summary of the lessons from the Sierra Leone Post-Conflict Action Plan and its implementation from 1999-2005.

### *Development and management of the plan*

- i. Even though the Secretariat does not typically prepare country plans, it is advisable to develop one for assistance to post-conflict member countries. The plan should be based on a logical framework analysis construction with a goal and purpose statement, a time frame (two to three years), areas of priority and a notional budget. The Secretariat can use the post-conflict needs assessment prepared by the World Bank and the UN for the international donor community as a starting point for its plan, and select from the suggested areas of need those priorities where the Secretariat's comparative advantage coincides with the member country's requests.
- ii. The Secretariat should designate one officer to be primarily responsible for the plan's leadership and management, and convene a task force with representatives of the programming divisions. The task force requires a written mandate specifying membership, roles, responsibilities and frequency of meetings. The task force should meet regularly, keep minutes, monitor and report on the plan's progress to the member's officials, the Secretary-General and/or CMAG.
- iii. The plan should be consulted with the primary contact point (PCP) officer as well as with relevant political representatives.
- iv. The plan should be governed by existing Secretariat policies for gender, the environment and project funding. Exceptions to existing policies should be documented and formally approved. All initiatives should identify a point of contact (POC) official to ensure there is a technical counterpart in the country.
- v. The Secretariat can increase, but should not double, its assistance to a member country, as is the practice of other donors, as its funding is not for humanitarian assistance and infrastructure, which are the reasons for the major increases of most donors.
- vi. Opportunities for donor co-ordination are minimal, as the Secretariat does not maintain in-country offices. The Secretariat can maximise its collaboration with DfID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office due to the location of their head offices.
- vii. With a large number of donors operating in post-conflict states, and the weak capacity of the post-conflict government, all assignments need to pay greater attention to roles and responsibilities and increased resources dedicated to monitoring.

### *Diplomatic and political lessons*

- viii. The Secretariat will often be called upon to use its good offices role to settle conflicts. The Political Affairs Division (PAD) should identify the lessons learned from the engagement of the Commonwealth's Special Envoy to Sierra Leone and document these for future reference.

### *Lessons in support to democratic processes and institutions*

- ix. Due to its historical traditions, the Commonwealth is well placed to offer training and technical assistance to electoral commissions and to support Parliament as an institution. Restoring

the credibility of these institutions is an important part of the Commonwealth's commitment to the democratic process. The Secretariat has proven expertise in support to elections. Attention can now be given to developing expertise to support the technical and managerial aspects of the functioning of Parliament.

x. The Secretariat should also consider providing general information and workshops to political parties on modern organisation, management and campaigning during and between the elections.

*Lessons in support for the reconstruction of the public sector and public services*

xi. The main emphasis in a post-conflict period is to strengthen the state's core administrative structure, re-establish its legitimacy and re-establish the rule of law. This involves support to elections, security (army and police), public financial management (the Central Bank, the Ministry of Finance, the National Revenue Authorities, Customs and Excise) and the functioning of Parliament, as well as the preparation to improve public services in education, health, the judiciary, infrastructure (roads, energy) and an enabling environment for private sector led economic development. The Secretariat has a comparative advantage in many of these core functions, but these are often areas of major reform dominated by other donors, with substantial funding and technical assistance provided. This necessitates the Secretariat making careful choices for its initiatives. Successful programming requires an in-depth knowledge of the proposed reform plans to identify gaps that the Secretariat can fill.

xii. Post-conflict states need to rapidly restore citizen confidence in the government's ability to deliver public services. The Secretariat can offer significant advantages to support operational experts for between one and three years working as civil servants to keep public services functioning. In such cases, sustainability has to do with the recruitment of qualified local staff to replace the foreign experts, and not with the training of counterparts.

xiii. The Secretariat can offer short-term, practical training courses to upgrade the skills of civil servants. These are best offered to a work group and their manager to maximise the possibility of the use of new skills and knowledge.

xiv. The Secretariat can offer assistance to help prepare for reform by conducting programme or organisational diagnostics; or it can contribute to reform by supporting the preparation of laws or policies. When funding is provided to the latter initiative, the Secretariat should ensure that there is a high priority to the supported work so that it will likely be endorsed by Cabinet and forwarded to Parliament for approval. When diagnostics are supported, they need to include a review of the annual budget and human resources complement with attention to eliminating waste and inefficiency to generate internal savings to fund new priorities.

xv. The Secretariat can offer significant support by identifying orphan ministries and agencies not supported by the major donors. Significant among these in the case of Sierra Leone were the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Youth.

*Lessons in support to simulating economic development*

xvi. The role of the Secretariat Advisory Services Division (SASD) is to support member states

to create an enabling environment for private sector led economic development. It should not undertake the planning and funding of SME activities, which require a high degree of in-country technical support involving the preparation and revision of business plans, on-the-job coaching and training to business owners and workers, financial monitoring and risk assessment.

xvii. In a post-conflict situation, the Secretariat's support to agriculture should be limited to the provision of seeds and hand tools to reactivate production. Projects involving machinery and business management are best left to the private sector and NGOs.

*Lessons in support of increased country ownership and leadership in managing technical assistance*

xviii. The Secretariat should continue to procure technical assistance on behalf of its members, but it should look for ways that its members can have a greater say in managing the advisory services provided. This would involve sharing of the terms and conditions of the contract (excluding the financial terms) and a clearer understanding by everyone – the point of contact, the primary contact point, the expert's supervisor and the expert – of their respective roles and responsibilities. The expert's semi-annual reports to the Secretariat should be shared with the point of contact and the primary contact point.

xix. The Secretariat needs to recognise that the primary contact point cannot function as a technical project monitor. If these services are needed, they should be funded within the project budget and carried out by fully dedicated monitors.

xx. Post-conflict states cannot provide local funding to support the Secretariat's projects and technical assistance assignments. The Secretariat should factor in the necessary support for experts in areas of transportation, computer equipment, reference materials and job aides as part of the assignment's costs. For projects, the Secretariat must identify and fund all costs.

## **Conclusion**

The post-conflict period in Sierra Leone's transition from civil war to economic growth and development is over. The Secretariat has made significant contributions to the country's recovery through support to core public services and to the elections. There can be improvements for the next post-conflict plan, as the lessons learned are incorporated into the Secretariat's development practice.

However, the good will built up in Sierra Leone has been diminished by the failure of four high profile projects in support of SME development. These poor results have done harm to several communities, to the reputation of the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning and the Commonwealth. As a responsible development agent and out of concern and obligation to Sierra Leone, the Secretariat needs to address these deficiencies and find a practical resolution.

## **Recommendations**

- i. The Secretariat is to review the lessons learned from the implementation of the Action Plan in support of post-conflict recovery in Sierra Leone and make the appropriate changes in its development practice.
- ii. The Secretariat is to continue a country plan for Sierra Leone for the next two to three years and then reassess its usefulness to determine whether to continue or return to regular programming by themes.
- iii. The Secretariat is to report its direct assistance support to Sierra Leone to the Development Assistance Cooperation Office (DACO) and possibly work with the office to develop a system to capture technical assistance co-operation for all donors.
- iv. SASD is to meet with the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning (MODEP) to develop a workout plan for the four projects that have unacceptable outcomes. The aim of the workout should be to provide the needed business services to the community in a financially sustainable manner. If this cannot be done, the machines should be removed and sold so that their physical presence does not serve as a constant reminder of failure, frustration and lost hope. To rectify the situation, SASD and the community leaders should identify an appropriate business owner, and provide her/him with a simple machine, appropriate to the Sierra Leonean reality. Options suggested from the evaluation review include:
  - completing the plant commissioning and training for the six oil palm plants and the four SMEs;
  - removing and selling the inappropriate machines and donating the funds to the community for development projects (all projects);
  - removing and selling the inappropriate machines and using the proceeds to purchase appropriate machinery available within Sierra Leone. This option may require additional money for the machines and training costs (all projects, except the salt factory);
  - in the case of the salt factory, the machinery should be gathered up and stored in an appropriate warehouse and sold by the Privatization Commission. The Rotifunk Women's Association should be provided with appropriate machines from local dealers; and
  - the brick making and roof tile machines are to be either rented out by community leaders or given to the one of the persons trained to run as a sole proprietor small production unit.

**ANNEX 1: LIST OF PROJECT EXPENDITURES BY YEAR**

<b>Project name &amp; code</b>	<b>1999/00</b>	<b>2000/01</b>	<b>2001/02</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>Total</b>
Inspector General of Police							
Commonwealth Police Development Task Force							No cost
Training programme/ capacity building for Sierra Leone police officers /GSIE085				£65,260	£43,874		£109,134
National Election Commission of Sierra Leone							
Special advisor to the Electoral Commission /GSIE073		£35,000	£37,760	£2,773			£104,783
Legal advisor/GSIE076			£9,119	£48,334	£14,933		£72,386
Training of local election observer experts /GSIE080			£105,640				£105,640
Observers of voter registration /PSIE106							Not available
Commonwealth observer group /PSIE109							Not available
Assistance to National Election Watch (NEW) /PSIE113				£3,587			£3,587
Electoral expert to Sierra Leone /PSIE140				£2,127	£6,186		£8,313
Electoral expert to Sierra					£6,186		£6,186

Project name & code	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	Total
Leone /PSIE145							
Commonwealth observer team for local government elections /PSIE146							Not available
Assistance to domestic election observers /PSIE147					£5,970		£5,970
Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender & Children's Affairs							
Advisor to the Ministry /GSIE077		£18,000	£9,328				£27,328
Technical expert in gender & development /GSIE079				£10,224			£10,224
National Workshop on Women and Men in Partnership for Post-Conflict Weak Reconstruction		£49,629	£67,284				£116,913
Ministry of Development and Economic Planning							
Gender specialist: PRSP /GSIE081				£7,819	£40,694	£26,000	£74,513
Establishment of stock exchange /XSIE016				£11,680	£23,414	£48,893	£83,987
Development of affordable housing construction industry /XSIE026	£34,903	£83,401	£84,303	£73,425	£48,625		£324,657
Development of small & medium enterprises				£269,356	£88,258		£357,614

Project name & code	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	Total
Small-scale refined salt facility /XSIE030				£239,341	£83,830	£6,093	£329,264
Technical assistance in customs modernisation & trade facilitation /XSIE027		£30,000	£25,814				£55,814
Technical assistance in customs modernisation /XSIE031					£45,145	£70,000	£115,145
Development of small & medium-scale palm oil & palm kernel processing facilities /XSIE032				£371,422	£169,951	£96,350	£637,723
Ministry of Finance							
Debt recording & management system		£10,118	£7,129				£17,247
Ministry of Trade and Industry							
Trade policy advisor					£34,027	£51,221	£85,248
Ministry of Agriculture							
Director-General, Agriculture						£71,553	£71,553
Ministry of Justice							
Judges at the High Court for Criminal Cases and Court of Appeal /GSIE083				£2,715	£91,144	£104,850	£198,709
Judges at the High Court for Criminal Cases and Court of Appeal /GSIE087					£44,519	£30,000	£74,443

Project name & code	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	Total
Prosecutor, anti-corruption /GSIE082				£1,799		£72,644	£115,543
Ministry of Foreign Affairs							
Diplomatic Training /GSIE074		£33,900	£33,900	£29,556	£3,038		£100,394
Training of Sierra Leoneans <sup>61</sup>	£62,257	£57,617	£53,139	£104,252	£111,658	£115,398	£504,321
Total <sup>62</sup>	£126,410	£318,567	£433,416	£1.244 m	£861,452	£693,002	£3.676 m
Total <sup>63</sup>		£322,902	£340,015	£1.217m	£793,500	£547,735	

<sup>61</sup> The numbers were 34 trained for 99/00; 37 for FY 2000/02; 53 for FY 2001/02; 340 for FY 2002/03; 155 for FY 2003/04; and 57 for FY 2004/05.

<sup>62</sup> Information provided to the evaluator by the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division (SPED) dated 17 September 2004. This was the only available information by project name (not number) available for the review. The annual spending figures did not always correspond to the ones found in the file records, nor to the total amounts found in other reports.

<sup>63</sup> Draft Commonwealth Secretariat Sierra Leone Technical Co-operation Framework: 2006/07-2007/08, p. 11. This report lists only the total amount provided per year in direct assistance to Sierra Leone.

**Annex 2:**  
**Details of the Action Plan's Activity Results and Sustainability Status as of December 2006**

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
<b>INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE</b>				
Commonwealth Police Development Task Force (CPTF)	No cost	Sec Gen used his good offices to contact DfID to head up police reform & to recruit 5 senior police officers from Commonwealth countries to join the task force (1998)	The name CPTF continued to be used for the meetings of foreign experts that co-ordinated training & advisory input. Other than the good offices role, there was no further input from the Secretariat	<b>Sustainability achieved:</b> The police force reform is expected to be sustainable
Training programme/ capacity building for Sierra Leone police officers /GSIE085	£109,134	40 senior SL police officers were exposed to community policing practice in Botswana through a 2-week study tour & seminars/briefings. When the tour occurred, community policing had already been introduced into SL (Nov-Dec 03 & Aug-Sept 04)	There was a high degree of satisfaction expressed with these tours. Officers from Botswana had come to Sierra Leone to assess needs & had designed the tour and seminars appropriately	<b>Sustainability achieved:</b> The study tour occurred in the context of police force reform. Given this organisational effort, the project results are considered sustainable
<b>NATIONAL ELECTION COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE (NEC)</b>				
Special advisor to the Electoral Commission /GSIE073	£104,783	The former Ghanaian Electoral Commissioner was funded for 12 months to help NEC prepare for and carry out the 2002 Parliamentary and Presidential elections (Jan-May 02)	The entire NEC staff changed after the elections & no file documents for this assignment were found. As the elections were considered to be fair and free, it is assumed that the assistance provided was	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but not achieved:</b> Due to the complete turnover of NEC staff, the assignment results in terms of building local capacity were not

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
			satisfactory.	achieved.
Legal advisor /GSIE076	£72,386	A senior lawyer functioned as NEC staff lawyer for 2½ years (July 02-Sept 03)	Wrote the 2002 Electoral Law based on the consolidation of 30 different statues since 1961, which was passed by Parliament. Also write the Code of Conduct for Political Parties	<b>Not intended to be sustainable, but some of the products developed were sustainable:</b> NEC still requires a senior staff lawyer after the Secretariat project is over. The laws developed are in use
Training of local election observer experts /GSIE080	£105,640	7 short-term observers/experts (1-2 months each) were provided to train 125 trainers of local groups in how to observe elections, to train others in the same skills & to supervise local observation teams (Feb-May 02)	3,000 observer manuals produced and train-the-trainer sessions provided. These 125 trainers in turn trained 2,200 local observers (see PSIE/113). The core training materials remain, but will need to be updated for the next elections	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but was not:</b> Knowledge & skills successfully transferred. The local observer groups feel they can carry out the election observation organisation & training themselves if they have the necessary core funding.
Observers of voter registration /PSIE106	Not available	3 persons were sent to observe the voter registration period for 10 days in January 2002	No report available	
Commonwealth observer group /PSIE109	Not available	An 11-person team was sent to observe the May 2002 Presidential and Parliamentary elections for 3 weeks. The Commonwealth team was 1 of 3 international observer groups	Based on their observations, the elections were deemed fair and free; The group gave international & local credibility to the elections	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> This was a one-off activity

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
Assistance to National Election Watch (NEW)/ PSIE113	£3,587	Provided funding support to a coalition of 18 organisations, which carried out the local election observation	No report available. December 2006 interviews confirmed that skills & knowledge were transferred	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but was not:</b> Knowledge & skills successfully transferred but NEW requires core funding for long-term
Electoral expert to Sierra Leone /PSIE140	£8,313		No report available	
Electoral expert to Sierra Leone /PSIE145	£6,186		No report available	
Commonwealth observer team for local government elections /PSIE146	Not available	A 7-person team was sent for 10 days to observe the local elections in May 2004, the first in 30 years	Based on their observations the elections were deemed fair & free; international & local credibility conferred on the elections	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> A one-off activity
Assistance to domestic election observers /PSIE147	£5,970		No report available	
<b>MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE, GENDER &amp; CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS</b>				
Advisor to the Ministry /GSIE077	£27,328	Short-term (2 months) advisor supported to provide general advice to the Minister & to plan/co-ordinate the National Workshop on Women & Men in Partnership for Post-Conflict Reconstruction (Jan-Mar 01)	No assignment report available. The National Workshop was well attended and considered a success	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> A one-off activity to assist in planning

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
Technical expert in gender & development /GSIE079	£10,224	A short-term advisor (6 months) was provided to the Ministry	Helped to develop a 5-year strategic plan, wrote project proposals for donor funding, organised 6 one-day training sessions for staff in other government ministries in Freetown & in the provinces	<b>Likely to be sustainable:</b> The advisor helped to build the Ministry's capacity. The Ministry has more knowledgeable & informed staff as a result
National Workshop on Women and Men in Partnership for Post-Conflict Reconstruction	£116,913	200 people attended the 4-day national consultation, including 6 ministers, 8 traditional chiefs, high-ranking civil servants, NGOs, media personnel & citizens with a third from the provinces; the consultation took place from 21-24 May 2001	15 background papers were presented, 43 recommendations were developed and a report was published & circulated	<b>Not intended to be sustainable.</b> There was no mechanism established in the plan for follow-up to the recommendations
<b>Ministry of Development and Economic Planning (MODEP)</b>				
Gender Specialist: PRSP/ GSIE081	£74,513	A long-term advisor over 1 year (two 6-month periods) was provided to develop the gender framework for the PRS	Advisor worked in a line position, carrying out the functions of a gender policy advisor in the Poverty Alleviation Strategy Co-ordinating Office of MODEP. Gender was satisfactorily included in the PRS of June 2005. A new PRS will be written every 3-5 years. This position will have to be staffed in the future	<b>Not intended to be sustainable, but some of the products developed were sustainable:</b> Gender issues were successfully incorporated in the PRS. A new advisor will have to be hired for the next PRS, as there was no skill transfer in this assignment

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
Establishment of stock exchange /XSIE016	£83,987 <sup>64</sup>	Secretariat technical assistance from ELS, plus 3 short-term advisors (1-3 months each) worked with a local committee to draft legislation to establish a stock market & to revise the 1929 Company's Act. Project has been operational since July 2002 & was still ongoing in Dec 06	Two draft bills have been prepared & are waiting approval by the Cabinet and the Parliament. It is unlikely that the exchange will be established as there has been no business plan prepared to show its operating costs/revenues. There are only 6 public companies in the country with shares, which is too small a market for the exchange to be run on a viable basis	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but not achieved yet:</b> If the Companies Act is passed, this will provide support to the business-enabling environment. The stock exchange is not expected to be set up, as there are little prospects for its economic sustainability

<sup>64</sup> Includes funding up to June 2005. An estimated £55,000 was spent in FY 05/06, bringing the total cost to nearly £139,000.

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
Development of affordable housing construction industry /XSIE026	£314,657	Machinery for the production of bricks and roofing tiles was provided to 6 organisations in Freetown & 18 chiefdoms outside of the capital. Training was provided by 2 short-term advisors (1 local, 1 foreign) to 300-500 persons in the use of these building material technologies. The aim was to have 10,000 houses built in 5 years & generate employment for 30,000 people (FY 99-05)	It is likely that none of the 24 production units are currently functioning as the project design did not include a business plan, provision for working capital, training in marketing or small business coaching & project monitoring. No more than 20 houses were built in total	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but was not achieved:</b> All of the 24 production units were set up without the preparation of a business plan showing operating costs, set up costs and sources of capital/revenue. None of the units are likely to be functioning as of December 2006. It is likely that few if any of the people trained are working using their skills & knowledge

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
Development of small & medium enterprises /XSIE028	£357,614	Six micro production sites were provided with machinery & training: pepper processing, rice milling, cashew nut processing, cassava processing (2 sites) and wood products & timber processing	The wood products plant located in Freetown employs 30 youths & sells office, hospital & school furniture based on competitive tendering orders, mainly from the GoSL. The cashew plant located at Kambia is operating at 15% of installed capacity due to lack of working capital, insufficient revenue & lack of raw material. It employs 14 people, mainly women, part-time. The other 4 SMEs are not functioning due to a variety of reasons: machinery not provided as specified; machinery theft/no money to pay for security; lack of working capital; machinery not maintained & repaired; lack of generator fuel; lack of transport; trained operators have employment elsewhere; no management skill; disputes among community members on the oversight committee	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but was not achieved:</b> All of the SMEs were set up without the preparation of a business plan showing operating costs, set up costs and sources of investment capital/ revenue. The 3 community-owned plants functioned during the training period, but stopped operation shortly thereafter. Two of the 3 privately-owned SMEs are functioning. Except for the wood products & furniture manufacturing manager, none of the SME owners/operators had any previous business experience or experience in running a production plant

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
Small-scale refined salt facility /XSIE030	£329,264	Machinery for an industrial salt production facility of 60 acres (50 acres of salt ponds & a 10 acre plant, office, workshop & laboratory site), employing 36 people, 32 of whom were to be technical or university science/ engineering graduates was provided to the 200 members of the Rotifunk Rural Women's Association (RRWA) - who are mainly illiterate women who currently produce salt manually	The equipment was delivered & the building of 1 of the 5 required buildings was approximately 33% completed. No earthwork was carried out to build the salt ponds, the bore well, the road or the peer jetties. The equipment was never assembled as the RRWA, even with the support of the Rotifunk Community Development Committee (RCDC), could not raise the necessary start up & working capital. Neither did they have the working capital to run the plant once it was constructed, nor the qualified people living in the community to work at the facility	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but was not achieved:</b> Approximately 50 pieces of large machinery are either stored in valuable community meeting space or scattered throughout the village in public view - a reminder to everyone of the failure of RRWA, RCDC, GoSL and the Commonwealth. The funding of this project has caused harm to RRWA, the village, MODEP and the Secretariat's reputation
Development of small & medium-scale palm oil & palm kernel processing facilities /XSIE032	£637,723	Machinery for 6 micro oil palm mills was provided. Najala University established an oil palm nursery of 3,660 seedlings on 10 acres, & provided training to 86 oil palm producer farmers & 18 agriculture extension workers. 50 farmers received rehabilitation packages of £50 cash, machetes & a wheelbarrow. 6,340 seedlings - the balance of the 10,000 supplied by the Commonwealth supplier -	None of the plants are operational. The plants were apparently designed & built in Malaysia specifically for Sierra Leone, & never actually operated anywhere in the world before. None of the plants have been commissioned (that is, the	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but was not achieved:</b> All 6 oil mill plants were set up without the preparation of a business plan showing operating costs, set up costs & sources of

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
		were given to 12 farmers and farmer groups/co-operatives. In addition, 28 hand presses (a potential small business) were given to 28 communities	certification has not been provided that the machinery provided is in running order & the plant operators trained). No environmental assessment was done prior to the purchase of these plants. The amount of firewood that they consume is excessive & costly, & will likely destroy the surrounding forests should the plants become operational. Approximately 86 farmers have been trained & 100 given oil palm seedlings	capital/revenue. Four of the plants are owned by the community, which are unable to operate them because of the lack of working capital & trained personnel. The other plants, which are owned by the private sector (a family & Najala University) have defective parts & the owners do not have the funds nor the know-how to repair them
<b>MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC PLANNING (MODEP)</b>				
Technical assistance in customs modernisation & trade facilitation /XSIE027	£55,814	A joint Commonwealth Secretariat /UNCTAD team conducted a diagnostic of the Customs & Excise Department, recommending improvements in physical infrastructure, computer systems & training and in developing modern WTO-compatible customs legislation and a Valuation Verification Unit	The Customs and Excise Department was able to use this diagnostic to interest other donors (the World Bank & DfID) in helping to support its modernisation	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> A one-off activity
Technical assistance in customs modernisation /XSIE031	£115,145 <sup>65</sup>	A management consulting company was hired to undertake a comprehensive review of the customs laws & to draft modern, WTO-compatible customs	The draft legislation was prepared and commented on by the Customs & Excise	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but not achieved yet:</b> Once passed

<sup>65</sup> Records show that there was an additional funding in FY 05/06 of £82,600 bringing the total costs to close to £197,000.

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
		legislation	Department, but has not yet been passed by the Cabinet & Parliament	into law, Sierra Leone will be in compliance with its treaty obligations. The issue of sustainability will then be the enforcement of the law
<b>MINISTRY OF FINANCE</b>				
Debt recording & management system /TSIE012	£17,247	A short-term advisor & the Secretariat ELASD assisted in reinstalling the debt recording & management system (CS DRMS 2000+) & in providing training to the Ministry of Finance. The records of the Ministry of Finance were destroyed by fire in 1997	80-85% of the debt database had been recovered by the end of the workshop, and the records between the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance were reconciled. The records were completed and used for Sierra Leone's IMF-HIPC (heavily indebted poor countries) conversion exercise	<b>Intended to be sustainable and is sustainable:</b> The systems remain in place and are being used. The Ministry of Finance has signed a licensing agreement with the Secretariat, which ensures ongoing supervision & upgrading
Advisor to the HIPC Ministerial Forum /GCWG120	Not available	A short-term advisor (8 months) was seconded to the Secretariat offices/International Finance & Capital Markets section of the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) to provide logistical support & policy advice to the rotating Chair of the HIPC Forum. The HIPC forum was held in Sierra Leone in March 2004	The HIPC forum was held in Freetown and attended by finance ministers, the IMF & the World Bank. A number of recommendations were made to improve the prospects for long-term debt sustainability	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> This is a one-off activity. This was a meeting to discuss and exchange views; the forums are held annually
<b>MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY</b>				

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
Organisational Review of the Ministry of Trade and Industry	Not available	A short-term (3 months) expert carried out a review of the Ministry's functions and organisational structure to recommend its modernisation	Budgetary constraints hindered the restructuring of the Ministry as had been recommended, although there were a few modifications made in the organisational structure	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> This project was an input to the Ministry's decision to modernise & reorganise
Trade policy advisor	£85,248	An expert was appointed for a 2-year position as the Director of Policy, Planning and Research, essentially functioning in a line position	The expert co-ordinated data for Sierra Leone's first trade policy external review by the WTO & helped to set up the National Coordinating Committee on Trade. A framework for a review of trade policy was developed	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> The advisor filled a staff position. When the advisor left, there was no replacement
<b>MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE</b>				
Director-General, Agriculture	£71,583	An expert was appointed for a 2-year assignment as the Director-General in a line position. His task was to help with the Ministry's reorganisations & the implementation of a new agriculture policy as set out by law	The Commonwealth expert was brought in as a change catalyst; however, there was a difference of opinion about the interpretation of the law among Ministry staff, which meant that the expert was unable to be as effective as had been hoped. In addition, his role as a change agent was not clear	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but was not:</b> No significant changes were introduced. There was no counterpart change agent assigned to this position. Counterpart training was done in the form of knowledge transfer to 4-5 Ministry staff. A new Director-General was appointed from existing

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
				staff after the advisor left
<b>MINISTRY OF JUSTICE</b>				
Judges at the High Court for Criminal Cases and Court of Appeal /GSIE083	£198,709	The provision of 2 judges to the High Court for Criminal Cases & 1 judge to the Court of Appeals, totalling 8 years of service between all 3 judges. The project was co-funded with DfID's Justice Sector Development Programme	The judges cleared a backlog of cases, including one where a person had been in prison for 22 years without a trial	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> Commonwealth judges were filling in critical labour shortages as the country did not have the skilled professionals
Judges at the High Court for Criminal Cases and Court of Appeal /GSIE087	£74,443	The provision of 1 judge to the High Court for Criminal Cases, totalling 9 months of service. The project was co-funded with DfID's Justice Sector Programme. The judge was later nominated to the UN Special Court for Sierra Leone	The judge worked on civil cases (not criminal ones) & reviewed cases that had been backlogged since 1992. Prison visits were also carried out & interventions were made for prisoners who were without trials	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> The Commonwealth judges were filling in critical personnel shortages for which the country did not have enough skilled professionals
Prosecutor, anti-corruption /GSIE082	£115,543	2 prosecutors were provided, each for a 2-year assignment	The Anti-Corruption Commission was a poorly functioning institution during these assignments, making it difficult for the Commonwealth prosecutors to be effective. The prosecutors assigned were not sufficiently experienced to prosecute high profile cases	<b>Not intended to be sustainable:</b> The Commonwealth prosecutors were filling in critical personnel shortages for which the country did not have enough skilled professionals

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
<b>MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS</b>				
Diplomatic training /GSIE074	£100,394	2 short-term experts were commissioned to develop a training programme on diplomatic protocol, to write a training manual & to deliver the training	22 persons were trained (21M/1F): 14 were new recruits to the Ministry & 8 were students from an Education College. The manual covered 1-hour of the 3-day training course	<b>Intended to be sustainable, but was not;</b> There were no trainers trained
<b>MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORT</b>				
Sub-regional workshop: National Youth Policy & National Youth Councils	n/a		No report available	
Regional youth forum workshop on HIV/AIDS	n/a		No report available	
National Youth Policy review	n/a		No report available	
Diploma consultations & evaluations	n/a		No report available	
Sub-regional workshop on Micro-Credit Management	n/a		No report available	
<b>MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS</b>				
In-country training programme for Parliamentary and Political	£13,000	A workshop for around 126 parliamentarians was planned for June/July 2003	As the funds did not arrive in time, the workshop was called	Not applicable

Project	2000-2005	Description	Results of the activities	Sustainability
Affairs /GAFR214			off and planned to be rescheduled. As of 2006, this had not happened	
<b>MINISTRY OF EDUCATION</b>				
Pan-Commonwealth citizenship education project manager /HCWG131	n/a	No report available	No report available	
<b>UNIVERSITY OF SIERRA LEONE</b>				
Training support /GAFR/216	£35,000	Training programme on Physiology, Histopathology & HIV/AIDs, College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences (June 2003); Training on Modern Teaching Skills, Research & Evaluation (Forah Bay College - July-August 2003); University staff training on Management, Modularisation and Modern Teaching (June 2004); Consultant for the computerisation of libraries (March 2004); Higher Education Management Programme (senior assistant registrar attended course in the UK June-July 2003); Attachment and study tour to the Ass. Commonwealth Universities (UK)	No report available	