



**DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL PUBLIC BROADCASTING
SERVICE FOR SIERRA LEONE
FINAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE REPORT**

<p style="text-align: center;">Programme Title & Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programme Title: Development of an Independent National Public Broadcasting Service for Sierra Leone• Programme Number: Joint Vision Programme 15• MDTF Office Atlas Number: 00075574	<p style="text-align: center;">Country, Locality(s), Thematic Area(s)²</p> <p>Sierra Leone – Nationwide Democratic Governance</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Participating Organization(s)</p> <p>UNDP, UNIPSIL</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Implementing Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation, Ministry of Information and Communication
<p style="text-align: center;">Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p> <p>MDTF Fund Contribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 792,000 US\$ <p>Agency Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>by Agency (if applicable)</i> <p>Government Contribution <i>(if applicable)</i></p> <p>Other Contribution (donor) <i>(if applicable)</i></p> <p>TOTAL: 792,000 US\$</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Programme Duration (months)</p> <p>Overall Duration: 6 months</p> <p>Start Date³: 24 June 2010</p> <p>Original end date: 31 January 2011</p> <p>Revised End Date: 30 March 2011</p> <p>Operational Closure Date⁴: 26 January 2011</p> <p>Expected Financial Closure Date: 31 March 2011</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Final Programme/ Project Evaluation</p> <p>No formal Evaluation Completed ?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: _____</p> <p>Evaluation Report - Attached</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Submitted By</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Name: Hassan Jalloh○ Title: Project Manager○ Participating Organization (Lead): UNDP○ Contact information: Hassan.jalloh@undp.org

¹ The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

² Priority Area for the Peacebuilding Fund; Sector for the UNDG ITF.

³ The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MDTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MDTF Office GATEWAY](http://mdtf.undp.org) (<http://mdtf.undp.org>).

⁴ All activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MDTF programme have been completed. Agencies to advise the MDTF Office.

FINAL PROGRAMME REPORT

I. PURPOSE

In recognition of the fact that information is power, the international community, in collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL), subscribed to the fact that unbiased, balanced, and independent information from all sectors of society, ethnic groups and political parties was critical to the strengthening of the nascent democracy in post-war Sierra Leone and therefore must be provided to the entire population. The power of the media to enable citizens to participate in national and regional debates was also believed to be of critical importance for the national ownership of democracy. Against this backdrop in 2010, following the closure of two radio stations owned and run by the two major political parties by the Independent Media Commission (IMC), the merger of the former UN radio and Sierra Leone Broadcasting Station (SLBS) was executed with funding initially provided by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) through a project entitled 'Development of an Independent National Public Broadcasting Service for Sierra Leone'. Delivering as One (DaO) Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF), which supported the project currently under review. The objective of the funding was to assist the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) to establish itself as a public service broadcaster in Sierra Leone that contributes to peacebuilding, democracy, human rights, reconciliation, development and the empowerment of the people. The project had three main outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** The capacity of SLBC and its staff is enhanced to broadcast unbiased, neutral and balanced programming that covers the breadth and length of Sierra Leonean society.
- **Outcome 2:** The SLBC is working to become self-sustainable through the development of its commercial services department.
- **Outcome 3:** A national coverage plan is created and near national radio coverage achieved to provide the people of Sierra Leone with access to SLBC programming.

Progress toward the achievement of these outcomes was supported by the project's following expected outputs:

- **Output 1:** The Board of Trustees trained to operate in an independent and responsible manner, and to provide effective oversight of SLBC management with clear policies and a full understanding of their role as a public service broadcaster.
- **Output 2:** The management and staff of SLBC are trained to be competent in their respective jobs and have a clear understanding of SLBC as a public service broadcaster.
- **Output 3:** Initial operational support provided to SLBC to operate reliably, providing daily unbiased and independent news and current affairs programmes, development programmes and entertainment and sports programmes on radio and TV.
- **Output 4:** Detailed strategic plans developed for generating income and resources mobilised to realise these plans.
- **Output 5:** Urgently required equipment procured for radio and TV broadcasting.

The project falls under Programme 15 of the UN Joint Vision for Sierra Leone, Support to Democratic Institutions. Programme 15 supports democratic institutions in the country such as SLBC, the IMC, the Anti-Corruption Commission, the African Peer Review Mechanism, and Parliament so as to complement the achievements secured through electoral democracy. In this regard, there is a significant role for a national broadcaster to play. The GoSL has recognised and embraced the concept that an independent broadcast service better serves the objectives of peacebuilding, good governance and progress than one which is controlled by partisan groups. Against this backdrop, SLBC was created by law in January 2010, replacing SLBS and UN Radio as

the second independent public broadcaster in Africa, presenting a unique and unprecedented opportunity to consolidate a process that began with the establishment of UN Radio. Finally, the project offered the opportunity to empower an information hungry public by supporting the capacity building of and increasing public access to SLBC, a broadcast institution which is truly independent and owned by the public through public funds.

II. ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMME/ PROJECT RESULTS

The project made significant progress towards the achievement of its outcomes.

- **Outcome 1:** The capacity of SLBC and its staff is enhanced to broadcast unbiased, neutral and balanced programming that covers the breadth and length of Sierra Leonean society.

The UN has supported capacity building of SLBC's staff and its ability to become a well-functioning independent public broadcaster through the provision of funds from the PBF and MDTF DaO. The funds have assisted the transition process through the provision of critically needed technical assistance, the renovation of one floor of SLBC to prepare for the transfer of the UN Radio equipment, the provision of required equipment, the payment of severance for terminated staff, and support to the initial operations of SLBC including salary support to temporary SLBC staff during the transition period.

In addition to the abovementioned support, the funding also contributed to the attainment of the following results:

Establishment of an independent public broadcaster: SLBC was officially launched on May 15th 2010 as the second independent public broadcaster in Africa in the presence of the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and the President of Sierra Leone, Ernest Bai Koroma. The Secretary General acknowledged the contribution that the UN Radio has made since 2000 to the peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone as the only radio station that reached the length and breadth of Sierra Leone and that provided independent, neutral and unbiased information. The President emphasised that SLBC is a people's radio station and provides a means through which all Sierra Leoneans can participate in the national dialogue and development process. The President also stressed that SLBC is not a government broadcaster and will have no place for political influence. He encouraged the SLBC Board to provide the necessary policy guidance to ensure the continued independence and neutrality of the institution.

Transfer of UN Radio assets to SLBC: Following the completion of the renovation of the first floor of the SLBC building, assets from the former UN Radio were transferred to the SLBC building and transmitter site at Leicester Peak. These assets included studio equipment, computers and other IT equipment, furniture and air conditioners, and will ensure the smooth operations of SLBC.

Development of key organisational policies: The project provided technical assistance in the development of key institutional policies such as Human Resources (HR) and Financial Management Policies through the recruitment of an international HR Consultant and a National Financial Consultant. The draft HR Policy and Finance Policy have been developed for Board approval. The HR Consultant also supported SLBC in developing job descriptions for the core staff to be recruited and provided support to the recruitment process. In addition, the project supported the audit of SLBC assets and liabilities and the development of a draft 5-year Business Plan to mobilise resources for sustainability.

Recruitment of the Director-General and Deputy Director-General: The Director-General (DG) and Deputy Director General (DDG) were appointed to take up their assignments on October 1st 2010. Interviews took place in early August 2010 with the participation of representatives from the UN as observers. Following the interviews, the DG was appointed by the President on recommendation by the SLBC Board of Trustees and was approved by the Parliament. The DDG was appointed by the Board. The recruitment of both the DG and DDG was a tremendous step forward in the institutional

development of the newly established public broadcaster as these roles had the responsibility to lead the remainder of the staff recruitment processes.

Salary payment support provided: The project provided salary support to approximately 160 temporary SLBC staff for a period of six months between July and December 2010 to ensure effective daily SLBC operations and broadcasting on radio and TV.

Procurement and installation of broadcast equipment: Essential broadcast equipment (including IP network distribution, studio and spares, computer, television distribution, and electronic news gathering equipment) was procured and installed at the SLBC New England location and regional stations around the country. Furthermore, SLBC staff members were trained in the use of the equipment.

- **Outcome 2:** The SLBC is working to become self-sustainable through the development of its commercial services department.

The project provided SLBC with technical assistance and capacity building support in marketing and sales, leasing, corporate branding, programme sponsorship and investment in order to enhance the Commission's resource mobilisation capacity. The project also assisted in the development of detailed strategic plans for income and resource generation. The SLBC Commercial Department has established modalities for effective implementation of plans developed and steps have been taken to proactively track and capture revenue from all SLBC transactions.

Outcome 3: A national coverage plan is created and near national radio coverage achieved to provide the people of Sierra Leone with access to SLBC programming.

Technical assessment of SLBC physical assets: A Technical Consultant conducted a field visit to eight SLBC regional stations in Kabala, Makeni, Magburaka, Kono, Bo, Pujehun, Kenema and Kailahun. The primary objective of the field visit was to carry out an assessment of each station's facilities and equipment including the former UN Radio transmitters. Based on the visit, a report was prepared with recommendations for national radio programming distribution and a coverage plan in addition to equipment and infrastructural needs at the SLBC facilities in Freetown and in the eight regions. A list of required equipment was also drawn up which informed the procurement needs and priorities of the project.

Initially, the passage of the SLBC Act was planned by the end of 2008 while UN Radio planned to close in September 2009, providing for a transition period of nine months. However, the passage of the bill was delayed in order to develop a new law that would reflect international standards of public service broadcasting and promote principles of independent and responsible journalism in support of democratic and socio-economic development. After continued lobbying by civil society and journalists as well as discussions between the GoSL and the UN, the Bill was finally passed and signed at the beginning of 2010, meaning that the transition had to be managed over a three month period as opposed to the nine months that was originally envisaged. This put tremendous pressure on the UN to deliver quickly to manage the transition. Additionally, the delay experienced in establishing the Board of Trustees, triggered by the delay in the passage of the law and the approval process by Parliament, meant that most of the institutional development activities did not take place by the end of the first half of 2010. This included the recruitment of SLBC senior management and staff and the development of key policy documents, as the Act establishing the SLBC states that the Board of Trustees is to facilitate the recruitment of all staff.

The Board of Trustees finally became operational in mid-June 2010 following the appointment of six out of the eight Board members. Once the temporary staffing arrangement between April and June ended, the Board of Trustees developed a framework of employing a scaled down number of temporary staff, totalling 160, for an additional period to support the continued broadcasting of SLBC while the recruitment of the formal staff kicked off in 2010 and was fully underway in 2011. Once the

DG and DDG took up their assignments in October 2010, also assuming responsibility for the overall management of the SLBC as well as the recruitment of all staff, various meetings took place over the to develop an organogram and clear timeline for recruitment. Five directors for the five departments were recruited. An additional 167 staff have been recruited to ensure the efficient and effective functioning of SLBC.

Today, radio is by far the most important medium for news and public information in Sierra Leone. A survey carried out in March 2010 by Fondation Hironnelle found that radio is listened to by 82% of Sierra Leoneans, up 5% on their 2008 findings. This compares to 26% for television, 9% for newspapers and just 3% for the internet. Furthermore, 86% of men and 78% of women are radio listeners, an increase in both figures since 2008. Significantly, well over half of Sierra Leone's radio audience did not go to school and 25% of those surveyed said they did not have enough money even to feed themselves. As previous experience shows, the poor and illiterate are often denied the information they need to participate fully in the democratic process and are more likely to be swayed by the arguments of party stalwarts. The combined figure for SLBC after the merger constitutes nearly 60% of the available audience, a reach unattainable by any other medium. In terms of investment on return, this represents a cost of approximately 15 cents per listener based on a 500,000 US\$ investment.

In 2011, the project built on results achieved by concentrating on creating themed 'programme zones' aimed at specific target groups, namely women, children and young people. This was funded by the PBF. The zones were supported by funded initiatives in the key areas of governance and human rights, health, sports, culture, religion and education. In addition, SLBC's relationship with its audiences in the regions was strengthened through networks and listening clubs around UN and SLBC presences in those towns where regional offices of the two organizations exist side by side. Regular audience research was carried out to address the tastes, interests and needs of audiences in the regions.

III. EVALUATION & LESSONS LEARNED

Three major assessments were carried out over the project period, namely, the KPMG Financial Audit, the Non-Financial Management Audit and the Presidential Task Force. Through these evaluations the following lessons learned were documented:

- **Capacity building in managing a public broadcaster:** Despite several trainings held for the Board of Trustees and senior management, there is still need for the continued capacity building of SLBC. Editorial independence, the quality of programmes, and the Commission's capacity for prudent and accountable financial management are key issues that need to be addressed.
- **Lack of performance appraisal:** After a long, protracted and challenging recruitment process, the SLBC has a large number of staff with little opportunity to receive monthly salary or the proper motivation or incentives to perform their duties and responsibilities effectively. This is more glaring especially at senior management level. In the absence of performance appraisal systems, managers are not being assessed based on pre-determined results or deliverables and this should be addressed in order to ensure improved staff and organisational performance.
- **Managing Public Perception:** Gaining and maintaining public confidence in a politically polarised country like Sierra Leone has been one of SLBC's greatest challenges. Making this situation even more challenging is the fact that the Corporation is going through a transition period at a time when the country is also preparing for upcoming 2012 national elections with huge competition for airtime between the ruling political party and opposition parties. In this respect, despite SLBC's efforts to equitably service the parties, it has come under fire whether fairly or unfairly.
- **Weak implementation of the Corporate Business Strategy** – While a Business Plan with a detailed financial management plan and resource mobilisation strategy has been formulated,

the Corporation is yet to fully implement the plan. This has posed a serious challenge to the sustainability of the corporation whilst increasing its dependence on donors and government for its day-to-day operations. The Corporation continues to receive government subvention, particularly for the payment of salaries. This is further subjecting the corporation to possible government control and hence has the potential to compromise its independence in the current political atmosphere in the run-up to the 2012 elections.

IV. INDICATOR BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

	Performance Indicators	Indicator Baselines	Planned Indicator Targets	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance (if any)	Source of Verification	Comments (if any)
Outcome 1: The capacity of SLBC and its staff enhanced to broadcast unbiased, neutral and balanced programming that covers the breadth and length of Sierra Leonean society.							
Output 1.1 The management and staff of the SLBC are trained to be basically competent in their respective jobs and have a clear understanding of a public service broadcaster	<i>Indicator</i> No. of core staff recruited and trained	Recruitment of core staff is being carried out	-Recruitment of core completed - Management and staff trained in key areas such as finance, Human Resource, Technical and engineering	The Director General and the Deputy Director General as well all directors have been recruited and trained		SLBC Progress Reports	
Output 2.1 Initial operational support provided to SLBC to operate reliably, providing daily unbiased and independent news and current affairs programmes , relevant information and	<i>Indicator</i> SLBC is operational and able to broadcast with resources including staff, skills and funding	Recruitment of core staff is carried out	Salaries received by staff	Salaries were received by staff		SLBC Progress Reports	

development programs , and entertainment and sports programmes on radio							
Outcome 2: The SLBC is working to become self-sustainable through development of commercial services department.							
Output 2.1 Detailed strategic plan developed for generating income and resource mobilise to realize plans	<i>Indicator</i> Strategic plan for commercial services	Strategic plan for commercial services not in place	Strategic plan for commercial services developed and approved by the board	Strategic plan for commercial services was developed and approved by board		Business Plan	
Output 2.2 SLBC has the facilities it needs to provide regular and reliable programming	<i>Indicator</i> Procurement of broadcast equipment	SLBC does not possess the necessary broadcast equipment for constant national coverage	Procurement of broadcast equipment complete	Broadcast equipment procured and installed in SLBC Freetown and in the provinces, as well as staff trained in the use of equipment		SLBC Installation Report	
Outcome 3: A national coverage plan created and near national radio coverage achieved to provide people of Sierra Leone with access to SLBC programming.							
Output 3.1 Strengthening public service ethos through programming that inform, educate and entertain the people	<i>Indicator</i> -No of programmes on gender -% increase in listeners (male and female) of women's programming	SLBC does not yet have systems to broadcast targeted programming for women, young people, or children.	50% of the news programming is measured as fairly unbiased, neutral and balanced	In the absence of systematic public perception survey, is impossible to measure achieved target.		SLBC Electoral Guidelines	
Output 3.2 Strategic planning	<i>Indicator</i> Strategic plan	Strategic plan not in	Strategic plan in place	Election Guidelines endorsed and signed		SLBC Elections Guidelines and	

complete towards 2012 elections	for coverage of elections	place for coverage of elections	for coverage of elections	by all political parties and national democratic institutions, Elections Unit established and staff and adequate logistics provided.		the SLBC Elections Unit	
Output 3.3 Initial operational support provided to SLBC to operate reliable, providing daily unbiased and independent news and current affairs programmes, relevant information and development programmes , entertainment and sport programmes on radio	<i>Indicators</i> SLBC is operational and able to broadcast with resources including staff, skills, and funding	Recruitment of core staff is being carried out	Recruitment of core staff completed Salaries are received by staff	Core of SLBC were recruited and received salaries.			
Output 3.4 Consistency of technical quality of SLBC out ensured and maximum reach among total population achieved	<i>Indicator</i> National coverage of radio	SLBC has relied on UN satellite service for distribution	SLBC maintain national (radio) coverage at least 90% of the time.	With the exception of Masingbi and Makali, Kamakwei and Kamalu (Northern region) and Gbangbatok and Bonthe district (Southern region) SLBC radio is close to national coverage.		SLBC Installation Report Jan/Feb 2012 (David Stanley, DBS Consulting)	