

The Danish Union of Teachers in Sierra Leone

Partner in Sierra Leone	The independent teachers' union Sierra Leone Teachers Union, SLTU, was established in 1963 and it is the only teachers' union in Sierra Leone. SLTU organises teachers from pre-school to secondary level and currently has 32,000 members from a potential of 40,000 teachers.
Development goal	The long-term goal is to strengthen SLTU's work towards political sustainability and economic independence.
Time frame and budget	The project began in the summer of 2006 and the current phase ends in 2017. The budget is approx. DDK 1M (\$181,000). SLTU finances 60 percent and the rest is financed by Danida through the Project and Advice Centre, which is the platform for Danish civil society organisations.
Facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sierra Leone is located in West Africa out to the Atlantic with borders to Liberia and Guinea. Sierra Leone has a population of 6.1 million inhabitants and 75 percent of Sierra Leone's adult population has to survive below the poverty line on \$2 per day.• Sierra Leone ranks lowest in the UNDP Human Development Index and the GDP per capita is one of the worlds lowest.• Sierra Leone was ravaged by civil war from 1991 to 2001, leading to horrible mutilations of locals and half the population being displaced.
School situation	Sierra Leone offers six years of mandatory basic education and six years of secondary education. 42 percent of the pupils are girls and the teacher/pupil ratio is 1:67. However, the civil war has greatly influenced the educational system in Sierra Leone. 500,000 children were unable to attend school during the civil war and 2/3 of the schools were destroyed. There is still a massive lack of teachers and schools, and far from all children attend school.
Background and project development	<p>In the beginning of the 1990's, SLTU participated in a DLF project in West Africa, which also included the teachers unions in Liberia, Ghana and the Gambia. Project activities in Sierra Leone ceased in 1997 due to the civil war. Many of the school representatives (shop stewards) and union leaders, who were educated in the 1990's, were either killed or forced to migrate.</p> <p>The purpose of the project is to rebuild the capacity of SLTU in order for the union to establish itself as an effective and sustainable union. The project focuses on strengthening the competences of the school representatives and seeks to involve the members in a democratic process – especially female teachers.</p> <p>Another focus area is the development and production of the newsletter so the goals and knowledge of SLTU are available to teachers and school representatives all over the country.</p> <p>The project aims at strengthening the social dialogue with the government and NGO's at all levels. Several workshops on negotiation will be held and materials will be developed, so the negotiators of SLTU have the necessary knowledge of the union's political programme.</p>

