

# PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE CHRISTIAN AID SIERRA LEONE

POVERTY

Strategy 2012–17





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

## WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO

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

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

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

From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, Christian Aid works in some of the world's poorest communities, supporting projects on the basis of need, not religion, ethnicity or nationality.

We work with, and through, partners including civil society organisations (CSOs), research institutions, churches, faith groups and social movements, as well as governments, the private sector and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

In 2011/12, Christian Aid gave grants to 578 partner organisations across Africa, Asia and the Middle East and Latin America and the Caribbean. Our total income was £95.5m (Le614bn), including £36.7m (Le236bn) in funding from governments and other institutions.

## OUR GLOBAL STRATEGY

At Christian Aid, we believe human action is responsible for the underlying causes of poverty and that when people work together, the world can be changed. This thinking has framed our new corporate strategy, *Partnership for Change*.

We believe that at the root of poverty is a lack of power – the power to have your say and be heard, or to know your rights and demand them. It is clear to us that poverty can be eradicated only through helping people secure power to help themselves. Christian Aid has identified five areas on which to focus our work:

- 1. Power to change institutions**  
We want to see all people having the power to influence institutions – so that the decisions affecting their lives are made responsibly and fairly
- 2. The right to essential services**  
We want to see all people able to fulfil their right to access the services essential for a healthy, secure life.
- 3. Fair shares in a constrained world**  
We want to see all people have a fair and sustainable share of the world's resources.
- 4. Equality for all**  
We want to see a more inclusive world where identity – gender, ethnicity, caste, religion, class and sexual orientation – is no longer a barrier to equal treatment.
- 5. Tackling violence and building peace**  
We want to see vulnerable people protected from violence and living in peace.

Christian Aid Sierra Leone's new strategy follows the launch of *Partnership for Change* in 2012.

## A TIME OF NATION BUILDING

In November 2012, Sierra Leone successfully held free, fair and transparent local government, parliamentary and presidential elections, widely hailed as a landmark moment in the nation's journey towards democracy.

But despite the country's steps towards democratic maturity, the political landscape remains polarised along south-eastern and north-western regional lines. This undermines national cohesion and ultimately hinders development.

Post-war Sierra Leone is characterised by nation building: the establishment of new national institutions, the improvement of systems and procedures, and the rehabilitation or reconstruction of damaged community and state infrastructure across the country. Sierra Leone is slated to grow by around 35 per cent over the next five years – albeit from a very low starting point. More than 60 per cent of the people still live below the poverty line.

Since the 2008 global food, fuel and economic crisis, there has been an increasing scramble for land and water from large-scale agribusinesses to grow crops mainly for biofuel or export, or simply to speculate. Land grabs are affecting the livelihoods of poor farmers and need to be tackled alongside the promotion of more sustainable smallholder farming models. More than 70 per cent of the population – mainly women – depend on the land for their livelihoods, but access to markets for these producers is very limited and they often sell to middle men who make all the profits, further driving them into poverty.

There has been some progress in opening up political space to promote people's increased participation in community mobilisation and in building a constituency of empowered citizens for planning and development. There has also been some success in the fight against corruption and further steps are being taken towards government accountability. The national strategic agenda is now focused on enhancing governance, promoting health systems through equitable institutions and social norms and promoting growth through private sector development, employment creation and new laws and policies. Christian Aid's new strategy promotes synergies with these national efforts.

Sierra Leone still faces huge challenges in lifting people out of poverty. Formal social services provision remains fairly inadequate and post-conflict issues still prevail: huge urbanisation, high numbers of unskilled youths, and poor water and sanitation services. There is great pressure on urban energy resources and road networks are largely underdeveloped. Key ministries and agencies – such as education, health and infrastructure – are weakly devolved and ineffective. Weak administration has limited the government's capacity to convert policies into real benefits for marginalised women, men and young people.

Sierra Leone is a patriarchal society in which women are disadvantaged and under-represented in both the traditional and formal governance systems. Cultural norms and practices discriminate against women, hampering their access to power and resources.

Epidemics, localised flooding and wild fires continue to affect vulnerable sections of the population, and the absence of robust national emergency plans often results in reactive rather than proactive and well coordinated responses.



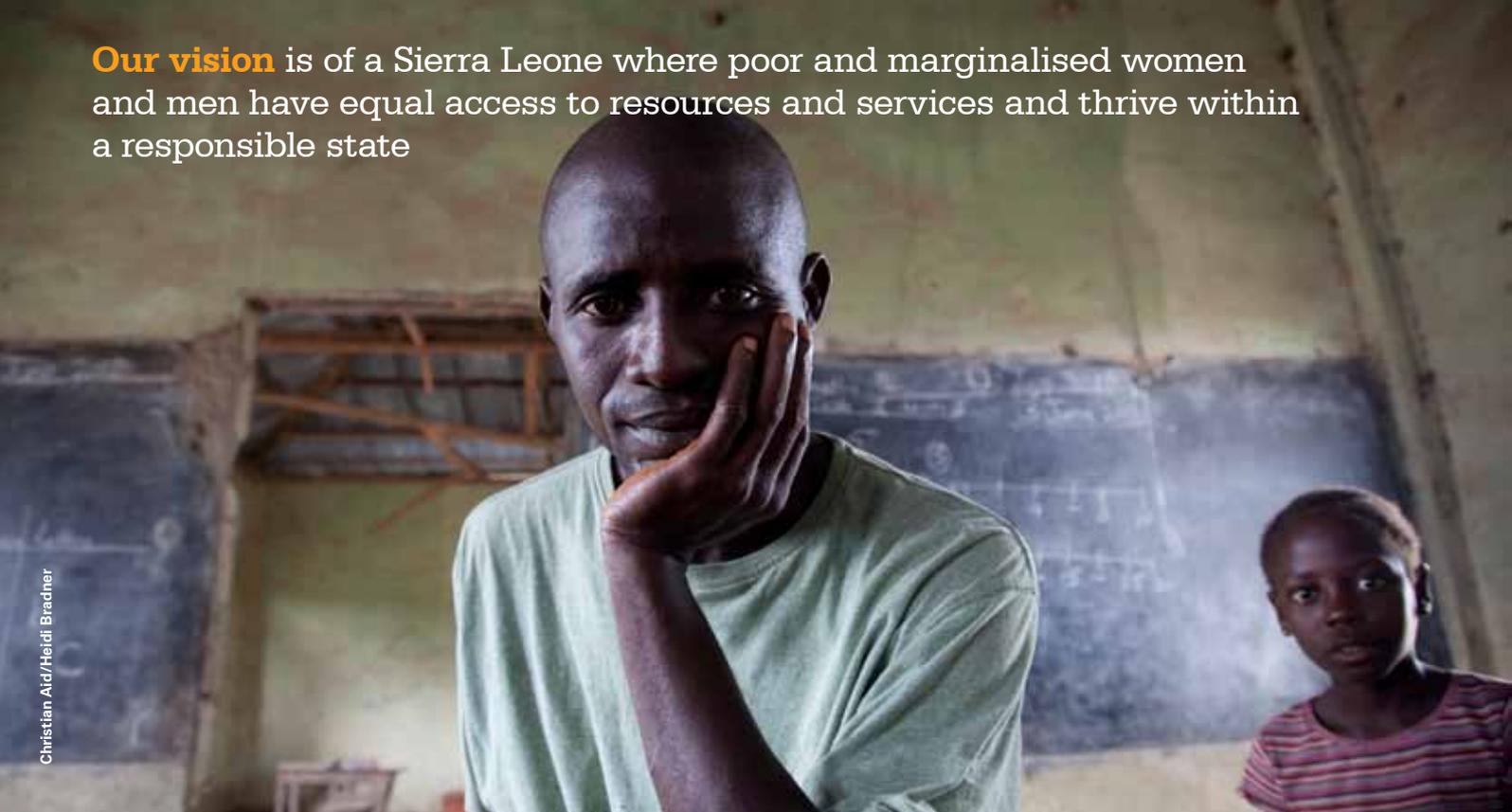
Christian Aid/Heidi Bradner

**There has been remarkable progress, but Sierra Leone still faces huge challenges in lifting people out of poverty**



Christian Aid/Heidi Bradner

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



Christian Aid/Heidi Bradner

## OUR WORK IN SIERRA LEONE

Christian Aid's Sierra Leone programme started in 1988 with a focus on service delivery and humanitarian assistance. Since the civil war ended in 2002, Christian Aid's work has had a greater emphasis on building the capacity of local partners to advocate on national issues, channelling resources towards ensuring the formation and strengthening of CSOs, networks and coalitions, and the development of projects around HIV, microfinance, livelihoods and conflict transformation.

Christian Aid Sierra Leone works with organisations, networks and coalitions at all levels (community, district, regional and national), where we have a strong knowledge base and influence, especially in the southern, eastern and western parts of the country where we have been working for more than two decades. We have partners in very remote areas where few INGOs operate, due to the difficult terrain, as well as national partners who challenge the systems and structures that perpetuate poverty and inequality in Sierra Leone.

Our programme strategy 2006–2011 supported the establishment of four well-organised civil society networks that became registered entities – the Budget Advocacy Network (BAN), the National Advocacy Coalition on Extractives (NACE), the Network of HIV Positives (NETHIPs) and SLENARELA, Sierra Leone's branch of the African network of religious leaders living with or affected by HIV – working in the areas of economic justice, inequality and promoting the rights of people living with HIV. Our work also centred on voice, livelihood, and the strengthening of community governance structures to promote development.

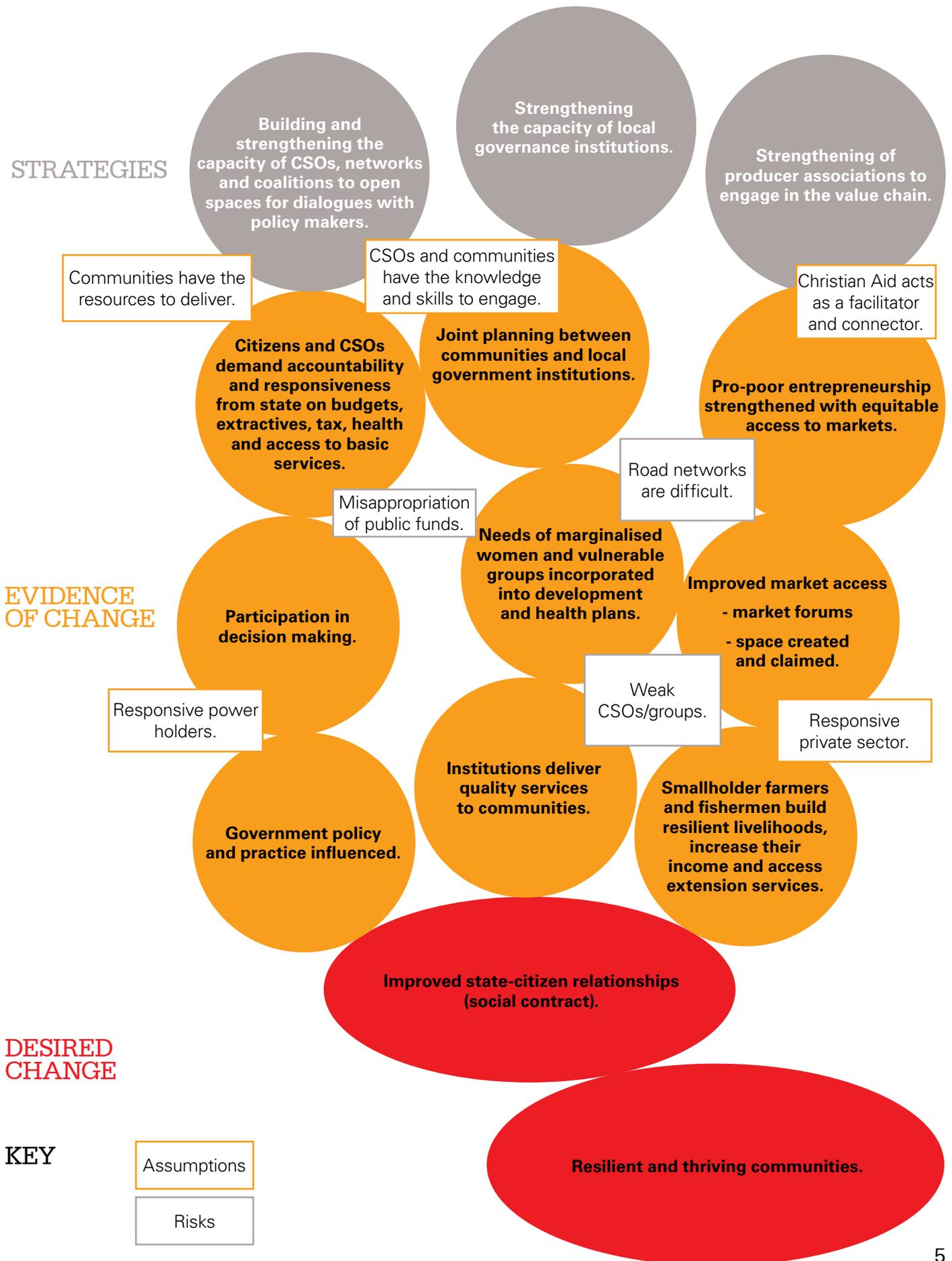
From 2006 to 2009, Christian Aid Sierra Leone implemented two major European Commission (EC)-funded projects – one focusing on community-based responses to HIV, the other promoting human

rights and democratisation. From 2009, we secured three further EC grants for water and sanitation (Pujehun District), health governance (Kailahun District) and food security (Bonthe District) projects. In 2011, Christian Aid won a contract from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to manage phase 3 of the ENCISS civil society governance project in Sierra Leone, which focuses on strengthening the interaction between civil society and the state. We have a Comic Relief-supported HIV project, which includes South to South learning with Christian Aid Nigeria and malaria prevention and control to reduce deaths among children and young people. Our programme is part of DFID's Governance and Transparency Fund (GTF) work, which in Sierra Leone aims to increase women's political participation in Kailahun District.

Since 2003, Christian Aid Sierra Leone has received funding from Irish Aid. This project aims to strengthen citizens' capacity and opportunities to transform public policy-making, natural resource governance, budgeting and practice to be more in their interests, particularly on inequality issues such as land rights, mining, oil and gas transparency, access to basic services, and tax justice, and to ensure space for civil society is maintained or widened. Gender has been a cross-cutting priority for the programme since 2005 and power analysis since 2009.

The major thrust of our work for a decade has been promoting more accountable governance. Through the formation and strengthening of CSOs, networks and coalitions, we have worked to influence government policies on public financial management, tax, natural resources and chieftancy reform. We have empowered communities to take the lead in their own development and built partnerships with local and international NGOs, which will be important in achieving our objectives under our new strategy *Partnership for Change*.

# OUR THEORY OF CHANGE



## OUR NEW STRATEGY FOR SIERRA LEONE

Our Sierra Leone programme contributes strongly to Christian Aid's global strategic goals. The power to change institutions objective is at the core of the programme and cuts across the other objectives in our work to influence government policy and seek greater accountability and responsiveness. Through our governance, community health and HIV work we will press for communities' rights to essential services. Our actions on resilient livelihoods, access to markets and disaster risk reduction seek fair shares for the poor and marginalised in a constrained world. In all our work, we will strive to ensure equality for all and for men and women to be given the chance to participate in their own development.

We understand that poor and marginalised people have the solutions to their own problems. We want marginalised women, men, youth and people with disabilities to be empowered to demand accountability and transparency, and have access

to productive and sustainable resources. We want them to know their rights to participate, to be heard and to hear and that they have a responsibility to contribute.

Christian Aid will continue to offer technical and financial support to our partners, with a particular focus on the faith-based organisations with which we work. We will connect our coalitions and networks with others and increase their reach, leverage and impact in a way that ensures value for money. We will support partners to use power analysis, gender-sensitive programming, participatory vulnerability and capacity assessments (PVCA) and to share lessons in their work. We will be transparent and accountable to our partners and the communities with which they work and integrate Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) principles into our work from 2013.

Our two programme objectives overlap and will be achieved by working at the community, district and national levels. Christian Aid Sierra Leone will work in two closely linked geographical areas in the east and south of the country, which have similarities in language and culture.

### **Objective 1 – To strengthen CSOs, networks and coalitions, and empower poor, marginalised women, men, youth and people with disabilities to expand the space and demand accountability for equitable service delivery and resource allocation within a responsible state.**

We aim to:

- support the participation of poor and marginalised groups, especially women, in governance and decision-making
- build and strengthen CSO networks in advocacy and lobbying
- support accountability and transparency initiatives
- use research on land grabbing, mining, tax, chiefdom-governance reform and budgets to push for transparency and accountability
- scale up our HIV work into broader community health, malaria, TB and mother and child health
- help build the capacity of people living with HIV, health community animators and HIV networks to influence decision-makers and demand rights and services
- involve communities in monitoring health services
- highlight gender issues that make young women and young men more vulnerable to infection
- strengthen the capacity of partners and communities to claim health rights and demand better health services, particularly for rural women and children
- establish links with the private sector, faith-based institutions, civil society and the media to support initiatives that improve the provision of health information for rural communities
- support advocacy by partners on community health systems strengthening
- advocate for increased resources for health, education and agricultural services
- strengthen coordination and partnership structures at community level
- advocate for pro-poor governance and sustainable use of natural resources
- advocate for the integration of conflict transformation approaches into pro-poor resource governance work
- track and monitor national budgets
- increase engagement with the government business cycle, policy formulation and monitoring processes, and intervene at the right times
- seek stronger action by the media
- scale up work with partners and communities on downward accountability through HAP
- collaborate with sub-regional bodies for additional impact.

**Objective 2 – To strengthen poor and marginalised women, men and young people to gain access and control over productive resources and build resilient and sustainable livelihoods.**

We aim to:

- support communities to move up the value chain
- increase access to productive resources, especially by smallholder farmers and fishers
- promote initiatives to ensure food-secure households
- strengthen linkages with the private sector and tap into research on markets
- push for National Agricultural Budget research on increased government allocations to agriculture
- link evidence from sustainable smallholder farming practices with National Agricultural Budget analysis and advocacy work
- promote sustainable, climate-resilient and environmentally sound farming and fishing practices
- develop the resilience and emergency preparedness of smallholders to reduce their vulnerabilities in the face of natural and man-made disasters
- promote the formation and networking of smallholder groups to strengthen their voice in decision-making on national agricultural policies
- strengthen the capacity of smallholders to effectively engage with markets to increase their incomes
- promote pilot projects that explore equitable access and use of solar power to address the energy needs of remote and vulnerable communities
- increase links between livelihoods work and the extractives sector.



# OUR PARTNERS IN SIERRA LEONE

Budget Advocacy Network (BAN)  
Campaign for Good Governance (CGG)  
Green Scenery  
Methodist Church Sierra Leone (MCSL)  
National Advocacy Coalition on Extractives (NACE)  
Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD)  
Network of HIV Positives in Sierra Leone (NETHIPS)  
Rehabilitation and Development Agency (RADA)  
Search for Common Ground  
Social Enterprises for Development Foundation (SEND)

# CONTACT US

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**Front-cover photo:** Niema Bockarie speaking during a dialogue session on chieftom governance, in the Fowaya community, Peje-Bongre chieftom, Kailahun District. These sessions, facilitated by Christian Aid partner MCSL, empower poor and marginalised women and youth to participate in discussions on human rights issues.

**Christian Aid/Marie-Luise Schueller**

Christian Aid is a member of the

**actalliance**

Christian Aid is a member of ACT – an alliance of more than 130 churches and related organisations that work together in humanitarian assistance, advocacy and development – giving us the ability to respond quickly and easily to emergencies the world over.



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