

# Building Capacities to Access and Communicate Research Evidence for Development: Lessons of Collaborative Initiatives in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is recovering from a devastating 10 years conflict and still suffers from serious gaps in its infrastructure. While there are many needs in Sierra Leone, previous experience has shown that higher education and research can play a key role in social and economic development. This calls for synergies between higher education institutions and the private sector; to train and produce graduates relevant to the needs of the job market, and to conduct collaborative scientific research, relevant not only to industry, trade and investment, but also to policy formulation and governance. To do this, higher-education and research institutions need adequate ICT facilities, sufficient collections of educational online resources, and with so much now online - reliable internet connections. This paper outlines ongoing initiatives by the government and development partners, including the World Bank, DFID, INASP and Research4Life to support Sierra Leone as the country develop its higher education and research capacities to tackle development challenges. The paper provides a rapid review of the relevant literature on research and knowledge system in Sierra Leone, and aims to provide a brief, but thoroughly grounded desk review of literature on the overall research and knowledge systems (including policies, priorities, actors, interaction and funding); knowledge production, communication and access; ICT infrastructure, availability and use and; the extent of gender mainstreaming in knowledge generation and dissemination within the higher education and research landscape in the country.

## Summary

This paper outlines ongoing initiatives by the government and development partners to support Sierra Leone as the country develop its higher education and research capacities to tackle development challenges. The paper provides a rapid review of the relevant literature on research and knowledge system in Sierra Leone and recommendations for rebuilding the infrastructure in higher education and research community as useful starting point in the system overhaul.

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**Track Classification:** NRENs and communities: Business models, Communities of Practice, Use cases and Collaboration