

Support to the Implementation of the Sierra Leone Reparations Programme (SLRP)

Between 1991 and 2002 a brutal conflict ravaged Sierra Leone, which displaced 2.5 million people and subjected thousands more to gross human rights violations, including widespread killings, torture and sexual abuse. In 2004, two years after the war, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) for Sierra Leone recommended the implementation of a comprehensive reparations programme for the victims of these human rights violations.

The international community through the UN Peacebuilding Fund included the TRC's recommendations into the overall Sierra Leone peacebuilding priority plan, and funded the Sierra Leone Reparations Programme (SLRP). IOM was called upon to provide programmatic and fiduciary oversight to the country's newly established Reparations Directorate in the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) for designing and implementing the SLRP.

Given the capacity needs for implementing a large scale reparations programme, NaCSA required additional technical support, capacity building and expertise. Financed by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IOM and NaCSA jointly developed the SLRP. In particular, IOM supported NaCSA through the development of the SLRP outreach strategy and claim forms, an extensive victim's database and a strategy for delivering the various types of reparation benefits.

Between 2009 and 2013, the SLRP provided reparations to over 32,000 victims including forced amputees, victims of sexual violence, severely war wounded, orphans and war widows.

Benefits included cash grants; medical interventions for sexual violence victims and the severely war wounded; vocational training; and symbolic community reparations measures. Throughout the SLRP, IOM continuously provided technical assistance and legal expertise to build NaCSA's capacity to implement the SLRP.

In 2013, IOM's role to provide programmatic and administrative oversight to the SLRP was extended until December 2014 in order to focus on the most vulnerable beneficiaries. During this time, NaCSA has been providing a comprehensive reparations package to 1,300 amputees and severely war wounded. The package has consisted primarily of rehabilitation grants (accompanied by adequate income generation and financial management training), and also included emergency assistance to 50 beneficiaries in dire health circumstances and immediate medical needs.

Despite efforts by the Government of Sierra Leone, IOM, and the international community, some TRC recommendations remain unimplemented due to lack of resources at national and international level. In support of ongoing activities, IOM however continues to strengthen the NaCSA's Reparations Directorate capacity to continue the advocacy, promotion and delivery of the SLRP in the future.

For more information, kindly contact lpr@iom.int



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