



SIERRA LEONE 2015 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS

THEMATIC REPORT ON CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH



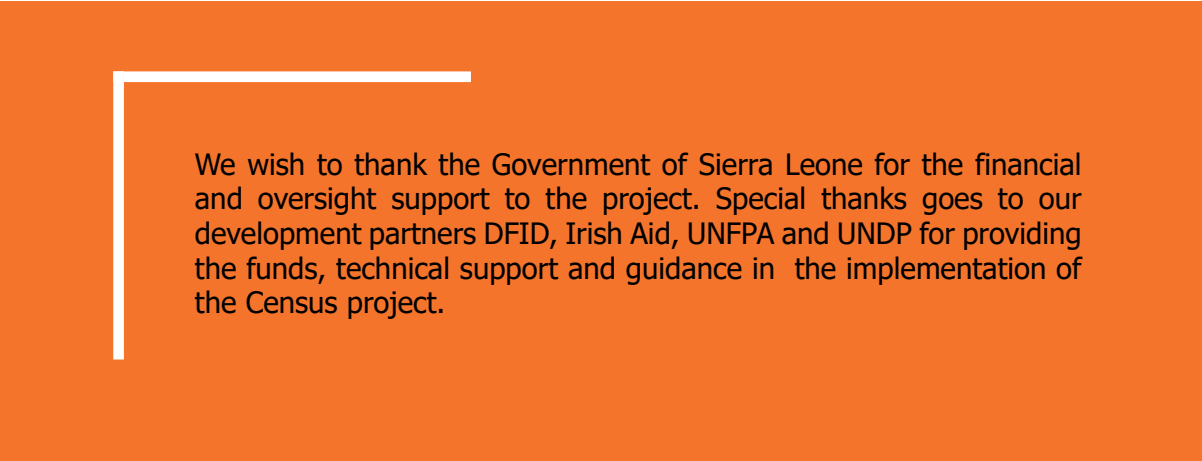
**STATISTICS SIERRA LEONE (SSL)
OCTOBER 2017**



**SIERRA LEONE 2015
POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS**

**THEMATIC REPORT ON
CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH**

**BY
ARABA M.M. FORSON
ALIMAMY YALANCY**



We wish to thank the Government of Sierra Leone for the financial and oversight support to the project. Special thanks goes to our development partners DFID, Irish Aid, UNFPA and UNDP for providing the funds, technical support and guidance in the implementation of the Census project.

DISCLAIMER

Statistics Sierra Leone cannot be held responsible for errors, or any consequences arising from the use of information contained in this report. All rights reserved. This document may be freely quoted or reproduced, in part or in full, provided that the source is acknowledged.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Statistics Sierra Leone is required by law to collect, compile, analyse and publish reliable demographic and socio-economic data on Sierra Leone for planning, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes. To conform with this mandate, the 2015 Population and Housing Census was carried out, the fifth to be conducted in the country. Previous censuses were conducted in 1963, 1974, 1985 and 2004.

This report is one of 17 thematic reports published by Statistics Sierra Leone, with assistance from the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA), based on the 2015 Population and Housing Census data. It examines issues concerning children, adolescents and youth and outlines the challenges they face, while pointing to the need for effective policies and programmes to address these challenges. The report puts forward proposals for future action, including more investments in education and training particularly for young people in rural areas.

Appreciation goes to all who assisted the consultant Mrs. Araba M.M. Forson and Alimamy Yalancy (Statistician, Statistics Sierra Leone) to prepare this report, especially Professor Stephen O. Kwankye (Technical Editor, Regional Institute for Population Studies, University of Ghana, Legon) who provided overall guidance. In the preparation of this report, valuable contributions, comments and critical remarks were provided by Mr. Kwadwo Danso-Manu (Technical Specialist, Census, UNFPA), Mr. Eric Okrah (National Programme Analyst, Monitoring and Evaluation, UNFPA) Mr. Michael Beckoe (Ghana Statistical Service, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist), Dr. Mohammed Elhassien (Technical Specialist, RH, UNFPA) and Sonia Gilroy (Programme Specialist, ASRH, UNFPA). Special gratitude goes to Gershon Togoh for his support in preparing the population projections for young persons.



CONTENTS

■ Acknowledgements	V
■ List of tables	viii
■ List of figures	x
■ Abbreviations	xi
■ Executive Summary	01
■ CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	04
■ 1.1 Introduction	04
■ 1.2 Rationale	04
■ 1.3 The Concepts of Children, Adolescents and Youth	05
■ 1.4 Objectives	06
■ CHAPTER 2: POPULATION SIZE, AGE-SEX AND HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE	07
■ 2.1 Introduction	07
■ 2.2 Population Size and Age-Sex Composition	07
■ 2.3 Spatial Distribution of Young Persons	09
■ 2.4 Living Arrangements	12
■ CHAPTER 3: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS	18
■ 3.1 Introduction	18
■ 3.2 Type of Dwelling	18
■ 3.3 Type of Holding/Tenancy Arrangement and Ownership of Dwelling	19
■ 3.4 Main Construction Material of Dwelling	20
■ 3.5 Household Facilities and Utilities	21
■ CHAPTER 4: LITERACY AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	26
■ 4.1 Introduction	26
■ 4.2 Literacy Levels	26
■ 4.3 Educational Attainment	28
■ CHAPTER 5: MARITAL STATUS AND FERTILITY	33
■ 5.1 Introduction	33
■ 5.2 Marital Status	33
■ 5.3 Children Ever Born	38
■ CHAPTER 6: REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND MORTALITY	42
■ 6.1 Introduction	42
■ 6.2 Deaths and Causes of Death in the Past 12 Months	42



CONTENTS

■	CHAPTER 7: ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	45
■	7.1 Introduction	45
■	7.2 Employment Status	45
■	7.3 Institutional Sector of Employment	50
■	7.4 Occupation	51
■	7.5 Industry	52
■	CHAPTER 8: DISABILITY	54
■	8.1 Introduction	54
■	8.2 Disability among Young People	54
■	8.3 Variations in Disability by Region	56
■	8.4 Types of Disability	56
■	CHAPTER 9: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY	59
■	9.1 Introduction	59
■	9.2 Household Ownership of Computer	59
■	9.3 Ownership of Mobile Phones	62
■	9.4 Access to Internets	64
■	CHAPTER 10: POPULATION PROJECTION OF YOUNG PERSONS	66
■	10.1 Introduction	66
■	10.2 Sources of Data and Methodology	66
	10.2.1 Methodology	66
■	10.3 Population Projection Results	67
■	10.4 Age Structure at the Regional Level	69
■	10.5 School-Age Population	70
■	10.6 Policy Implications and Recommendations	72
■	CHAPTER 11: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	73
■	11.1 Population Size, Age-Sex and Household Structure	73
■	11.2 Housing Characteristics	73
■	11.3 Literacy and Educational Attainment	74
■	11.4 Health and Mortality	74
■	11.5 Economic and Employment Characteristics	74
■	11.6 Disability	75
■	11.7 Information and Communication Technology	75
■	11.8 Projections	76
■	REFERENCES	77



LIST OF TABLES

■	Table 2.1: Population distribution of young persons as percentage of total household population by age-sex and residence		07
■	Table 2.2: Distribution of population of young persons by age-sex and residence		08
■	Table 2.3a: Per centage distribution of population of children 0-9 years by region and sex		09
■	Table 2.3b: Per centage distribution of population of adolescents 10-14 years by region and sex		10
■	Table 2.3c: Per centage distribution of population of adolescents (15-19 years) by region and sex		10
■	Table 2.3d: Percentage distribution of population of youth (20-24 years) by region and sex		11
■	Table 2.3e: Percentage distribution of population of youth (25-35 years) by region and sex		11
■	Table 2.4a: Percentage distribution of population (0-35 years) by relationship to head of of household, sex and residence		12
■	Table 2.4b: Percentage distribution of children (0-9 years) by relationship to head		13
■	Table 2.4c: Percentage distribution of children (10-14 years) by relationship to head of household, sex and residence		14
■	Table 2.4d: Distribution of adolescents (15-19 years) by relationship to head of household, sex and residence		15
■	Table 2.4e: Percentage distribution of adolescents (20-24 years) by relationship to head of household, sex and residence		16
■	Table 2.4f: Percentage distribution of population (25-35 years) by relationship to head of households, sex and residence		17
■	Table 3.1: Percentage of young persons by age group and type of dwelling		18
■	Table 3.2: Distribution of young persons by age group and household ownership of dwelling unit		19
■	Table 3.3: Percentage distribution of young people by main construction material used for floor of dwelling place		20
■	Table 3.4: Percentage distribution of young people by main source of lighting		21
■	Table 3.5: Percentage distribution of young persons by age group and main source of drinking water		22
■	Table 3.6: Percentage of young persons by age group and main source of cooking fuel for household		23
■	Table 3.7: Percentage distribution of young people by bathing facilities		23
■	Table 3.8: Percentage distribution of young people by age group and toilet facility used by household		24



LIST OF TABLES

■ Table 3.9: Percentage distribution of young people by age group and method of refuse disposal for household	25
■ Table 4.1: Distribution of young persons by literacy status and age-sex	26
■ Table 4.2: Percentage distribution of young people (10-35 years) by age, literacy and locality of residence	27
■ Table 4.3a: Distribution of young people (3 years and over) by educational attainment	29
■ Table 4.3b: Distribution of young people (3 years and over) by educational attainment, age and sex	30
■ Table 4.4: Distribution of young persons by educational attainment, residence and age-sex	31
■ Table 5.1: Percentage distribution of young persons (10-35 years) by marital status, age and sex	34
■ Table 5.2: Percentage distribution of population of young persons aged 10-35 years by marital status, residence and sex	35
■ Table 5.3: Percentage distribution of young persons (10-35 years) by marital status, sex and region	37
■ Table 5.4: Contribution of young people to children ever born by age group and residence	38
■ Table 5.5: Distribution of children ever born by region	39
■ Table 5.6: Percentage contribution of women (10-54 years) to total births in the last 12 months by age group and type of place of residence	39
■ Table 5.7: Distribution of number of birth in last 12 months by region by age group of mothers	40
■ Table 6.1: Distribution of deaths of persons (10-54 years) in the 12-month period preceding the census by age- sex	43
■ Table 6.2: Percent distribution of female deaths in the 12-month period preceding the census for population (10-54 years)	43
■ Table 6.3: Distribution of pregnancy related deaths for population (10-54 years) by period of occurrence and age group of women	44
■ Table 6.4: Percentage distribution of all deaths in the 12-month period by cause of death (0-54 years)	44
■ Table 7.2: Distribution of young persons (10-14 years) by sex, employment status and region	47
■ Table 7.3: Percentage distribution of young persons (aged 15-19 years) by sex, employment status and region	48
■ Table 7.4: Percentage distribution of young persons (20-24 years) by sex, employment status and region	49



LIST OF TABLES

■ Table 7.5: Distribution of young persons by age-sex and institutional sector	50
■ Table 7.6: Percentage distribution of population of young people by age-sex and occupation	51
■ Table 7.7: Percentage distribution of population of young people by age-sex and industry	52
■ Table 8.1: Distribution of population of young people by disability status and age-sex	55
■ Table 8.2: Distribution of young persons with disability as a percentage of region's population	56
■ Table 8.3: Distribution of young persons with disability by type of disability and age-sex	57
■ Table 9.1: Percentage distribution of young people by household ownership of computer, residence and age	59
■ Table 9.2: Percentage distribution of population of children (0-9 years) by household ownership of computer, region and residence	60
■ Table 9.3: Percentage distribution of population of children (10-14 years) by household ownership of computers and region	60
■ Table 9.4: Distribution of population of persons (15-19 years) by household ownership of computers and region	61
■ Table 9.5: Percentage distribution of population of persons (20-24 years) by household ownership of computers and region	61
■ Table 9.6: Percentage distribution of young persons (25-35 years) by household ownership of computers and region	62
■ Table 9.7: Percentage distribution of population of young people by household ownership of mobile phones, residence and age	63
■ Table 9.8: Percentage distribution of young people (35 years and below) by household ownership of mobile phones,	63
■ Table 9.9: Distribution of young persons (10 years and older) by access to internet, residence and age	65
■ Table 10.3a: Summary of projected population by sex, 2016 to 2030	67
■ Table 10.3b: Summary of projected population by sex, 2016 to 2030	68
■ Table 10.3c: Summary of projected population by sex, 2016 to 2030	68



LIST OF FIGURES

■ Figure: 10.1: Age Structure of Children and Youth

| 70



ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	Antenatal Care
CHEB	Children Ever Born
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JSS	Junior Secondary School
LLITN	Long-lasting Insecticide Treated Nets
NPA/BKPS	National Power Authority/ Bo-Kenema Power Station
NYC	National Youth Commission
PHC	Population and Housing Census
PWD	Persons with Disability
SLDHS	Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey
SSS	Senior Secondary School
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The 2015 Population and Housing Census was the fifth modern census with a complete count of the population to be conducted nationwide in Sierra Leone. The first was in 1963, the second in 1974 and the third in 1985. These censuses indicate that the country's population increased from 2.18 million in 1963 to 2.74 million in 1974, 3.5 million in 1985, 4.98 million in 2004 and 7.09 million in 2015. All the censuses showed that the population is youthful with more than 40 per cent under the age of 15.

This report is essential because Sierra Leone has not previously analysed the data on children, adolescents and youth gathered in its censuses. By looking closely at the social, economic and demographic characteristics of children, adolescents and youth, it is possible to identify their specific needs and make recommendations on how these needs can be met, through policies and programmes.

MALARIA IS THE MOST PREDOMINANT CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG YOUNG PERSONS BELOW 20 YEARS.



22.9% of female adolescent age 15-19 have ever married.

Adolescents aged 15-19 years contribute to **11.6%** of all children ever born by women aged 10-54 years.

Main Findings

Population Size, Age-Sex and Household Structure

Persons under 35 years of age make up about 80 per cent of the entire population of Sierra Leone. This large and youthful population could present challenges in the provision of education, healthcare and jobs. However, it also represents a great resource offering opportunities to establish a solid foundation for development - if young people get the head start needed in life. Investing in the health of children, especially girls, has a ripple effect on their families, communities and their future children.

Females (51.3 per cent) outnumber males (48.7 per cent) in the total population of young people 35 years and below. In rural areas, males outnumber females in the age groups below 15 years, but at older ages, females predominate. In urban areas, however, females outnumber males in all the age groups under 35 years.

Education and Literacy

The census data show that two in five young people 35 years and below have never attended school. However, seven in ten adolescents aged 10-14 years have attained primary or JSS level of education. A literacy intervention is needed in rural areas where 41.4 per cent of those aged 15-19 are reported as illiterate as against 14.2 per cent in urban areas.

Marital Status and Fertility

Attention must be focused on addressing the needs of girls. In Sierra Leone, girls and young women are likely to marry and have children at a very early age, and drop out of school earlier than boys. Results of the 2013 Sierra Leone Demographic Health Survey indicates that the median age of first birth for women aged 25-49 years is 19.4 years. Also, the median age at first marriage rises from 18.2 years among women aged 25-29 years to 19.4 years among women aged 20-24 years. About 0.4 per cent of girls and 0.1 per cent of boys in Sierra Leone were married before they attained age 15 years. A considerably higher proportion of female adolescents (22.9 per cent) of age 15-19 years than male adolescents (0.7 per cent) have ever married. This has implications for increased fertility, teenage pregnancy, unsafe child bearing and poor infant health.

Young people 35 years and below contribute 44.2 per cent of all children ever born by women aged 10-54 years. Children aged 10-14 years contribute 0.3 per cent, while those aged 15-19 years contribute 11.6 per cent. This implies that young people should be targeted by government policies and programmes that are aimed at reducing fertility rates, unmet need for family planning and population growth.

Housing Characteristics

More than half (59 per cent) of children below 10 years live in separate housing units. For those aged 20-24 years, the corresponding figure is 52.6 per cent. A considerably smaller (2 per cent) number of young people aged 35 years and below live in dwelling units that are owned by their households through purchase. There could be a number of reasons for this: these households

are not earning enough to purchase property; there are not enough available properties on the market to buy or such households are made up of people who have only relocated for a temporary basis and are not looking to buy.

Four out of five of all young people 35 years and below live in dwelling units that use electricity as the main source of lighting. This is likely to increase productivity among young people and the country at large. Children below 10 years are most likely to living in households whose main source of drinking water is either a public tap (27.3 per cent), river stream (23.8 per cent) or a protected ordinary well (20.1 per cent).

Health and Mortality

Deaths of children, adolescents and youth formed more than half (54.8 per cent) of the deaths of people aged 0-54 years in the 12 months preceding the census. Of the total number of deaths, 7.6 per cent were of children aged between 10 and 14 years, 10.7 per cent were from the 15-19 age group while 10.7 per cent were in the age group 20-24 years. Deaths from the age group 30-34 years formed 12.3 per cent. Malaria is reported at the household level to be the most predominant cause of death among young persons below 20 years. Two in five deaths among children below 10 years are reported to be caused by the disease. Malnutrition (8.5 per cent), anaemia (7.0 per cent), maternal death (6.7 per cent) and Ebola (5.7 per cent) are the next most predominant causes of death among children below five years. For persons aged 20 years and older, however, Ebola and malaria (each 1 in 5) are the most predominant causes of death.

Economic and Employment Characteristics

Most children aged 10-14 years are full-time students (72 per cent of males, 74 per cent of females). The rest are mainly self-employed without employees (13.9 per cent for males and 11.8 per cent for females) or in household work (4 per cent males, 5 per cent females). Western Region reported the highest proportion (9 in 10) of children who are full-time students.

Three in five adolescents are full-time students (63.7 per cent males, 57.8 per cent females).

The rest are mainly engaged as self-employed without employees (20.1 per cent for males and 23.5 per cent for females) or in household work (3.0 per cent males, 7.7 per cent females). More than half (54.9 per cent males, 60.9 per cent females) of young persons of age 25-35 years are self-employed without employees. The corresponding figures for the 20-24 age group is 43.8 per cent among males and 28.4 for the females. On the other hand, the 25-35 year age group reports the highest proportion of paid employees (12.8 per cent of males and 4.5 per cent of females). Most young persons who are economically active are engaged in either crop farming (34.9 per cent and 42.8 per cent, male/female) or trading activities (9.5 per cent and 17.2 per cent male/female).

Disability

Less than one per cent of households with children less than 10 years of age reported having a child with a form of disability (0.5 per cent or 9,837). The corresponding figure for older children between 10 and 14 years is relatively higher (0.7 per cent). The 25-35 age group reported the highest proportion (1.3 per cent) with a disability. The corresponding proportions of males and females with disability are 1.4 per cent and 1.1 per cent respectively. The composition of disability among the young persons included: polio (27.3 per cent), amputees (10.1 per cent), partially sighted (8.5 per cent), deaf (7.8 per cent), blind or visually impaired (5.9 per cent), mute (5.8 per cent), speech difficulty (5.7 per cent) partially deaf (5.5 per cent), epileptic (3.9 per cent) and psychiatric disability (1.2 per cent).

Information and Communication Technology

In urban areas, a little less than one in ten (9.1 per cent) of children under 10 years live in households that own a computer. The corresponding figure for children in rural areas is less than one in a hundred (0.8 per cent). Among children under 10 years, the Western Region reported the highest proportion (12.5 per cent) of household ownership of a computer. The other regions recorded a much lower rate (2 per cent) of ownership. Ownership of mobile phones by young people in Sierra Leone is high. For each age groups, more than half own mobile

phones at the household level. In urban areas, however, the rate of ownership is higher (nine out of ten) than in rural areas (two out of five). Children below 15 years in rural areas have less access to the Internet (4.4 per cent) than those in urban areas (7.5 per cent). One in five adolescents of age 15-19 years have access to the Internet in urban areas compared to just 13.1 per cent in this age group in rural areas. The young age group with the highest level of access to the Internet is the 20-24 age group (32.1 per cent) in urban areas compared to only 8.5 per cent in the rural areas.

Recommendations

- Efforts towards improving housing conditions for young people in Sierra Leone should be continued by ensuring improvement in access to potable water. This will result in positive changes in the country's productivity in the long run.
- Fertility rates, currently high among adolescent females, could be curtailed by targeting young females in education programmes such as comprehensive sexuality education and life skills.
- Tackling malaria, responsible for one in five deaths in young children below 10 years, would bring down that age group's mortality rate.
- Innovations should also be considered to encourage more young people to stay in school. The figures show that currently there is a low rate of educational attainment by young people, especially in girls up to the primary level. Focusing more on those in rural areas will help to address issues of equity in access to education, as well as reduce the rural - urban migration.
- For the large proportion of school-age children who are not in full-time education, entrepreneurship training is required to make them more productive as self-employed workers in their respective occupations. The general population, including those with disabilities, need to be educated to understand that those with disabilities can contribute a lot to society if they receive encouragement and assistance.
- Finally, education and training programmes for young people should take advantage of the high rates of mobile phone ownership among them. This would be more effective if access to the Internet is also improved, especially in rural areas.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The population of Sierra Leone grew by 3.2 per cent between 2004 and 2015 from about 5 to 7 million people.

The majority of the population is young, with eight out of ten people being under 35 years old. About 41 per cent are under the age of 15 and 62.5 per cent are under 25 years old.

Sierra Leone's national population policy, revised in 2009, addresses issues of population and their interrelated development challenges. Among other goals, it seeks to promote the health of children and the welfare of all Sierra Leoneans at every stage of the life cycle. This national policy outlines several strategies, including regular improvements in the knowledge of the demography and development of the country.

To ensure that information on the demography and development is available, the Population and Housing Census was conducted in 2015 and gathered data on children, adolescents and youth, which are being analysed and reported as important components of the population.

The future of a country depends on the population size of its young people as well as investments made in providing their development needs. The dependency ratio (the relationship of the proportion of the population not in the labour force to that in the labour force) is an indicator which provides information on the standard of living of citizens in a country. The total dependency ratio in 2015 was 82.6 while the youth dependency ratio was 78.0.

1.2 Rationale

The population of young people in Sierra Leone needs to be analysed to inform policy makers in the design of policies that could effectively address their specific needs.

It is also important to identify the unique differences in the characteristics of children,

adolescents and young adults within this population, because each of these three categories is quite distinct from each other.

Policies that address the challenges faced by these sub-groups of the young population need to be related to their demographic and socio-economic characteristics so as to address their specific needs adequately.

For children under age five, challenges that policy makers seek to address include infant mortality, health and school enrolment, birth registration and vaccinations against killer diseases. In contrast, challenges faced by adolescents would lead to policy interventions targeting adolescent sexual health, early marriages, teenage pregnancy, youth employment, tertiary and vocational education as well as drug or substance abuse.

However, some of the needs of these differing age groups of young people do overlap, allowing institutions responsible for their welfare and development to conceive and implement programmes in an integrated manner to ensure no one is left behind. In order to determine where these overlaps occur, data analysis has to bring out the characteristics and needs of the different youthful age groups so they can be targeted effectively without duplication and waste of scarce resources.

Young people living in rural areas have different needs from those residing in urban areas based on marked differences in infrastructure and community facilities such as health, education or housing facilities. Policies, therefore, need to target rural and urban young people differently.

Some government policy interventions for young people in Sierra Leone include the implementation of national population and youth policies. Both policies emphasize reduction of child labour, the need for reduction in fertility rate, lowering of infant mortality, improvement in the education of children and employment of youth and reduction of child marriage.

Due to population dynamics and changes in social, political and economic circumstances, the distribution of young people in Sierra Leone and their characteristics are expected to change over time. This calls for a regular review of policies and programmes using relevant results from in-depth analysis of data on young people.

1.3 The Concepts of Children, Adolescents and Youth

Children: The term “children” is defined by considering their age, psychology, physical attributes and their rights. Biologically, a child is a human being between the stages of birth and puberty. A child legally refers to a minor, otherwise known as a person younger than the age of majority. This relates to a person with a lower level of maturity requiring protection, love and nurturing from adults. Children below five years are most vulnerable to poor hygiene and, therefore, require good nutrition to survive.

The definition of children differs from country to country. The United Nations defines children as persons less than 18 years of age. In Sierra Leone, children are also defined in the 2007 Sierra Leone Child Rights Act as persons below age 18 years. In this report, however, children are defined as persons aged 0-9 years, as recorded in the 2015 Census.

Adolescents: Adolescents are persons aged 10-19 years. They are persons who are in transition from childhood to adulthood. During these adolescent years, people undergo changes

in their physiology and social lives. This period of adolescence often coincides with a time of enormous creativity, passion, courage and experimentation. Hence national developmental strategies that focus on education and training of adolescents in productive skills can lead to several developmental outcomes which need to be managed for the benefit of both the adolescents and the nation.

The environment adolescents live in has changed tremendously over the years. They are now faced with many choices due to the different ways technological advancement and the media present them with alternative livelihoods. They are confronted with sexual and reproductive health choices that could have long-lasting impact on their socio-economic development. Adolescents who are out of school and unemployed can also become a target for different social deviant behaviours, including terrorism, via social networks (ECOWAS Gender Development Centre, 2017).

Youth: According to the National Youth Policy (2003) and the draft revised policy (2012) of Sierra Leone, youth are defined to include all persons of age 15-35 years. In contrast, the United Nations defines youth as all persons aged between 15 and 24 years.

In Sierra Leone, youth are classified as persons 15-35 years, and for this reason the report classifies youth in the same way.



1.4 Objectives

The overall objective of the report is to present an analysis of the characteristics of children, adolescents and youth in Sierra Leone. This will highlight the implications for policies that call for action to address their needs, to leverage children, adolescents and youth as a valuable resource for the nation's socio-economic development. The specific objectives are:

01 Analyse the population of children, adolescents and youth to bring out the specific needs of each category.

02 Examine the composition of each group of children, adolescents and youth in relation to the total population and highlight the implications for the socio-economic development of Sierra Leone.

03 Assess the variation of the three groups with respect to their demographic, social, and economic characteristics in Sierra Leone.

04 Study the extent to which the social setup in Sierra Leone affects the development of these three groups of young people.

05 Examine the gaps that exist in the legal framework in relation to the development of children, adolescents and youth.

06 Project the population of children, adolescents and youth to 2030 and establish the implications for the socio-economic development of Sierra Leone.

07 Present policy recommendations to address the implications of the situation of young people.

CHAPTER 2: POPULATION SIZE, AGE-SEX AND HOUSEHOLD

2.1 Introduction

Data from the 2015 Population and Housing Census provide information on the population of each age group of young people in Sierra Leone by sex and locality of residence. They show that children, adolescents and youth living in urban areas face different challenges from those in rural areas of the same age and sex.

2.2 Population Size and Age-Sex Composition

Table 2.1 presents the distribution of young persons as a per centage of total national population by age-sex and residence. It shows that eight out of every ten persons in the country are aged 35 years and below, while those age 24 years and below make up 62.3 per cent of the population.

This young population reflects high fertility. Young females aged 35 years and below constitute a relatively higher proportion of all females in the country (81.0 per cent) than their male counterparts who make up 79.5 per cent of the male population in Sierra Leone. The same pattern is observed in both urban and rural areas.



Table 2.1: Population distribution of young persons as per centage of total household population by age-sex and residence

Age group	All Localities			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
0-4	13.2	13.4	13.0	14.5	14.9	14.2	14.5	14.9	14.2
5-9	15.6	15.9	15.4	17.5	18.2	16.8	17.5	18.2	16.8
10-14	11.9	12.4	11.5	11.9	12.9	10.9	11.9	12.9	10.9
15-19	12.3	12.3	12.3	11.6	11.8	11.4	11.6	11.8	11.4
20-24	9.3	8.8	9.8	7.9	7.1	8.6	7.9	7.1	8.6
25-35	17.7	16.6	18.9	16.6	14.6	18.6	16.6	14.6	18.6
0-35	80.2	79.5	81.0	80.0	79.5	80.5	80.0	79.5	80.5
Total SL	7,092,113	3,490,978	3,601,135	4,187,016	2,052,342	2,134,674	4,187,016	2,052,342	2,134,674

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015
Population and Housing Census

Children: Nearly three in ten people in Sierra Leone (28.8 per cent) are children below the age of 10 years (Table 2.1). Children under the age of 5 years constitute 13.2 per cent of the national population. Since this age group is the most vulnerable and dependent of young persons, this has serious implications for services to those households.

The 5-9-year age group makes up a higher proportion of the total national population (15.6 per cent). This may suggest a fertility decline in the recent past or some increase in infant and child mortality in recent times. It may also be due to age misreporting and rounding of ages to 5. The proportion of children under 15 years in rural areas is higher (43.9 per cent) than the proportion of children in urban areas (36.3 per cent).

Adolescents: Adolescents aged 10-19 years constitute nearly one quarter (24.4 per cent) of the total national population. The proportion of adolescents is higher in urban areas (25.4 per cent) than in rural areas (23.5 per cent).

Youth: More than one-third of the country's population are in the youth category (15-35 years). There is, however, some variation by area of residence, as the proportion of youth in rural areas is lower (36.1 per cent) than that in the urban areas (44.2 per cent). This may be a result of migration of youth from rural to urban areas.

The sex ratio for all young persons of age 35 years and below is 95.1, indicating that there are more young females than males (Table 2.2). This is also the case in both urban (95.6) and rural areas (94.9). In rural areas, males outnumber females in all age groups below 15 years, while females outnumber males in the age groups between 15 and 35 years. In urban areas, females outnumber males in all age groups.



Table 2.2: Distribution of population of young persons by age-sex and residence

Age group	All Localities			
	Total	Male	Female	Sex ratio
Total	5,689,343	48.8	51.2	95.1
0-4	938,453	50.0	50.0	99.9
0-9	1,108,715	50.1	49.9	100.3
10-14	847,292	50.9	49.1	103.8
15-19	873,620	49.3	50.7	97.3
20-24	662,819	46.5	53.5	86.9
25-35	1,258,444	46.0	54.0	85.2
0-35	80.2	79.5	81.0	
Total SL	7,092,113	3,490,978	3,601,135	

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015
Population and Housing Census



Table 2.2: Distribution of population of young persons by age-sex and residence (continued)

Rural					Urban				
Age group	Total	Male	Female	Sex ratio	Age group	Total	Male	Female	Sex ratio
Total	3,350,390	48.7	51.3	94.9	Total	2,338,953	48.9	51.1	95.6
0-4	608,954	50.1	49.9	100.2	0-4	329,499	49.9	50.1	99.4
0-9	730,812	51.1	48.9	104.4	0-9	377,903	48.2	51.8	93.0
10-14	498,654	53.2	46.8	113.7	10-14	348,638	47.7	52.3	91.2
15-19	485,427	49.9	50.1	99.6	15-19	388,193	48.6	51.4	94.4
20-24	329,756	44.5	55.5	80.1	20-24	333,063	48.5	51.5	94.1
25-35	696,787	42.9	57.1	75.1	25-35	561,657	49.9	50.1	99.6
0-35	80.0	79.5	80.5		0-35	80.5	79.4	81.6	
Total SL	4,187,016	2,052,342	2,134,674		Total SL	2,905,097	1,438,636	1,466,461	

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

2.3 Spatial Distribution of Young Persons

There are distinct district variations in the distribution of the population of young people in Sierra Leone.

Children: The 2015 Census counted 2,047,168 children below 10 years across the country (Table 2.3a). The population is split almost equally between males and females. However, the distribution of children varies by region, with males outnumbering females in two of the four regions (Northern and Southern) while the reverse is true in the other two (Eastern and Western). The sex ratio is, however, highest in the Northern Region (102.7) and lowest in the Western Region (96.4).



Table 2.3a: Per centage distribution of population of children 0-9 years by region and sex

Region	Total Population of Region	Total	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	% of Total population
Total	7,092,113	2,047,168	1,024,384	1,022,784	100.2	28.9
Eastern	1,642,370	473,335	234,503	238,832	98.2	28.8
Northern	2,508,201	792,964	401,841	391,123	102.7	31.6
Southern	1,441,308	437,652	219,578	218,074	100.7	30.4
Western	1,500,234	343,217	168,462	174,755	96.4	22.9

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

The proportion of children less than 10 years of age is highest in the Northern Region and lowest in the Western Region, which is more urbanized. These variations may be due to differences in fertility rates by region.

Adolescents: A higher proportion of children of age 10-14 years are males compared to females, with a sex ratio of 103.8 (Table 2.3b). This is true for all regions except for the Western Region (88.1), where there are more females than males. The Western Region has the smallest proportion of children aged 10-14 years while Eastern Region recorded the highest proportion.

This section of the report looks at the distribution of respondents by marital status, age and sex.

The results in Table 3.1 indicate that 49.3 per cent of all respondents, 10 years and over, were ever-married.



Table 2.3b: Per centage distribution of population of adolescents 10-14 years by region and sex

Region	Total population of region	Total	Males	Females	Sex Ratio	% of total population
Total	7,092,113	847,292	431,588	415,704	103.8	11.9
Eastern	1,642,370	204,350	104,222	100,128	104.1	12.4
Northern	2,508,201	306,023	161,289	144,734	111.4	12.2
Southern	1,441,308	170,239	88,022	82,217	107.1	11.8
Western	1,500,234	166,680	78,055	88,625	88.1	11.1

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

There are 873,620 adolescents in the country (Table 2.3c), with more females than males, indicated by a sex ratio of 97.3. However, there are variations by region with sex ratios ranging from 92.4 in the Western Region to 99.4 in the Northern Region.



Table 2.3c: Per centage distribution of population of adolescents (15-19 years) by region and sex

Region	Total population of region	Total	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	% of total population
Total	7,092,113	873,620	430,792	442,828	97.3	12.3
Eastern	1,642,370	215,996	107,525	108,471	99.1	13.2
Northern	2,508,201	297,261	148,149	149,112	99.4	11.9
Southern	1,441,308	175,377	86,286	89,091	96.9	12.2
Western	1,500,234	184,986	88,832	96,154	92.4	12.3

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

The proportion of adolescents of 15-19 years in each region also varies. It is highest in Eastern Region (13.2 per cent) and lowest in the Northern Region (11.9 per cent).

Youth: The Western Region has the highest proportion (12.3 per cent) of the youth (20-24 years) to the total population in the region while the Northern Region has the lowest proportion (8.4 per cent), according to Table 2.3d. In all four regions, there are more females aged 20-24 years than males. The regions with the lowest sex ratios are the Southern Region (81.1) compared to the lowest recorded in the Western Region (97.0).



Table 2.3d: Per centage distribution of population of youth 20-24 years by region and sex

Region	Total population of region	Total	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	% of total population
Total	7,092,113	873,620	430,792	442,828	97.3	12.3
Eastern	1,642,370	143,593	66,006	77,587	85.1	8.7
Northern	2,508,201	210,895	95,856	115,039	83.3	8.4
Southern	1,441,308	123,647	55,355	68,292	81.1	8.6
Western	1,500,234	184,684	90,918	93,766	97	12.3

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

In all regions, there are more females than males in the population of young people 25-35 years - except for the Western Region where the sex ratio is at 106.7, signifying a higher number of males than females (Table 2.3e). The region with the lowest sex ratio is Northern Region (77.1). Young people of age 25-35 years in the Western Region represent 21.0 per cent of the region's total population while Northern Region recorded the lowest proportion at 16.6 per cent.



Table 2.3e: Per centage distribution of population of youth (25-35 years) by region and sex

Region	Total population of region	Total	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	% of total population
Total	7,092,113	873,620	430,792	442,828	97.3	12.3
Eastern	1,642,370	286,944	128,895	158,049	81.6	17.5
Northern	2,508,201	416,176	181,192	234,984	77.1	16.6
Southern	1,441,308	240,783	106,630	134,153	79.5	16.7
Western	1,500,234	314,541	162,341	152,200	106.7	21

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

2.4 Living Arrangements

The roles that young people play in their households depends on their relationship to the household head. This means it is important to analyse these relationships to see the extent to which young people play decision-making roles as household heads or spouses of household heads. It also helps to determine other roles that young people play in their households. Half of young people in the country are sons or daughters of the head of household (Table 2.4a).

There is, however, some variation by locality of residence. In rural areas, it is a little over half while in urban areas, four in ten young persons are sons or daughters of the head of household. There is also some variation by sex. It is more likely for a young male to be a son of the household head (52.8 per cent) than for a young female to be the daughter (47.5 per cent). Also, young males are more likely to be household heads (12.2 per cent) than young females (4.2 per cent). Young males are, however, more likely to be household heads in urban areas than in rural areas. This may be because males tend to migrate more than females, from rural to urban areas.



Table 2.4a: Per centage distribution of population (0-35 years) by relationship to head of household, sex and residence

Relationship to Head of Household	All Localities			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head	8.1	12.2	4.2	6.8	10.3	3.5	9.9	15.0	5.2
Spouse	9.4	0.4	18.0	9.9	0.3	18.9	8.8	0.4	16.7
Son/Daughter	50.1	52.8	47.5	54.8	58.7	51.0	43.4	44.4	42.4
Sister/Brother	7.0	8.4	5.7	6.3	7.4	5.1	8.1	9.8	6.5
Nephew/Niece	5.8	6.2	5.5	4.6	5.0	4.2	7.6	7.9	7.4
Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Uncle/Aunt	1.2	1.3	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	1.9	1.7	1.5
In-Law	1.7	1.1	2.3	1.4	0.9	1.9	2.2	1.5	2.9
Grand Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grand Child	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.9	2.0	1.2	1.2
Step Son/Daughter	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.1
Other	11.8	12.2	11.5	11.1	11.5	10.8	12.9	13.3	12.5
Not related	1.8	2.3	1.2	1.4	2.0	1.1	1.1	2.8	1.6

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015
Population and Housing Census

One in 10 young people (0-35 years) is a spouse of the household head. However there are less males (0.4 per cent) compared to females (18.0 per cent). A similar pattern is observed in both urban and rural areas, but it is more pronounced in the rural areas.

Children: Close to seven out of ten children are sons or daughters of the household head (Table 2.4b). This is the case for rural areas (69.7 per cent), but in urban areas it is relatively lower (63.5 per cent). As expected, none of the children of these ages is a household head.



Table 2.4b: Per centage distribution of children (0-9 years) by relationship to head of household, sex and residence

Relationship to Head of Household	All Localities			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Spouse	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Son/Daughter	67.6	68.6	66.6	69.7	70.4	69.0	63.5	65.0	62.1
Sister/Brother	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.4	2.8	2.6	2.9
Nephew/Niece	5.4	5.1	5.7	4.9	4.7	5.0	6.4	5.8	7.0
Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Uncle/Aunt	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	1.0	1.2
In-Law	0.5	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.8
Grand Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grand Child	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.9	1.9	2.0	3.0	3.1	3.0
Step Son/Daughter	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.0	1.9	2.1
Other	17.0	16.6	17.4	15.7	15.3	16.1	19.3	19.1	19.6
Not related	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.3

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015
Population and Housing Census

Six out of ten young persons of age 10-14 years are sons or daughters of the household head (Table 2.4c). This varies between the urban areas (57.8 per cent) and rural areas (68.3 per cent). Just like the children below 10 years, none of the children in this age group is reported as a household head.



**Table 2.4c: Per centage distribution of children (10-14 years)
by relationship to head of household, sex and residence**

Relationship to Head of Household	All Localities			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Spouse	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.3
Son/Daughter	64.0	65.2	62.7	68.3	68.3	68.3	57.8	60.3	55.4
Sister/Brother	6.4	6.6	6.2	6.4	6.7	6.0	6.5	6.5	6.5
Nephew/Niece	8.1	7.6	8.6	6.3	6.4	6.3	10.6	9.5	11.6
Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0
Uncle/Aunt	1.3	1.2	1.4	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.7	1.6	2.0
In-Law	1.2	0.9	1.4	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	1.3	2.0
Grand Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grand Child	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.7	1.1	1.2	1.2
Step Son/Daughter	3.1	2.9	3.3	2.9	2.7	3.0	3.4	3.1	3.6
Other	13.4	12.9	13.9	12.1	11.8	12.4	15.2	14.7	15.7
Not related	1.4	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.7	1.1	1.0	1.7	1.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015
Population and Housing Census

Adolescents: The living arrangements of adolescents (15-19 years) indicates that more than half of them are sons or daughters of the household head (Table 2.4d). Just about two per cent of them are household heads while 4.6 per cent are spouses to the household head. These spouses are mainly females who constitute 9.1 per cent of all females in this age group. One in ten adolescents, however, is either a sister or a brother of the household head and 8.5 per cent of them reported to be nephews or nieces of the household head.





Table 2.4d: Distribution of adolescents aged 15-19 years by relationship to head of household, sex and residence

Relationship to Head of Household	All Localities			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Head	1.8	2.1	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.2	2.2	2.7	1.7
Spouse	4.6	0.1	9.1	5.5	0.1	10.9	3.5	0.1	6.8
Son/Daughter	53.9	55.9	52.0	59.9	63.0	56.8	46.5	46.8	46.2
Sister/Brother	10.9	12.7	9.2	9.8	11.4	8.1	12.3	14.3	10.4
Nephew/Niece	8.5	9.0	7.9	6.1	6.8	5.3	11.4	11.9	11.0
Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Uncle/Aunt	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.1	1.2	0.9	2.5	2.6	2.4
In-Law	2.7	1.6	3.9	2.3	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.2	4.4
Grand Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grand Child	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.6
Step Son/Daughter	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.5	3.0	2.8	3.1
Other	10.7	11.0	10.4	9.5	9.8	9.3	12.1	12.5	11.8
Not related	2.1	2.8	1.3	1.7	2.3	1.2	2.7	3.6	1.6

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015
Population and Housing Census

Youth: Three out of 10 persons aged between 20 and 24 years are sons or daughters of the household head (Table 2.4e). One in ten are household heads and 18.2 per cent are spouses to the household head. One in ten is a sister or brother of the household head and about one in ten is defined as an 'other' relative of the household head.



Table 2.4e: Per cent distribution of adolescents (20-24 years) by relationship to head of household, sex and residence

Relationship to Head of Household	All Localities			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Head	9.5	13.7	5.8	8.1	12.6	4.6	10.8	14.7	7.2
Spouse	18.2	0.3	33.6	21.2	0.4	37.8	15.1	0.3	29.0
Son/Daughter	35.7	40.6	31.4	41.4	50.8	33.8	30.0	31.3	28.8
Sister/Brother	12.2	16.7	8.2	10.4	14.5	7.1	14.0	18.8	9.5
Nephew/Niece	6.5	8.3	4.9	4.1	5.5	3.0	8.8	10.9	6.8
Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Uncle/Aunt	1.6	2.0	1.2	1.0	1.4	0.7	2.1	2.6	1.7
In-Law	3.5	2.0	4.8	3.1	1.5	4.4	3.9	2.4	5.3
Grand Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grand Child	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3
Step Son/Daughter	1.8	2.1	1.6	1.7	2.0	1.4	1.9	2.1	1.8
Other	8.2	9.7	6.9	6.8	7.8	5.9	9.6	11.4	7.9
Not related	2.6	4.4	1.4	2.1	3.4	1.2	3.6	5.3	1.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015
Population and Housing Census

Three out of 10 young people (25 to 35 years) are household heads (30.4 per cent) with about a third of females in this age group being household heads as compared to half of their male counterparts (Table 2.4f). Another three in ten persons in this age group are spouses to the household head (29.7 per cent) while almost two in ten are sons or daughters of the household head.



Table 2.4f: Per centage distribution of population (25-35 years) by relationship to head of households, sex and residence

Relationship to Head of Household	All Localities			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head	30.4	49.9	13.9	27.9	48.9	12.1	33.6	50.9	16.4
Spouse	29.7	1.4	53.7	33.4	1.4	57.4	25.1	1.4	48.6
Son/Daughter	17.1	19.8	14.8	19.0	24.2	15.2	14.6	15.1	14.2
Sister/Brother	8.2	11.4	5.6	7.2	10.3	4.9	9.5	12.5	6.5
Nephew/Niece	2.9	3.9	2.1	2.0	2.7	1.5	4.0	5.2	2.9
Parent	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1
Uncle/Aunt	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.8	1.1	0.6	1.3	1.5	1.0
In-Law	2.4	1.8	3.0	2.2	1.6	2.6	2.7	1.9	3.4
Grand Parent	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grand Child	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0
Step Son/Daughter	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.8	0.9	0.7
Other	5.1	6.1	4.4	4.6	5.4	4.0	5.8	6.7	4.8
Not related	2.4	3.5	1.0	2.2	3.5	1.0	2.5	3.8	1.4

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015
Population and Housing Census



CHAPTER 3: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

3.1 Introduction

Housing conditions affect human health and wellbeing. The quality of the home and availability of, or access to, basic amenities in the dwelling, as well as the environmental sanitation of the dwelling, among other factors, may therefore influence the health and standard of living of young people.

Ownership or status of tenure of the household dwelling may also affect the quality of the dwelling unit. For example, some dwellings lack access to sanitation facilities such as toilet and bathing facilities because landlords do not provide them for tenants. Provision of facilities and amenities may also be largely dependent on whether the occupier owns the unit or not. Young children need basic facilities within their dwellings, as some may not be able to access public facilities located at a distance.

This chapter examines ownership of dwelling units that accommodate young people in Sierra Leone and the conditions that affect their standard of living. When households do not own their dwelling units, they pay for their accommodation or live on the goodwill of owners who may be their relatives. Inability of people to acquire or own their dwelling units or rent decent housing accommodation, possibly due to financial challenges, could lead to situations where young people may grow up in improvised housing structures - such as kiosks and other temporary structures - where access to basic housing facilities may be completely absent.

3.2 Type of Dwelling

More than half of young people aged 35 years and below live in separate houses in Sierra Leone (Table 3.1). There is, however, some slight variation by age group. For children aged below 10 years, the proportion living in separate houses is higher than for the other age groups. The 20-24 age group records the lowest proportion living in separate houses.

About one in ten of young people live in compound houses while one in five live in flat apartments. About 2.5 per cent live in huts or buildings with a shared compound. Another 1.6 per cent live in improvised homes such as kiosks and container board, pan-body and tents.



Table 3.1: Per centage of young persons by age group and type of dwelling

Types of dwelling	Total	0-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35
Total No.	5,677,696	2,046,103	846,137	871,348	660,438	1,253,670
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100
Separate house	56.4	59	56.7	55.6	52.6	54.5
Semi-detached house	6.6	6.1	6.6	6.8	7.3	7
Flat/Apartment	19.8	18.7	19.8	20.2	21.3	20.5



Table 3.1: Per centage of young persons by age group and type of dwelling (continued)

Types of dwelling	Total	0-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35
Total No.	5,677,696	2,046,103	846,137	871,348	660,438	1,253,670
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100
Compound house (rooms)	9.8	8.9	9.8	10.1	11	10.4
Huts/Buildings (same compound)	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5
Huts/Buildings (different compound)	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.4
Tent	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8
Improvised home (kiosk container board pan-body)	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.6	2.2	2
Uncompleted building	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.7
Other	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.2

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

3.3 Type of Holding/Tenancy Arrangement and Ownership of Dwelling

The type of holding or tenancy arrangement can sometimes provide an indication of the standard of living of the household in which young people live. Analysis of tenancy arrangement in Table 3.2 reveals that over seven out of 10 young people in the country live in dwelling places that are either owner-constructed (more than half), or owner-inherited (one in five). There is not much variation by age group, except that the proportions are highest for children below 10 years. The rest of the dwelling places of young people are mostly rented from the private sector (more than 15 per cent). However, about one in five young adults aged between 20 and 35 years live in dwelling places rented from the private sector. A considerably smaller proportion (about 2 per cent) of the children live in dwellings owned by their households through purchase of the structure.



Table 3.2: Distribution of young persons by age group and household ownership of dwelling unit

Age Group	Total	Owner purchased %	Owner Constru. ED	Owner Inherited	Employed Government	Employer Private
0-9	2,046,103	1.9	56.7	20.9	0.8	0.5
10-14	846,137	2.1	56.4	19.6	1.1	0.6
15-19	871,348	2.3	55.2	19.6	1.1	0.6
20-24	660,438	2.4	50.7	19.2	1.1	0.7
25-35	1,253,670	2.2	51.0	19.7	1.0	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 3.2: Distribution of young persons by age group and household ownership of dwelling unit (continued)

Age Group	Employer Par.	Renting Gov.	Renting Par.	Renting private	Renting Qua.	Squat	Other
0-9	0.1	0.5	1.7	14.2	0.1	0.5	2.1
10-14	0.1	0.7	1.7	15.4	0.1	0.5	1.7
15-19	0.1	0.7	1.8	16.3	0.1	0.5	1.7
20-24	0.1	0.8	2.0	20.2	0.1	0.6	2.1
25-35	0.1	0.7	2.1	19.6	0.1	0.6	2.2

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

3.4 Main Construction Material of Dwelling

The type of material used in constructing the floor and roof of a dwelling unit affects the wellbeing of the young people who live in it. Concrete floors are generally easier to clean than mud floors and so crawling infants are more likely to contract diseases from mud floors than from concrete floors. The type of construction material also serves as an indicator of the income level or standard of living of the household to which young people belong. As the purchasing power of households improves, their ability to purchase more expensive construction materials for their dwelling units increases.

The main construction material used for the floors of structures that young people live in is either mud (about half) or cement (2 in 5). Since cement is much more expensive than mud, this shows the variations among young people in the country, in terms of quality of the material used in constructing their household dwelling units (Table 3.3).

Almost six out of ten children below nine years (55.2 per cent) live in houses with mud floors, while 37.3 per cent of them live in houses with cement floors. The corresponding figure for children of age 10-14 years are 48.5 per cent for mud and 42.5 per cent for cement. On the other hand, two in five adolescents between 15 and 19 years live in dwelling units that have mud floors and the same proportion have cement floors. Two in five of youths aged 25-35 years live in homes with floors constructed mainly with mud but the same proportion also have homes with cement floors.



Table 3.3: Per centage distribution of young people by main construction material used for floor of dwelling place

Age Group	Total	Stone	Tiles	Cement	Wood	Mud	Other	Total
0-9	2,046,103	0.6	4.3	37.3	2.1	55.2	0.5	100
10-14	846,137	0.6	5.9	42.5	2.0	48.5	0.5	100
15-19	871,348	0.7	6.8	44.0	2.0	46.0	0.5	100
20-24	660,438	0.8	8.6	46.8	1.9	41.3	0.6	100
25-35	1,253,670	0.7	7.2	43.0	2.0	46.6	0.5	100

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

3.5 Household Facilities and Utilities

The availability of improved household facilities and utilities is important for the welfare of children and young persons. The 2015 Census collected information on the main source of lighting, drinking water, cooking fuel and cooking space for the dwelling as well as type of bathing and toilet facility and method of rubbish disposal for all households in the country.

3.5.1 Main Source of Lighting for Dwelling

More than four out of five children aged 0-9 years live in dwelling units that use electricity from batteries or rechargeable lite as the main source of lighting for the household (Table 3.4). The figure is slightly lower for other children aged between 10 and 14 years, (78.8 per cent not 82.6 per cent) and for young adults aged 25-35 years (75.6 per cent).



Table 3.4: Per centage distribution of young people by main source of lighting

Age Group	Total	NPA/BKPS	Gas	Kero-sene	Gene-rator	Lite	Candle	Wood	Solar	Other	Total
0-9	2,046,103	11.6	0.2	1.2	0.7	82.6	0.2	2.0	0.8	0.7	100
10-14	846,137	15.2	0.2	1.2	0.9	78.8	0.2	1.9	0.9	0.7	100
15-19	871,348	17.1	0.2	1.1	1.1	76.8	0.2	1.9	0.9	0.7	100
20-24	660,438	21.5	0.2	1.0	1.2	72.5	0.2	1.7	0.9	0.8	100
25-35	1,253,670	18.6	0.2	1.1	1.0	75.6	0.2	1.7	0.8	0.8	100

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

A little more than one in ten of children below 15 years live in households that use NPA/BKPs (National Power Authority/ Bo-Kenema Power Services) as the main source of lighting. The corresponding figure for adolescents aged 15 to 19 years is higher (17.1 per cent). This compares to young persons between 25 and 35 years where one in five use NPA/BKPs at the household level.

3.5.2 Main Source of Drinking Water for Household

A safe source of drinking water is particularly important for children. This is because untreated drinking water poses health risks, especially to children, including diarrhoea-related infections. According to Table 3.5, the main sources of drinking water for young people in Sierra Leone are public tap (three in ten), protected ordinary well (one in five), and the river/stream (one in five). There is a slight but concerning variation observed by age group regarding the use of unprotected water (ordinary and spring) and water from rivers and streams as a source of drinking water. The proportion for children under ten years who use these unprotected sources is higher than the corresponding proportion for older age groups 20-24 years and 25-35 years.



Table 3.5: Per centage distribution of young persons by age group and main source of drinking water

Age Group	Total	Piped indoor	Piped in community	Pup. Tap	Protected Ordinary water	Protected spring	Unprotected Ordinary water
0-9	2,046,103	0.6	2.9	27.3	20.3	3.3	5.9
10-14	846,137	0.7	3.7	28.4	21.9	3.3	5.3
15-19	871,348	0.8	4.1	28.6	22.4	3.4	5.1
20-24	660,438	1.1	5.0	28.9	22.7	3.6	4.8
25-35	1,253,670	1.0	4.3	28.4	21.0	3.6	5.1

Age Group	Unprotected spring	Mech. well	River/River-bed Stream	Neighbor Ta.	Sachet/ bottled water	Water Ven.	Other	Total
0-9	4.2	8.5	23.8	1.6	1.1	0.3	0.2	100
10-14	3.8	8.5	20.6	2.0	1.5	0.2	0.1	100
15-19	3.6	8.3	19.3	2.1	1.8	0.4	0.1	100
20-24	3.3	7.5	17.5	2.3	2.7	0.5	0.1	100
25-35	3.7	7.7	19.8	2.0	2.7	0.5	0.2	100

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

3.5.3 Main Source of Cooking Fuel

The main source of cooking fuel is another indicator of the standard of living of the household in which a young person lives, particularly as higher income households tend not to use less safe fuels, like wood or charcoal. These types of cooking fuel are less safe for a child's wellbeing than electricity because of the air pollution they cause. This is especially true when cooking is done indoors. In addition, charcoal and wood fires are traditionally prepared close to the ground level which makes them unsafe for children. The use of wood sometimes requires gathering of wood by household members, including children, who could otherwise have used that time for other productive uses. The main source of cooking fuel used by households in which children dwell is wood fuel (over 7 in ten), followed by charcoal (about one in five) (see Table 3.6).

The corresponding figures for young adults of age 20-24 and 25-35 are lower with 61 per cent and 65 per cent respectively using wood as the main source of fuel. At the same time, about 36 per cent and 32 per cent of persons respectively in age groups 20-24 and 25-35 use charcoal as the main source of fuel in their households.



Table 3.6: Per centage of young persons by age group and main source of cooking fuel for household

Age Group	Total	Electricity	Gas	Kerosene	Charcoal	Wood	Crop residue	Saw Dust	Solar	Animal waste	Other	Total
0-9	2,046,103	0.3	0.3	0.5	22.7	75.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	100
10-14	846,137	0.4	0.3	0.6	27.2	70.9	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	100
15-19	871,348	0.4	0.4	0.6	29.5	68.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.5	100
20-24	660,438	0.6	0.7	0.7	35.9	61.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.7	100
25-35	1,253,670	0.5	0.8	0.6	32.0	65.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.7	100

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

3.5.4 Bathing Facility used by Household

More than half of children below 10 years in Sierra Leone use bathing facilities outside their dwelling units and about 35 per cent depend on makeshift facilities (Table 3.7). Less than one in ten of them (5.2 per cent) can bathe inside their homes while a little more than two per cent of them do not have any bathing facility in their dwelling units.

About 56 per cent of young adolescents 10-14 years in Sierra Leone bath outside their dwelling units while 32.7 per cent depend on makeshift facilities outside. Less than one in ten of them bath in facilities inside their homes and about two per cent of them do not have any bathing facility at all.

Among the older adolescents (15-19 years), close to six in ten bath outside their dwelling units and 32.0 per cent use outside makeshift facilities. Less than one in ten of them (8.0 per cent) bath in facilities inside their dwelling places while two per cent of them do not have any bathing facility. The results further show that among persons 20-24 years, a similar proportion (55.8 per cent) use bathing facilities built outside of their dwelling units with another 30.4 per cent using an outside makeshift facility. There are similar results for youths aged 25-35 years. The reason may be that as dependant young people, they just have no choice than to use their respective households' facilities. Access to bathing facilities for young people may, therefore, not vary much to the generality of the population in Sierra Leone.



Table 3.7: Per centage distribution of young people by bathing facilities

Age Group	Total	Inside	Outside built	Outside makeshift	Other	None	Total
0-9	2,046,103	5.2	55.2	34.6	2.4	2.6	100
10-14	846,137	6.9	56.1	32.7	2.1	2.2	100
15-19	871,348	8.0	55.8	32.0	2.0	2.2	100
20-24	660,438	9.9	55.8	30.4	1.9	2.0	100
25-35	1,253,670	8.4	55.4	31.8	2.1	2.3	100

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

3.5.5 Toilet Facility used by Household

There is little or no variation among young people in their use of toilet facility. A little over half use a communal pit toilet facility and one in five use a private pit toilet (Table 3.8). One in ten use communal bush or river bed with only about two to four per cent using flush toilet facilities.



Table 3.8: Per centage distribution of young people by age group and toilet facility used by household

Age Group	Total	Communal VIP	Communal flushed inside	Communal flushed outside	Communal Pit	Communal bucket	Communal/ bush river bed
0-9	100	1.4	1.7	1.6	53.7	0.2	14.7
10-14	100	1.4	2.4	1.9	53.4	0.2	12.5
15-19	100	1.5	2.8	2.0	52.8	0.2	12.2
20-24	100	1.5	3.6	2.4	52.3	0.2	11.5
25-35	100	1.4	3.0	2.2	52.8	0.2	13.0

Age Group	Communal Other	Private VIP	Private flushed inside	Private flushed outside	Private	Private bucket	Private Other
0-9	0.8	0.9	1.8	0.6	21.5	0.1	1.0
10-14	0.6	1.1	2.6	0.7	22.1	0.1	1.0
15-19	0.7	1.1	3.1	0.8	21.8	0.1	0.9
20-24	0.7	1.2	4.0	0.9	20.8	0.1	0.8
25-35	0.7	1.1	3.3	0.7	20.4	0.3	0.9

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

3.5.6 Method of Refuse Disposal

The productivity of a nation depends very much on the sanitation of its communities, including the mode of refuse disposal. Safe refuse disposal is important for the health of children and indirectly affects their education and training - since children who are healthy perform better in school.

Table 3.9 shows that for households with children below 10 years, refuse is mainly deposited in a bin (58 per cent), dumped anywhere (16 per cent) or burnt (13 per cent). This implies that environmental safety for 16 per cent of children for whom refuse is dumped anywhere will not be good. There are similar figures for households with children aged 10-14 years.



Table 3.9: Per centage distribution of young people by age group and method of refuse disposal for household

Age Group	Total	Collected	Dumped anywhere	Burnt	Buried	Deposited in bin	Other
0-9	100	6.3	16.3	13.1	4.7	57.9	1.7
10-14	100	7.4	15.1	14.1	4.7	56.9	1.8
15-19	100	8.0	14.4	14.5	4.7	56.6	1.8
20-24	100	9.6	13.8	15.6	4.8	54.3	1.9
25-35	100	8.8	14.7	14.5	4.6	55.6	1.8

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

The methods of waste disposal do not appear to be very different for households with adolescents (15-19 years) and youth in the country. Again, it is possible that waste disposal follows similar patterns among the entire population.

CHAPTER 4: LITERACY AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

4.1 Introduction

Literacy is an important social attribute that contributes to the wellbeing of people and their involvement in society. Literate adults also benefit from electronic media (radio and television) that use both local and official languages to supplement what they read. Young people are better informed and able to participate in political discussions and other social matters when they are literate. This is important for productivity and good governance.

Educational status is an important indicator for examining the standard of living and social status of people. It determines, to a very large extent, the income status and access to and affordability of some social amenities and services, including safe drinking water and health services. Education also provides opportunities for social mobility and an escape from poverty. It is, therefore, important to examine the educational status of young people in Sierra Leone. The 2015 Census looked at the ability of people 10 years and above to read or write in any language. It also asked about respondents about their educational attainment.

4.2 Literacy Levels

A higher proportion of older adolescents (15-19 years) are literate in English only than younger adolescents (10-14 years) (Table 4.1). However, four in 10 of children aged 10 to 14 and three in 10 children aged 15 to 19 years are not literate. There is some variation by sex, with a higher proportion of literate male adolescents than the female adolescents.



Table 4.1: Distribution of young persons by literacy status and age-sex

	10-14		15-19		20-24		25-35	
Literacy	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Local Language only	2.5	2.6	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.5	2.6	3
English only	56.1	58.8	65.9	63.2	65.2	51.1	47.9	26.9
Local language and English only	0.8	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.5	1	1.2	0.6
French only	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3
Local language and French only	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
English and French only	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Local language English and French only	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Arabic only	2.2	0.5	2.5	0.6	2.4	0.7	4.3	1.0
Local language and Arabic only	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
English and Arabic only	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.0
Local language English and Arabic only	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Languages	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3
Not Literate	37	35.9	27.1	31.6	27.2	43.3	42.2	67.3
Don't Know	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.5

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Young people aged between 20 and 25 years, particularly women, have a lower literacy status than those in younger ages. An even higher proportion of females are illiterate (67.3 per cent) in the 25-35 year group than males (42.2 per cent). In fact women aged 25-35 years have the lowest literacy rate among young people in Sierra Leone.

Table 4.2 presents the distribution of young persons by literacy, age and residence. It indicates that those living in urban areas are more likely to be literate in English than those living in rural areas. For children aged 10-14 years in rural areas, less than half are literate in English only. About three-quarters who live in urban areas are literate.

Following this pattern, adolescents in urban areas aged between 15 and 19 years are more likely to be literate (eight out of ten) than their counterparts living in rural areas (just five out of ten). A little more than one in ten adolescents (15-19 years) in urban areas are illiterate, compared to about half of their counterparts in rural areas.

Comparing adolescents to the older youth groups shows literacy is lower among young people between 20-24 years. In both urban and rural areas, those in the 20-24 age group are more likely to be literate than those in the 25-35 age group.

Young persons aged 25-35 years in rural areas have the lowest rate of literacy (about 30 per cent) compared to a little more than 60 per cent among their counterparts in urban areas. Seven out of ten women in this age group (25-35 years) in rural areas are illiterate compared to about 36 per cent of people in the same age group in urban areas.



Table 4.2: Per centage distribution of young people (10-35 years) by age, literacy and place of residence

Types Of Locality	Local language only	English only	Local language and English only	French only	Local Language and French only	English And French only	Local language English and French only
Rural							
10-14	2.5	46.1	0.7	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0
15-19	2.1	52.1	0.9	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0
20-24	2.2	41.4	0.8	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0
25-35	2.6	21.2	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0
Urban							
10-14	2.7	73.6	1.0	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0
15-19	2.1	80.2	1.5	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.0
20-24	2.4	73.7	1.6	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.0
25-35	3.1	55.8	1.4	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.0



Table 4.2: Per centage distribution of young people (10-35 years) by age, literacy and place of residence (continued)

Types Of Locality	Arabic only	Local language and Arabic only	English and Arab only	Local language English and Arabic	Other language	Not literate	Don't know
Rural							
10-14	2.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	47.4	0.5
15-19	2.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3	41.4	0.5
20-24	2.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3	52.1	0.6
25-35	2.9	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	71.7	0.5
Urban							
10-14	0.5	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.4	20.7	0.4
15-19	0.7	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.4	14.2	0.2
20-24	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.4	19.6	0.4
25-35	2.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.4	35.9	0.5

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

4.3 Educational Attainment

Table 4.3a presents the distribution of young people by educational attainment and age while Table 4.3b shows the distribution of young people by educational attainment and age-sex.

Children: Five in ten of children under 10 years of age have never attended school. This is true for both males and females, although a relatively higher proportion of males than females have never attended school. The rest either attained primary school (2 in 5) or kindergarten (1 in 10) education.

Adolescents: Young adolescents (10-14 years) have either attained only kindergarten level of education (3 in 10) or primary school level (3 in 5), or never attended school (1 in 5). There is not much variation by sex.

Two in ten older adolescents (15 and 19 years) have never attended school while two in 10 attained primary school level. Also, nearly two in five reached the JSS level and nearly one in five attained the SSS level. There appears to be not much variation by sex except that there are slightly higher proportions of male adolescents than their female counterparts attaining JSS and SSS levels.

Youth: Among the 20-24 years age group, women are more likely to have attended school (38.7 per cent) than their male counterparts (26.0 per cent). However the situation changes for the 25 to 35 year age group where almost two-thirds of women have never attended school compared to 42.2 per cent of men. This may be a result of teenage pregnancy, child marriage or cultural values. For these young women who have never attended school, there is much less opportunity for jobs or effective participation in discussions on governance and issues concerning their welfare.



Table 4.3a: Distribution of young people three years and over by educational attainment and age

Educational attainment	3-35	3-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35
Total	5,191,415	1,559,822	846,137	871,348	660,438	1,253,670
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100
Never Attended School	38.1	45.5	19.1	23.7	32.8	54.5
Kindergarten	5.3	13.1	3.8	1.3	1.4	1.4
Primary	29.3	41.1	63.0	19.8	9.5	8.9
JSS	13.3	0.0	13	36	19.6	11.1
SSS	10.6	0.0	0.4	17.9	31	15
Voc/Technical/Nursing/Teacher	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.4	2.9	4.8
Higher (First Degree)	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.3	1.9	2.7
Tertiary (Post-graduate) & PHD	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.6
Koranic	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.8
Other	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1
Don't Know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census





Table 4.3b: Distribution of young people three years and over by educational attainment, age and sex

Relationship to Head of Household	Total	3-35		3-9		10-14	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	5,191,415	2,521,689	2,669,726	779,681	780,141	430,883	415,254
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Never Attended School	38.1	35.0	41.4	46.8	44.2	20.4	17.7
Kindergarten	5.3	5.0	5.2	12.7	13.5	3.9	3.7
Primary	29.3	29.0	29.6	39.9	42.2	61.1	65.0
JSS	13.3	14.0	12.9	0.0	0.0	13.0	13.0
SSS	10.6	13.0	8.5	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.4
Voc/Technical/Nursing/Teacher	1.6	2.0	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Higher (First Degree)	0.9	1.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Tertiary (Post-graduate) & PHD	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Koranic	0.6	1.0	0.2	0.5	0.1	1.2	0.1
Other	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Don't Know	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1

Relationship to Head of Household	15-19		20-24		25-35	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	429,184	442,164	306,319	354,119	575,622	678,048
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100
Never Attended School	22.6	24.8	26.0	38.7	42.2	64.9
Kindergarten	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.7	1.2
Primary	19.1	20.5	8.0	10.8	8.6	9.2
JSS	36.4	35.7	20.1	19.2	13.0	9.4
SSS	19.0	16.9	38.1	24.9	22.0	9.0
Voc/Technical/Nursing/Teacher	0.4	0.4	3.0	2.8	5.9	3.9
Higher (First Degree)	0.2	0.2	2.2	1.6	4.0	1.5
Tertiary (Post-graduate) & PHD	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.9	0.4
Koranic	1.1	0.2	0.8	0.2	1.3	0.4
Other	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Don't Know	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Male and female children in both rural and urban areas aged 3-9 years are more likely than their counterparts of 10-14 years to report that they have never attended school (Table 4.4). More than half of male children in rural areas (3-9 years) have not attended school, compared to about 28 per cent of their counterparts aged 10-14 years. Young people aged 35 years and below in urban areas have better educational attainment than those in rural areas. Twice the number of males in this age group have never attended school in rural compared to urban areas. A corresponding proportion of females have never attended school (52.4 per cent for rural areas and 25.8 per cent for urban areas). Women aged 25-35 years living in rural areas are the most likely group of young persons to report never attended school. Children aged 10 to 14 years in urban areas are the least likely group of young people never to have attended school. In urban areas, less than one in ten of this age group of both girls and boys is reported as never attended school.



Table 4.4: Distribution of young persons by educational attainment, residence and age-sex

Sex/Place of residence/ Age group	Total	Total %	Never Attended School	Ever Attended School		
				Kindergarten	Primary	JSS
Male						
Rural	1,475,708	100	44.9	4.7	29.5	11.6
3-9	524,359	100	53.1	9.6	36.6	0
10-14	265,084	100	28.4	3.6	56.6	9.4
15-24	388,306	100	35	1.3	17.2	28.4
25-35	297,959	100	58	1.5	9.2	12
Urban	1,045,981	100	20.1	6.3	28.2	17
3-9	255,322	100	34	19.1	46.8	0
10-14	165,799	100	7.5	4.4	68.4	18.7
15-24	347,197	100	11.7	1.3	11.4	30.9
25-35	277,663	100	25.2	1.8	8	14.1
Female						
Rural	1,565,838	100	52.4	4.5	29.1	9.8
3-9	509,346	100	50.6	10.4	38.9	0
10-14	233,156	100	26	3.5	61	9.1
15-24	425,756	100	43.9	1.5	19	25.3
25-35	397,580	100	79.1	0.9	8.5	6.2
Urban	1,103,888	100	25.8	6.2	30.4	17.2
3-9	270,795	100	32.2	19.3	48.5	0
10-14	182,098	100	7.1	4	70.1	18.1
15-24	370,527	100	16	1.3	12.9	31.9
25-35	280,468	100	44.7	1.7	10.3	13.9

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 4.4: Distribution of young persons by educational attainment, residence and age-sex (continued)

Sex/Place of residence/ Age group	Ever Attended School						
	SSS	Voc/ Technical/ Nursing/ Teacher	Higher (First Degree)	Tertiary (Post-graduate) & PHD	Koranic	Other	Don't Know
Male							
Rural	6.8	0.7	0.2	0.1	1.4	0.1	0
3-9	0	0	0	0	0.7	0	0
10-14	0.3	0	0	0	1.7	0	0
15-24	15.5	0.7	0.3	0	1.6	0	0
25-35	13.3	2.8	0.9	0.2	2	0.1	0
Urban	21.6	3.3	2.6	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1
3-9	0	0	0	0	0.1	0	0
10-14	0.7	0	0	0	0.2	0.1	0
15-24	39.8	2.4	1.9	0.2	0.3	0.1	0
25-35	31.3	9.3	7.3	1.6	0.8	0.3	0.3
Female							
Rural	3.5	0.4	0.1	0	0.2	0	0
3-9	0	0	0	0	0.1	0	0
10-14	0.2	0	0	0	0.2	0	0
15-24	9.5	0.5	0.2	0	0.1	0	0
25-35	3.6	1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0
Urban	15.4	2.9	1.4	0.3	0.1	0.3	0
3-9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10-14	0.6	0	0	0	0.1	0	0
15-24	33.1	2.7	1.6	0.2	0.1	0.2	0
25-35	16.6	7.9	3.4	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.1

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



CHAPTER 5: MARITAL STATUS AND FERTILITY

5.1 Introduction

Marriage is a highly respected institution in Sierra Leone. Most adults, especially women, would wish to get married.

The question on marital status is applicable to persons 10 years and older because although the laws vary, in some situations eligibility criteria are based on the average age at menarche. In some parts of the country, girls as young as 12 years old are given into marriage.

Marital status has been recognized as the most important factor in population dynamics. It strongly affects fertility and to a lesser extent mortality and migration. Its effect is also felt on other socio-economic phenomena such as school attendance, family formation, households, and labour force participation in late adolescent and young adult age groups.

Socially, an individual's role in society is to a large extent dependent on the person's marital status. This is so in traditional societies like Sierra Leone where marriage is an integral part of the society through which everyone is expected to pass. The reason is that this is the only sanctioned social institution through which procreation is recognized.

One of the risk factors in infant and child mortality is the marital status of the mother. Unmarried women tend to experience higher child loss than married women. Where such women are poor, they find it difficult to afford proper care and children also suffer from paternal care (Statistics Sierra Leone, 2013).

There are several reasons for the high premium placed on child bearing in traditional society. These range from personal, emotional or psychological satisfaction which babies and children give to their parents and families, to the numerical increase in the size of the lineage or clan and its attendant benefits or advantages in intra-lineage relations (Aryee and Forson 2002). Previous censuses conducted in Sierra Leone

have shown that early marriage has been declining, due to increasing access of girls to education. As girls stay in school longer, they end up marrying later, as marriage and schooling are incompatible. This postponement is not limited to those in formal education, but extends to those in trade apprenticeships.

5.2 Marital Status

For persons aged 10-35 years, 97 per cent of the males and 96 per cent of females have never married before (Table 5.1). For males, 1.6 per cent were reported to be married compared to 2.2 per cent of their female counterparts (monogamous and polygamous marriages). If the reporting is accurate, these child marriages have health implications, especially for the girls. Reporting accuracy is questionable, considering that 0.5 per cent of the male children 10-14 years reported to be married with more than one spouse, which would be a strange development in the country. There is need for further investigation.

Some adolescents (15-19 years) have married before. While only 5.7 per cent of the adolescent males are ever married, almost 23 per cent of their female counterparts are ever married. The difference between males and females is large, indicating that adolescent females are more likely to be married compared to adolescent males. Early age at first marriage among the females could also lead to high fertility, especially in situations of little or no contraceptive use.

It is also notable that almost one per cent of adolescent males are married with more than one spouse and 8.4 per cent of their female counterparts are married to a spouse with other wives.



Table 5.1: Per centage distribution of young persons (10-35 years) by marital status, age and sex

	10-14		15-19		20-24		25-35	
Marital Status	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Never Married	96.9	96.0	94.3	77.1	79.2	41.2	35.0	14.0
Engaged	0.3	0.5	1.0	3.6	3.6	7.8	7.4	6.8
Married Monogamous	1.1	1.5	2.7	8.9	8.8	17.5	17.2	22.5
Married Polygamous	0.5	0.7	0.8	8.4	6.4	30.1	36.6	51.0
Co-habitation (<5years)	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.6	0.5
Co-habitation (>5 years)	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.3
Separated	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.9	1.5	1.9
Divorced	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.9
Widowed	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.6	0.4	2.0
Don't know	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.1
Total per cent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Number	430,883	415,254	429,184	442,164	306,319	354,119	575,622	678,048

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

The table further presents young people 25 years and above as having the highest proportions ever married. Among women in these ages, almost 59 per cent was ever married among the 20-24 age group compared to 86 per cent among those of age 25-35 years. In contrast, about 20 per cent of men aged 20-24 years and 65 per cent of their counterparts aged 25-35 years were ever married. Furthermore, about five per cent of young women but just 2.6 per cent of men of age 25-35 years were reported to be divorced, separated or widowed.

Table 5.2 shows that among all four age groups of young people in the country, the proportion ever married is higher in rural than urban areas. For example, among the males, 7.5 per cent and 73.5 per cent respectively of adolescents (15-19 years) and youth (25-35 years) reported to be ever married in the rural areas, compared to 3.4 per cent and 55.8 per cent of their counterparts in urban areas. Similarly, among the females, 39.1 per cent and 91.5 per cent respectively in age groups 15-19 and 25-35 were ever married in rural areas, compared to 15.4 per cent and 78.3 per cent of their counterparts in urban areas. It is also the case that a higher proportion of females than males among all age groups of young people both in rural and urban areas were ever married in Sierra Leone.



Table 5.2: Per centage distribution of population of young persons aged 10-35 years by marital status, residence and sex

Sex/Place of residence/ Age group	Co-Habitation					
	Never Married	Engaged	Married Monogamous	Married Polygamous	Co-habitation (<5years)	Co-habitation (>5 years)
Male						
Rural						
10-14	96.4	0.4	1.4	0.6	0.3	0.0
15-19	92.5	1.3	4.0	1.0	0.3	0.1
20-24	71.1	4.0	13.5	9.0	0.7	0.2
25-35	26.5	5.2	21.0	43.4	0.5	0.2
Urban						
10-14	97.6	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.0
15-19	96.6	0.6	1.2	0.5	0.2	0.2
20-24	86.6	3.2	4.5	3.9	0.6	0.3
25-35	44.2	9.8	13.2	29.3	0.7	0.3
Female						
Rural						
10-14	95.1	0.7	2.1	0.8	0.3	0.0
15-19	70.9	3.7	12.5	10.7	0.7	0.2
20-24	31.1	6.1	23.4	35.9	0.9	0.3
25-35	8.5	4.4	25.9	55.9	0.4	0.2
Urban						
10-14	97.2	0.3	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.0
15-19	84.6	3.3	4.4	5.7	0.6	0.3
20-24	52.0	9.7	11.1	23.9	0.9	0.5
25-35	21.7	10.2	17.6	44.1	0.6	0.4

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 5.2: Per centage distribution of population of young persons aged 10-35 years by marital status, residence and sex (continued)

Sex/Place of residence/ Age group	Co-Habitation				Total
	Separated	Divorced	Widowed	Don't Know	
Male					
Rural					
10-14	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.7	100
15-19	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	100
20-24	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.3	100
25-35	1.7	0.8	0.5	0.2	100
Urban					
10-14	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.9	100
15-19	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.5	100
20-24	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.4	100
25-35	1.3	0.6	0.3	0.3	100
Female					
Rural					
10-14	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.7	100
15-19	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.5	100
20-24	1.1	0.4	0.6	0.2	100
25-35	1.8	0.8	2.0	0.1	100
Urban					
10-14	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.7	100
15-19	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.4	100
20-24	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.3	100
25-35	2.1	1.1	2.0	0.2	100

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

In each region, Table 5.3 shows that more than half of the population of young persons have never married before. The proportion ranges from 61.9 per cent in the Eastern Region to 67.9 per cent in the Western Region. The proportion of those married polygamously by region, ranges from 16.1 per cent in the Western Region to 21.6 per cent in the Southern Region. The proportion of those in monogamous marriages, however, ranges from 6.4 per cent in the Western Region to 13.9 per cent in the Northern Region. In all regions, women are less likely to report not married than men (70 per cent or higher of males compared to 52 per cent or less of females).



Table 5.3: Per centage distribution of young persons (10-35) by marital status, sex and region

Sex/ District	Total	Never Married	Engaged	Married Monogamous	Married Polygamous	Co-habitation (<5years)	Co-habitation (>5 years)
Both Sexes							
Total	100,0	61,9	4,2	11,1	20,1	0,5	0,2
Eastern	100,0	61,9	3,4	10,6	20,9	0,6	0,2
Northern	100,0	59,0	3,3	13,9	21,3	0,3	0,1
Southern	100,0	59,7	3,5	12,2	21,6	0,7	0,2
Western	100,0	67,8	6,7	6,4	16,1	0,5	0,3
Male							
Total	100,0	72,7	3,4	8,2	13,5	0,4	0,2
Eastern	100,0	72,7	2,9	8,5	13,4	0,5	0,2
Northern	100,0	71,6	2,7	9,5	14,4	0,3	0,1
Southern	100,0	70,6	2,8	9,4	14,8	0,6	0,2
Western	100,0	75,9	5,4	5,0	11,5	0,4	0,2
Female							
Total	100,0	51,9	4,9	13,7	26,1	0,6	0,2
Eastern	100,0	52,0	3,8	12,6	27,8	0,7	0,2
Northern	100,0	47,5	4,0	18,0	27,5	0,4	0,1
Southern	100,0	49,9	4,1	14,7	27,8	0,8	0,3
Western	100,0	59,9	8,0	7,8	20,6	0,6	0,3

Sex/ District	Separated	Divorced	Widowed	Don't Know
Both sexes				
Total	0,8	0,4	0,6	0,4
Eastern	0,9	0,4	0,7	0,4
Northern	0,7	0,4	0,6	0,3
Southern	0,7	0,3	0,6	0,5
Western	0,8	0,4	0,5	0,4
Male				
Total	0,6	0,3	0,2	0,5
Eastern	0,7	0,3	0,2	0,5
Northern	0,6	0,3	0,2	0,4
Southern	0,6	0,3	0,2	0,6
Western	0,6	0,3	0,2	0,5
Female				
Total	1,0	0,4	0,9	0,3
Eastern	1,1	0,4	1,1	0,3
Northern	0,9	0,5	1,0	0,2
Southern	0,9	0,3	0,9	0,4
Western	1,0	0,5	0,8	0,4

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

5.3 Children Ever Born

Young people make a substantial contribution to the numbers of children ever born (CEB) in Sierra Leone (Table 5.4). Of the 4.9 million children ever born to all women 10 years and older, 54.4 per cent were born to young people aged 10-35 years. These are the age groups that sexual activity is highest.

This implies government's intervention policies and programmes that are aimed at reducing fertility rates in Sierra Leone should target young women. Improved access to education and family planning among young people, both men and women, would positively affect sexual behaviour by making them become aware of alternative economic opportunities, thereby empowering them to only have births when they are ready and able to take care of them.

Interestingly, there is little variation between urban and rural areas with respect to the contribution of young people to fertility. Young rural women contributed less than three per cent more to CEB than young urban women.



Table 5.4: Contribution of young people to children ever born by age group and residence

Age Group of Women	Total Population	Place of Residence / CEB		
		Women	Total	Rural
Total	1,889,585	2,693,514	1,798,207	895,307
10 - 14	415,254	0.1	0.2	0.1
15 - 19	442,164	3.2	4.8	4.3
20 - 24	354,119	10.2	15.2	17.8
25 - 29	329,751	19.4	29.1	30.5
30 - 34	233,693	20.6	30.8	30.7
35 - 35	114,604	13.3	20.0	16.5
10+	2,334,825	4,948,126	3,252,864	1,695,262
10-35	1,889,585	2,693,514	1,798,207	895,307
Contribution by Young Women (10-35)	80.9	54.4	55.3	52.8

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

The per centage distribution of children ever born by age group was analysed by region and shows little geographical variation in trends (Table 5.5). As expected, females 10-14 years contribute just 0.1 per cent of all births to women in child bearing ages 10-54 years. There is no differential by region.

Adolescents: Adolescents aged 15-19 years contribute about 2-3 per cent of CEB in the country. There is not much difference by region.

Youth: The contribution of the 20-24 year group to CEB is 8.5 per cent. There is, however, some variation observed by region in this regard, with the contribution by region ranging from 8.4 per cent in the Northern Region to 9.8 per cent in the Western Region.

The proportion contributed by 25-29 age group to total CEB is 16.1 per cent. The contribution by region ranges from 15.6 per cent in the Southern Region to 16.7 per cent in the Western Region. The proportion contributed by the 30-34 age group to total CEB is the highest (16.7 per cent), with the contribution ranging from 16.4 per cent in the Western Region to 17.5 per cent in the Eastern Region.



Table 5.5: Distribution of children ever born by region

Age Group of Women	Total	Eastern	Northern	Southern	Western
Total	4,948,126	1,153,071	1,872,577	1,097,006	825,472
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100
10-14	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
15-19	2.5	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.0
20-24	8.8	8.5	8.4	8.9	9.8
25-29	16.1	16.5	15.9	15.6	16.7
30-34	16.7	17.5	16.5	16.6	16.3
35-54	55.8	55.0	56.5	56.0	55.1

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 5.6: Per centage contribution of women (10-54 years) to total births in the last 12 months by age group and type of place of residence

Age Group of Women	Total	Rural	Urban
Total	100	100	100
10-14	0.3	0.3	0.3
15-19	11.6	11.1	12.0
20-24	24.1	23.1	22.9
25-29	27.2	27.8	27.1
30-34	17.0	17.6	16.9
35-54	19.8	20.1	20.8
35-54	55.8	55.0	56.5

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Analysing the number of births during the last 12 months before the census by region does show small variations (Table 5.7).

Children: Children in the Western Region recorded the least proportion of births recorded in the region (0.2 per cent) while their counterparts in the Southern Region reported the highest (0.4 per cent) proportion of all births recorded in that region in the past 12 months.

Adolescents: Adolescents aged 15-19 years contributed 11.6 per cent of all births in the last 12 months prior to the census. There is some variation observed by region ranging from 10.8 per cent in the Western Region to 12.0 per cent each in the Southern and Northern regions.

Youth: Young women aged 20-24 years contributed 24.1 per cent of all births in the last 12 months before the census. By region, the contribution by this age group ranges from 22.9 per cent in the Northern Region to 28.1 per cent in the Western Region. Young women aged 25-29 years contributed the highest (27.2 per cent) to all births in the last 12 months with very little variation by region - which is to be expected.



Table 5.7: Distribution of number of birth in last 12 months by region by age group of mothers

Age Group of Women	Total	Eastern	Northern	Southern	Western
Total	100	100	100	100	100
10-14	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2
15-19	11.6	11.1	12.0	12.0	10.8
20-24	24.1	23.1	22.9	24.0	28.1
25-29	27.2	27.8	27.1	26.4	27.4
30-34	17.0	17.6	16.9	17.4	16.3
35-54	19.8	20.1	20.8	19.9	17.2

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Age at First Sex

The timing of sexual activity is important in analysing fertility rates in any country. The data from the Sierra Leone Demographic Health Survey (SLDHS) show that young women aged 15-19 are almost twice as likely to engage in sexual intercourse before age 15 compared with young men of the same age group (20 per cent versus 11 per cent). Also, among persons aged 20-24, a higher proportion of women than men had sexual intercourse before the age of 18 (69 per cent and 54 per cent respectively).

Age at first sexual intercourse varies by residence and gender. A higher proportion of women in rural areas (24 per cent) have sexual intercourse before age 15 compared with women in urban areas (14 per cent). Furthermore, in both urban and rural areas, women are more likely than men to have initiated sexual intercourse before age 15.

Level of education is an important variable that affects the timing of sexual intercourse. However, in Sierra Leone, the effect of education on the timing of first sex does not appear to always show the expected relationship. Nearly three-quarters (74 per cent) of young women with no education and eight out of ten (81 per cent) of those with primary school education are more likely than those with secondary or higher education (68 per cent) to have initiated sexual intercourse before age 18. However men seem to show an opposite relationship with 49 per cent of young men with no education and 52 per cent of others with primary school education being less likely than men with secondary or higher education (57 per cent) to have initiated sexual intercourse before age 18 (SLDHS, 2013).

CHAPTER 6: REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND MORTALITY

6.1 Introduction

The rate of death among young persons is an indication of their wellbeing and health status, hence indices of mortality have been used as indicators of socio-economic development. Mortality data helps analyse the potential growth of populations and calculate population projections.

Sierra Leone, like other developing countries in Africa, has a poor death registering procedure, due to large rural populations and a lack of funds. As a result, population and housing censuses and other surveys, such as the demographic and health and post enumeration surveys, have been relied on to determine the levels, age patterns and trends of mortality.

Sierra Leone's reproductive health policy to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity was prepared by the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in 2010. There is also a National Reproductive Health Strategy which provides guidelines for improving access to skilled attendance at child birth and for improving the availability of and access to quality emergency obstetrical care.

This chapter analyses data collected in population and housing censuses as well as from other surveys such as the demographic and health surveys conducted in Sierra Leone. The 2015 Population and Housing Census asked questions on deaths in the past 12 months as well as the causes of death.

Data on mortality obtained from surveys and censuses sometimes have limitations because they usually contain errors of omission and displacement of birth and death dates. When the age of birth or death is misreported, it tends to produce biased estimates. Under-reporting was also identified as a source of error in the 2008 SLDHS (SSL, 2013).

6.2 Deaths and Causes of Death in the past 12 Months

The 2015 Census recorded the distribution of deaths among young people in the last 12 months by age group (Table 6.1). It shows that 45,677 people aged 10-54 years died in the 12 months preceding the census night. In total, deaths among children, adolescents and youth formed more than half of all such deaths. Deaths among children in the age group 10-14 represented 7.6 per cent of all the deaths compared to 10 per cent or higher in older age groups between 15 and 34 years.





Table 6.1: Distribution of deaths of persons aged 10-54 years in the 12-month period preceding the census by age-sex

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
10-14	8.3	6.9	7.6
15-19	10.3	11.2	10.7
20-24	9.3	12	10.7
25-29	12	15.1	13.5
30-34	11.7	12.8	12.3
35-54	48.4	42	45.2
Total per cent	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Number	22,807	22,870	45,677

The data further shows that amongst 10 to 14 year olds, a male child is more likely to die than the female child. However, with increasing age, females become more at risk of dying until the age of 35 years. Then the proportion of all deaths is higher for men (48.4 per cent) than women (42 per cent). This trend could be linked to high maternal mortality or pregnancy-related deaths in young women.

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

6.2.1 Maternal Deaths

The Census data shows that in the 12 months preceding enumeration, one in 10 deaths of young women aged 15 to 34 years was pregnancy related (Table 6.2).



Table 6.2: Per centage distribution of female deaths in the 12-month period preceding the census for population aged 10-54 years by age

Age group	Pregnancy related deaths	Other causes of death	Total per cent	Total deaths
10-14	1.7	98.3	100.0	3,458
15-19	11.3	88.7	100.0	4,905
20-24	13.9	86.1	100.0	4,866
25-29	12.8	87.2	100.0	6,188
30-34	10.1	89.9	100.0	5,600
35-54	3.6	96.4	100.0	20,660

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Table 6.3 also presents the distribution of pregnancy-related deaths by age group and timing of death. Six out of ten cases of the pregnancy-related deaths were reported to occur whilst the woman was pregnant. A little more than one-fifth of the deaths occurred during child birth, apart from in the 10-14 age group where as many as 32 per cent of the deaths were during child birth. Pregnancy-related deaths that occurred six weeks after the end of pregnancy were the lowest in all the age groups, representing a little more than 10 per cent.



Table 6.3: Distribution of pregnancy-related deaths for population aged 10-54 years by period of occurrence and age group of women

Age group	Whilst pregnant	During childbirth	6 weeks after end of pregnancy	Total per cent
10-14	57.6	32.2	10.2	100
15-19	63.9	23.6	12.5	100
20-24	60.4	25.8	13.8	100
25-29	60.3	23.1	16.6	100
30-34	60.5	27.3	12.2	100
35-54	63.3	22.7	14	100

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 6.4: Per centage distribution of all deaths in the 12-month period by cause of death (0-54 years)

Age group	%	Malaria	Malnutrition	Congestive Chest Failure(CCF)	Hypertension	Anemia	Acute Respiratory Infection
Total	100	34.1	5.6	2.8	1.9	5.8	2.3
0 - 4	100	44.2	8.5	1.8	0.5	7.0	1.4
5 - 9	100	41.3	6.1	2.3	1.3	6.3	2.1
10 - 14	100	33.0	4.6	3.4	1.6	5.6	2.4
15 - 19	100	26.5	2.8	2.9	2.1	4.0	3.0
20 - 24	100	23.4	2.9	3.0	2.8	5.0	2.8
25 - 29	100	21.4	3.2	3.7	3.0	4.4	3.0
30 - 34	100	22.9	2.7	4.2	4.5	4.9	3.9
35 - 54	100	19.4	2.9	5.9	8.6	5.3	4.4

Age group	%	Broncho-pneumonia	Maternal death	HIV/AIDS	Ebola	Other	Don't know	Not stated
Total	100	1.0	6.3	0.1	15.5	16	7.3	1.3
0 - 4	100	0.7	6.7	0.1	5.7	13.1	8.8	1.5
5 - 9	100	0.9	1.9	0.1	16.4	13.8	6.5	1.0
10 - 14	100	0.5	1.4	0.1	21.1	17.4	7.1	1.8
15 - 19	100	1.1	7.5	0.2	24.3	18.3	6.2	1.1
20 - 24	100	1.3	8.4	0.2	23.1	20.4	5.3	1.4
25 - 29	100	1.2	8.3	0.3	24.8	19.5	6.0	1.2
30 - 34	100	1.4	6.6	0.2	23.7	17.5	6.1	1.4
35 - 54	100	1.6	3.1	0.2	20.5	20.2	6.8	1.1

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

CHAPTER 7: ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

7.1 Introduction

The ultimate objective of development is to bring about sustained improvement in the living standards of people. To this end, development policies must aim to increase employment opportunities. To achieve this aim, data on economic activity and other characteristics of the labour force are required. Population and housing censuses can provide the most comprehensive source of such data. This can be used to make projections about the labour force and unemployment rates and track the progress of economies over time. Such data can also be used to assess any shortfall in manpower requirements needed to plan for various sectors of the economy, including health and education. Everyone aged ten and above were asked about their economic activity. One is said to be economically active if he/she engaged in any activity for pay (cash or kind) or profit or family gain during the 12 month period preceding the census. Interviewers collected information on employment status, employer, type of work and industry.

People judged not in the labour force include full-time home makers, students and pensioners. Also included in this category are those who were not working and were not looking for work. By this definition, the labour force concept only presents a rough idea of the employment situation. It masks phenomena including under-employment, part-time, seasonal and irregular employment.

7.2 Employment Status

The employment status of young people has implications for their income and standard of living. Most self-employed workers and those who work in the informal sector, including agriculture, forestry and fishing, earn relatively low wages. The same is true for casual and domestic employees. On the other hand, employees of public and private enterprises receive higher salaries and usually have social security and pensions. It is, therefore, useful to analyse

the population of young people by employment status and institutional sector of employment and industry, as a proxy for understanding their living standards.

Table 7.1 presents the distribution of young people by age-sex and employment status. It indicates that most young persons of age 10-35 years are either self-employed without employees (37.9 per cent among females and 32.2 per cent for males) or full-time students (37.4 per cent among females and 45.2 per cent for males). These two categories constitute 75.3 per cent of all young females and 77.5 per cent of all young males.

The rest of the young females are mainly engaged doing household work (10 per cent) or as unpaid family workers (3 per cent), while the males are mainly engaged as paid employees (5.3 per cent) and household workers (2.8 per cent). It is also instructive to note that 11.8 per cent of the females and 13.9 per cent of the males in the age group 10-14 years were recorded as working as self-employed without employees. This could imply some elements of child labour at a period when they would be expected to be in school.



Table 7.1: Distribution of young females and males by age-sex and employment status

Employment status	Male				Female			
	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35
Paid employee	0.4	0.9	4.3	12.8	0.4	0.6	1.8	4.5
Self-employed without employees	13.9	20.2	32.3	54.9	11.8	23.5	42.3	60.9
Self-employed with employees (employer)	0.8	1.1	2.0	3.7	0.6	1.1	2.0	3.0
Unpaid family worker	2.5	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.1	2.7	3.2	4.0
Paid apprentice	0.1	0.4	0.9	0.9	0	0.1	0.2	0.2
Unpaid apprentice	0.7	1.6	2.2	1.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.5
Worked before but currently looking for work	0.0	0.1	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.4
Looking for work for the first time	0.7	1.5	3.8	4.2	0.7	1.2	2.4	2.1
Household work	4.1	3.1	2.4	1.7	4.9	7.7	12.9	13.5
Not working & not looking for work	3.7	3.4	3.8	2.9	3.5	3.7	4.5	3.3
Full-time student	71.8	63.7	43.8	12.4	74.6	57.8	28.4	6.1
Retired/pensioner	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other (specify)	0.8	0.9	1.2	1.2	0.7	0.8	1.1	1.1
Don't know	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.4
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

The data further show that 3.7 per cent of females and 3.4 per cent of males are not working and not looking for work. The proportion of males (2.6 per cent) looking for work for the first time is higher than that of their female counterparts (1.6 per cent).

A higher proportion of the younger age groups are full-time students, compared to others in the older age groups. It should be noted that while in age group 10-14 years, the proportion of females who were full-time students was two per cent higher than males, at all other older ages, there were more male full-time students than female. This suggests that as young people grow older, males are more likely to continue schooling than females (Table 7.1).

Table 7.2.1: Analysis of Employment Status by Region

The proportion of young adolescents aged 10-14 years who are full-time students varies by where they live, ranging from 66.1 per cent of males in the Southern Region to 86.6 per cent of females in the Western Region. (Table 7.2). There is also a large variation in the distribution of children who are self employed without employees. It ranges from two in hundred in the Western Region to nearly two in ten in Northern Region.



Table 7.2: Distribution of young persons (10-14 years) by sex, employment status and region

Region	%	Paid employee	Self employed without employee	Self employed with employee	Unpaid family worker	Paid apprentice	Unpaid apprentice	Worked before but currently looking for work
Male								
Total	100	0.4	13.9	0.8	2.5	0.1	0.7	0.0
Eastern	100	0.5	15.4	0.7	2.7	0.1	0.8	0.0
Northern	100	0.3	18.0	1.0	2.6	0.1	0.5	0.0
Southern	100	0.6	14.9	0.9	4.0	0.1	0.8	0.1
Western	100	0.5	2.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.1
Female								
Total	100	0.4	11.8	0.6	2.1	0.0	0.3	0.0
Eastern	100	0.5	12.9	0.6	2.1	0.0	0.3	0.0
Northern	100	0.4	17.2	1.0	2.6	0.0	0.3	0.0
Southern	100	0.5	11.2	0.6	2.9	0.0	0.4	0.0
Western	100	0.4	2.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2	0.1

Region	%	Looking for work for the first time	Household work	Not working and not looking for work	Full-time students	Retired/pensioner	Other	Don't know
Male								
Total	100	0.7	4.1	3.7	71.8	0.0	0.8	0.5
Eastern	100	0.4	3.5	2.8	72.0	0.0	0.7	0.4
Northern	100	0.7	4.7	3.7	67.5	0.0	0.6	0.3
Southern	100	0.7	5.6	4.7	66.1	0.0	1.1	0.4
Western	100	1.3	2.1	3.8	87.1	0.0	0.9	0.5
Female								
Total	100	0.7	4.9	3.5	74.6	0.0	0.7	0.4
Eastern	100	0.5	4.2	2.7	75.3	0.0	0.6	0.3
Northern	100	0.6	6.0	3.7	67.5	0.0	0.5	0.2
Southern	100	0.6	5.8	3.6	73.3	0.0	0.6	0.5
Western	100	1.0	3.1	3.9	86.6	0.0	1.0	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Adolescents: Table 7.3 indicates that most adolescents (15-19 years) are full-time students. The proportion ranges from almost four in five among males and females in the Western Region to three in five for males and one in two for females in the Southern Region. Adolescents who are self-employed without employees follow as the second largest group with the Northern Region recording the highest proportion of 26.0 per cent for males and 32.2 per cent for females while the Western Region reported about one in ten among both sexes.



Table 7.3: Percentage distribution of young persons aged 15-19 years by sex, employment status and region

Region	%	Paid employee	Self employed without employee	Self employed with employee	Unpaid family worker	Paid apprentice	Unpaid apprentice	Worked before but currently looking for work
Male								
Total	100	0.9	20.2	1.1	2.7	0.4	1.6	0.1
Eastern	100	0.7	21.6	1.0	2.7	0.3	1.6	0.1
Northern	100	0.6	26.0	1.4	2.9	0.3	1	0
Southern	100	1.1	20.9	1.2	4.4	0.4	1.7	0.1
Western	100	1.6	8.0	0.7	0.7	0.8	2.4	0.2
Female								
Total	100	0.6	23.5	1.1	2.7	0.1	0.4	0.1
Eastern	100	0.5	24.0	1.0	2.5	0.1	0.6	0
Northern	100	0.4	32.2	1.6	3.1	0.1	0.3	0
Southern	100	0.9	22.4	1.2	4.2	0.1	0.6	0.1
Western	100	0.7	10.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.1

Region	%	Looking for work for the first time	Household work	Not working and not looking for work	Full-time studente	Retired/pensioner	Other	Don't know
Male								
Total	100	1.5	3.1	3.4	63.7	0	0.9	0.4
Eastern	100	0.9	2.5	2.6	65.0	0	0.7	0.3
Northern	100	1.3	3.3	3.0	59.4	0	0.5	0.3
Southern	100	1.4	4.4	4.1	58.8	0	1.1	0.4
Western	100	2.7	2.1	4.5	74.3	0	1.3	0.7
Female								
Total	100	1.2	7.7	3.7	57.8	0	0.8	0.3
Eastern	100	0.8	6.5	2.8	60.5	0	0.6	0.1
Northern	100	0.9	8.3	3.3	48.8	0	0.5	0.5
Southern	100	1.1	9.4	4.0	54.8	0	0.9	0.3
Western	100	2	6.5	5.0	71.6	0	1.3	0.6

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Youth: The proportion of young people aged 20-24 years who are full-time students ranges from one in two for males in Eastern and Western regions and one in five among females in the Northern Region (Table 7.4). Adolescents who are self-employed without employees are the second largest group, ranging from 52.2 per cent for females in the Northern Region to 20.3 per cent among males in the Western Region. The third largest group of female youth are those who do mainly household work and they range from 12.0 per cent in the Northern Region to 15.3 per cent in the Southern Region.



Table 7.4: Percentage distribution of young persons (20-24 years) by sex, employment status and region

Region	%	Paid employee	Self employed without employee	Self employed with employee	Unpaid family worker	Paid apprentice	Unpaid apprentice	Worked before but currently looking for work
Male								
Total	100	4.3	32.3	2	2.4	0.9	2.2	0.4
Eastern	100	2.2	35.2	1.8	2.9	0.6	2	0.2
Northern	100	2.3	40.3	2.3	2.8	0.5	1.3	0.2
Southern	100	4.4	34.8	2	4.2	0.7	2.2	0.3
Western	100	7.8	20.3	1.8	0.7	1.6	3.1	0.7
Female								
Total	100	1.8	42.3	2	3.2	0.2	0.6	0.2
Eastern	100	1.1	45.4	1.7	3.4	0.1	0.7	0.1
Northern	100	1	52.2	2.6	3.5	0.1	0.4	0.1
Southern	100	1.8	41.7	2	5.3	0.2	0.9	0.2
Western	100	3.3	27.9	1.5	1.1	0.3	0.6	0.5

Region	%	Looking for work for the first time	Household work	Not working and not looking for work	Full-time studente	Retired/pensioner	Other	Don't know
Male								
Total	100	3.8	2.4	3.8	43.8	0	1.2	0.5
Eastern	100	1.9	2.1	2.8	47.1	0	0.8	0.4
Northern	100	3	2.5	3	40.8	0	0.6	0.4
Southern	100	3.1	3.2	4.3	39.1	0	1.3	0.4
Western	100	6.6	2.2	5.2	47.5	0	1.9	0.6
Female								
Total	100	2.4	12.9	4.5	28.4	0	1.1	0.4
Eastern	100	1.5	11.6	3.4	29.9	0	0.7	0.4
Northern	100	1.5	12	3.2	22.3	0	0.6	0.5
Southern	100	1.9	15.3	4.4	24.8	0	1.1	0.4
Western	100	4.7	13.3	7	37.2	0	1.9	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

7.3 Institutional Sector of Employment

Analysis of the institutional sector of employment can highlight how conditions may affect the health of young people and constitute a breach to their rights. Table 7.5 shows that eight out of 10 children aged 10-14 years are not economically active. Those who are economically active are mainly self-employed. Among adolescents (15-19 years), seven out of 10 are not economically active. The rest are mainly self-employed without employees. The proportion of young persons working in the private sector is less than two per cent among adolescents and close to four per cent among the males aged 25-35 years. Furthermore, while more than half of young people aged 20-24 years are not economically active, four in ten are self-employed.

On the other hand, the proportion of young people (25-35 years) that is economically not active is less than three in ten, while that in self-employment in the same age group is higher (65.5 per cent of females and 60.3 per cent of males). Government sector employment among the young people in Sierra Leone is very small and is highest in the age group 25-35 years (5.5 per cent among the males compared to 2.4 per cent among the females).



Table 7.5: Distribution of young persons by age-sex and institutional sector

Institutional sector	Male				Female			
	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35
Government	0.1	0.2	1.1	5.5	0.1	0.1	0.6	2.4
Parastatal / Quasi Government	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.4
Self-employed	15.2	22.1	35.5	60.3	12.9	25.4	45.5	65.5
International Non- Governmental Org.	0.1	0.1	0.3	1.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.4
Local Non- Governmental Organization	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
Family member	2.4	2.7	2.5	2.1	1.9	2.3	2.6	2.9
Private enterprises	0.3	1.3	3.7	5.9	0.1	0.3	0.8	1.4
Private household (paid domestic work)	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
Embassy or International Organization	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Others	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.5	0	0.1	0.1	0.1
Don't know	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0
Not Economically Active	81.6	73	55.5	22.8	84.7	71.5	49.7	26.4
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total Number	430,883	429,184	306,319	575,622	415,254	442,164	354,119	678,048
Total per cent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

7.4 Occupation

Table 7.6 presents the distribution of young people by age-sex and occupation. It indicates two main types of occupation that are prominent among young people: agricultural and fishery workers and service, shop and market sales workers. In each of these two occupations, the proportion of young people working increases with age. This could be due to physical strength requirements. The remaining types of occupation employ quite negligible proportions of the young persons in each age category.



Table 7.6: Percentage distribution of population of young people by age-sex and occupation

Occupation	Male				Female			
	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35
Legislators Senior Officials & Managers	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.9	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.5
Professionals	0.1	0.3	1.3	5	0.1	0.2	0.8	2.4
Technicians & Associate Professionals	0.1	0.4	1.1	2.8	0.1	0.2	0.5	1.0
Clerks	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.8	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.5
Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers	0.8	2.1	6.1	10.9	1.4	4.8	13.0	18.7
Agricultural and Fishery Worker (farmers, fishermen, animal rearers, hunters, palm wine tappers, poultry workers etc.)	15.7	19.5	23.7	37.2	12.8	21.0	30.5	44.1
Craft and Related Trade Workers	1.1	3.2	6.9	11.0	0.4	1.1	2.4	3.0
Plant & Machine Operators & Assemblers	0.1	0.8	3.3	6.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2
Elementary Occupations	0.4	0.4	1.4	2.1	0.4	0.7	2.2	3.0
Other occupation	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2
Not Economically Active	81.6	73	55.5	22.8	84.7	71.5	49.7	26.4
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

7.5 Industry

Table 7.7 presents data on the distribution of young persons by industry. It shows that one in ten adolescents aged 10-14 years is mainly engaged in crop farming. There is some disparity by sex as males (14.8 per cent) are more likely to be engaged in this industry than females (12.2 per cent). Children who are economically active are mostly engaged in crop farming. They do work in several other industries, but always in very small proportions (less than 1 per cent).

Two in ten adolescents aged 15-19 years are engaged as crop farmers. Female adolescents (20.2 per cent) are more likely than male adolescents (18.2 per cent) to be engaged in this industry. Other adolescents who are economically active are engaged mainly in wholesale and retail trade and the repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles. There is, however, some variation by sex as male adolescents (2.0 per cent) are less likely to work in this industry than their female counterparts (4.4 per cent).

Economically active young persons of age 20-24 years, also work mostly as crop farmers or work in the wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles. There is, however, some variation by sex as females (12.5 per cent) are more likely to be engaged in the wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles than males (5.5 per cent) - similar to the observation made among adolescents of age 15-19 years.



Table 7.7: Percentage distribution of population of young people by age-sex and industry

Industry	Male				Female			
	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35
Crop Farming	14.8	18.2	22	34.9	12.2	20.2	29.6	42.8
Animal production	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.9
Forestry Logging and Hunting	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3
Fishing & Aquaculture	0.6	1	1.5	2.2	0.3	0.6	0.9	1.2
Mining and Quarrying	0.3	0.8	2	4.2	0.2	0.4	0.9	1.1
Manufacturing	0.6	1.2	2.1	3	0.4	0.7	1.6	2.2
Electricity gas steam & air conditioning supply	0.1	0.2	0.5	1.1	0	0.1	0.2	0.2
Water supply; sewerage waste management & remediation activities	0	0.1	0.2	0.5	0	0	0.1	0.1
Construction	0.1	0.8	2.2	3.5	0	0.1	0.2	0.2
Wholesale & Retail Trade Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	0.7	2	5.5	9.5	1.1	4.4	12.1	17.2
Transport and Storage	0.1	0.7	2.8	4.9	0	0.1	0.1	0.2

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 7.7: Percentage distribution of population of young people by age-sex and industry (continued)

Industry	Male				Female			
	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-35
Accommodation and food service activities	0	0.1	0.3	0.5	0	0.2	0.7	1.1
Information and Communication	0	0	0.2	0.4	0	0	0	0.1
Financial and Insurance activities	0	0	0	0.4	0	0	0.1	0.2
Real Estate activities	0	0	0.2	0.2	0	0	0.1	0.2
Professional scientific & technical activities	0.1	0.3	0.9	2.6	0	0.2	0.3	0.9
Administration & support service activities	0	0.1	0.4	1.1	0	0	0.1	0.3
Public Administration and Defence Compulsory Social Security	0.1	0.1	0.4	1.5	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.5
Education	0.1	0.2	0.4	1.5	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.6
Human health and social work activities	0	0	0.2	0.7	0	0	0.3	0.9
Arts entertainment and recreation	0	0.1	0.4	0.5	0	0.1	0.1	0.2
Other service activities	0.1	0.3	0.8	1.3	0.1	0.3	0.9	1.1
Activities of household as employers	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.7	1
Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	0	0	0.1	0.4	0	0	0	0.1
Not Economically Active	81.6	73	55.5	22.8	84.7	71.5	49.7	26.4
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total Number	430,883	429,184	306,319	575,622	415,254	442,164	354,119	678,048

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

CHAPTER 8: DISABILITY

8.1 Introduction

Knowledge of the disability status of young people helps stakeholders develop policies to provide social protection to support people with disabilities (PWDs). Knowing the types of disability in the community can also inform the kind of assistance required. Analysis of the disability status of children, adolescents and youth by age, sex and region, therefore, provides an important basis for the design of programmes of intervention to assist people with disabilities. The passage of the Act on Persons with Disability in 2011 and establishment of the National Commission for Persons with Disability provide evidence of the importance that Sierra Leone places on PWDs as a major development issue. The 2015 PHC, therefore, collected data on the demographic characteristics of PWDs in the country. This chapter analyses the characteristics of PWDs who are children, adolescents and youth.

8.2 Disability among young people

Table 8.1 shows the distribution of young persons by disability status and age-sex. It indicates that of the total number of 5,677,696 young people enumerated in Sierra Leone, 0.8 per cent were reported as having some disabilities. Ninety-three per cent of young persons reported no disability but 6.4 per cent said they did not know whether they had any disability or not. There are slight variations by age group.





Table 8.1: Distribution of population of young people by disability status and age-sex

Age/ Sex	Total	With disability		Without disability		Don't Know	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total							
Total	5,677,696	44,900	0.8	5,269,539	92.8	363,257	6.4
0-9	2,046,103	9,837	0.5	1,903,464	93.0	132,802	6.5
10-14	846,137	6,271	0.7	787,889	93.1	51,977	6.1
15-19	871,348	7,161	0.8	809,883	92.9	54,304	6.2
20-24	660,438	5,866	0.9	610,131	92.4	44,441	6.7
25-35	1,253,670	15,765	1.3	1,158,172	92.4	79,733	6.4
Male							
Total	2,765,814	24,305	0.9	2,564,965	92.7	176,544	6.4
0-9	1,023,806	5,560	0.5	952,535	93.0	65,711	6.4
10-14	430,883	3,488	0.8	401,673	93.2	25,722	6.0
15-19	429,184	3,911		398,732	92.9	26,541	6.2
20-24	306,319	3,175	1.0	282,095	92.1	21,049	6.9
25-35	575,622	8,171	1.4	529,930	92.1	37,521	6.5
Female							
Total	2,911,882	20,595	0.7	2,704,574	92.9	186,713	6.4
0-9	1,022,297	4,277	0.4	950,929	93.0	67,091	6.6
10-14	415,254	2,783	0.7	386,216	93.0	26,255	6.3
15-19	442,164	3,250	0.7	411,151	93.0	27,763	6.3
20-24	354,119	2,691	0.8	328,036	92.6	23,392	6.6
25-35	678,048	7,594	1.1	628,242	92.7	42,212	6.2

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

The proportion of young males reported to have some form of disability was relatively higher (0.9 per cent) than the corresponding figure for young females (0.7 per cent). There were also variations in the proportion of people with disabilities by age group. Those in the 25-35 year age group had the highest proportion with a disability (1.3 per cent), for men and women. Children under 10 years recorded the lowest proportion (0.5 per cent) with a disability. In all age groups, the proportion of males with disability is relatively higher than among females.

8.3 Variations in Disability by Region

There is some variation in the proportion of PWDs by region, ranging from 0.4 per cent in the Western Region to 0.8 per cent in the Eastern Region (Table 8.2).



Table 8.2: Distribution of young persons with disability as a percentage of region's population

Region	Total Population	Total Disability	Disability as % of population
Total	7,092,113	44,900	0.6
Eastern	1,642,370	12,980	0.8
Northern	2,508,201	15,676	0.6
Southern	1,441,308	9,956	0.7
Western	1,500,234	6,288	0.4

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

8.4 Types of Disability

Young people who have some form of disability must have formal education and training in employable skills in their formative years to be able to access paid work in adulthood. This is necessary for them to be self-reliant and have good living standards. Information on types of disabilities is used to design, plan and implement skills training programmes for PWDs.

Tables 8.3 presents the distribution of young persons with disability by the type of disability as a proportion of the total population of persons with disability in each age group. It shows that polio causes the greatest physical disabilities across every age and sex.

Among children (below 10 years) polio (28.9 per cent) is the most common disability, followed by amputees, partially deaf, deaf, mental difficulties and epileptic. For children 10-14 years, the most common disabilities after polio are deaf, amputee, partially deaf, partially sighted and speech difficulty.

For adolescents (15-19 years) with disabilities, one in four had polio while about one in ten were amputees. The deaf, partially sighted and mute, follow in that order. Similarly, polio (28.6 per cent) is the most common disability among the 20-24 age group, followed by amputees, partially sighted, deaf and mental difficulties. The situation among the 25-35 age group is also not different as polio records the highest proportion (27.3 per cent), followed by amputees, partially sighted, the blind or visually impaired and those with mental difficulties.



**Table 8.3: Distribution of young persons with disability
by type of disability and age-sex**

Sex/ Age	Total	%	Physical disability (polio)	Physical disability Amputee	Blind/ visually Impaired	Partially Sighted	Deaf	Partially Deaf	Speech Difficulty	Mute
Total	44,900	100	27.3	10	5.9	8.5	7.8	5.5	5.7	5.8
0 - 9	9,837	100	28.9	10.9	5	7.5	7.8	5.7	6.7	7.2
10-14	6,271	100	25.1	8.9	4.4	7.3	9.7	8	7.3	6.2
15 - 19	7,161	100	25.9	9.6	4.9	7.7	8.5	5.9	6.4	6.8
20 - 24	5,866	100	28.6	9.8	5.9	8.2	7.1	4.8	5.6	6.1
25 - 35	15,765	100	27.3	10.1	7.4	10.1	7.1	4.5	4.1	4.1
Male										
Total	24,305	100	27.5	10.2	6	8.5	7.4	5.2	5.8	5.6
0 - 9	5,560	100	28.1	10.3	5	7.5	8.4	5.6	7	7.5
10-14	3,488	100	25.3	8.9	5.1	7.4	9.8	8.1	7.1	5.8
15 - 19	3,911	100	25.5	9.9	5	8.1	8.6	5.7	6.5	6.3
20 - 24	3,175	100	29.4	10	5.9	7.8	7	4.1	5.4	5.9
25 - 35	8,171	100	28.1	10.8	7.7	10.2	5.4	3.9	4.4	3.7
Female										
Total	20,595	100	27.1	9.7	5.6	8.5	8.3	5.9	5.5	6
0 - 9	4,277	100	29.9	11.7	5.1	7.6	7.2	5.9	6.4	6.8
10-14	2,783	100	24.8	8.7	3.6	7.2	9.5	7.9	7.6	6.7
15 - 19	3,250	100	26.4	9.4	4.8	7.2	8.4	6.1	6.2	7.5
20 - 24	2,691	100	27.5	9.5	5.9	8.6	7.2	5.7	5.8	6.4
25 - 35	7,594	100	26.5	9.2	7.0	10.1	8.9	5.3	3.7	4.5

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 8.3: Distribution of young persons with disability by type of disability and age-sex (continued)

Sex/ Age	Mental difficulties	Spinal injury	Psychiatric disability	Epileptic	Rheuma- tism	Albinism	Kyphoscoliosis	Other
Total	6.6	2.4	1.3	3.9	0.9	0.7	0.9	6.8
0 - 9	3.8	2	1	3.9	0.7	1.1	0.9	6.9
10-14	6	1.9	1.3	5.1	0.8	0.9	1	6.1
15 - 19	7.1	2.1	1.4	5.3	0.9	0.7	1.2	5.6
20 - 24	8.5	2.2	1	4.2	0.7	0.5	1	5.8
25 - 35	7.7	3.1	1.5	2.8	1.1	0.4	0.8	7.9
Male								
Total	7.1	2.6	1.3	3.8	0.8	0.6	0.9	6.7
0 - 9	3.8	2.2	0.9	3.9	0.6	0.9	0.8	7.5
10-14	5.6	1.9	1.3	5.1	0.7	0.8	0.8	6.3
15 - 19	7.3	2.1	1.3	5.1	0.9	0.7	1.1	5.9
20 - 24	9.3	2.3	0.9	4.1	0.5	0.6	1.1	5.7
25 - 35	9.1	3.4	1.5	2.6	0.9	0.4	0.9	7
Female								
Total	6	2.2	1.4	4	1	0.7	1.2	6.9
0 - 9	3.8	1.7	1.2	3.8	0.7	1	1	6.2
10-14	6.4	1.9	1.3	5.1	1	1.1	1.3	5.9
15 - 19	6.9	2.1	1.5	5.6	0.9	0.7	1.1	5.2
20 - 24	7.4	2.1	1.2	4.5	0.9	0.5	0.9	5.9
25 - 35	6.3	2.7	1.5	2.9	1.3	0.5	0.8	8.8

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

CHAPTER 9: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

9.1 Introduction

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is an important channel and accelerator for development. It has the capability to draw investment, create job opportunities, encourage knowledge construction and sharing, and contribute to good governance and a well-organized public service. It enables citizens everywhere to access information and knowledge. ICT, together with education, allows citizens to be aware of their rights and to contribute actively in determining public policy, governance and development.

With the widespread use of technology in the home and workplace, it is important that young people are taught about ICT and how to use it. Access to ICT equipment such as computers, mobile phones and the Internet should, therefore, not be considered a privilege, but a right for all young persons in Sierra Leone.

Even though the Government recognizes the need to expose young people to ICT early in life, the coverage of ownership of computers and mobile phones and access of young people to the Internet have not been well documented. The 2015 Census collected information on the household ownership and use of computers and mobile phones. It also collected data on access to the Internet and its use during the period preceding the census.

9.2 Household Ownership of Computer

The data gathered indicate that in urban areas, almost one in ten (11.8 per cent) young people were living in households that own a computer (Table 9.1). The corresponding figure for young people in rural areas is 1.0 per cent. This is to be expected, as it is relatively more difficult to use computers in rural areas because they are less likely to have a regular electricity supply. Literacy is also relatively higher in urban than rural areas so rural households are less likely to have a use for a computer.



Table 9.1: Percentage distribution of young people by household ownership of computer, residence and age

Age group	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	5,677,696	5.5	93.8	0.7	3,347,327	1.0	98.3	0.7	2,330,369	11.8	87.4	0.8
0 - 9	2,046,103	3.5	95.7	0.7	1,339,486	0.8	98.6	0.6	706,617	9.1	90.1	0.8
10-14	846,137	5.0	94.3	0.7	498,240	1.0	98.3	0.7	347,897	10.6	88.6	0.8
15 - 19	871,348	6.1	93.2	0.7	484,769	1.2	98.1	0.7	386,579	12.3	87.0	0.8
20 - 24	660,438	8.2	91.1	0.7	329,293	1.4	97.9	0.7	331,145	14.9	84.4	0.7
25 - 35	1,253,670	6.9	92.4	0.7	695,539	1.2	98.2	0.7	558,131	14.0	85.2	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Although it is a matter of great concern to find that up to 90 per cent of households in urban areas in Sierra Leone with adolescents and children do not have access to either a laptop or desktop at home, the situation in rural areas (up to almost 99 per cent) is even more concerning. In urban areas, youngsters can often access computers and ICT services in Internet cafes but this access is not available to most in rural areas.

The results indicate that those aged 20-24 are in the best situation since 14.9 per cent in urban areas and 1.4 per cent in rural areas reported ownership of computers in their households. The youths in this group may be students or workers who have had to purchase a computer for work.

9.2.1 Regional Variation in Computer Ownerships

Children: Table 9.2 presents the percentage distribution of children by region, with respect to ownership of computers in the households they live in. It shows that children in the Western Region were much more likely to have a laptop or desktop computer in their home than children in the other three regions. In addition, those in urban areas of the regions are more likely to own computers than those in rural areas.



Table 9.2: Percentage distribution of population of children 0-9 years by household ownership of computer, region and residence

Region	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	2,046,103	3.7	95.7	0.7	1,339,486	0.8	98.6	0.6	706,617	9.1	90.1	0.8
Eastern	473,172	1.8	97.7	0.5	330,684	0.6	98.9	0.5	142,488	4.6	94.8	0.6
Northern	792,667	1.8	97.4	0.9	628,400	0.8	98.4	0.8	164,267	5.6	93.3	1.1
Southern	437,370	2.1	97.3	0.6	368,334	0.9	98.5	0.6	69,036	8.6	90.6	0.7
Western	342,894	12.5	86.8	0.7	12,068	2.9	96.6	0.5	330,826	12.8	86.5	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Adolescents: Analysis of household ownership of computers by region for adolescents is similar to that of children – the highest numbers live in the Western Region. The only difference is that the proportion of households of adolescents in each region that reported computer ownership was higher than those recorded among children. Overall, for all age groups, only about one per cent of households of persons in rural areas own computers as against about 11 to 12 per cent in urban areas



Table 9.3: Percentage distribution of population of children 10-14 years by household ownership of computers and region

Region	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	846,137	5.0	94.3	0.7	498,240	1.0	98.3	0.7	347,897	10.6	88.6	0.8
Eastern	204,173	2.5	97.0	0.6	131,804	0.7	98.7	0.5	72,369	5.6	93.8	0.6
Northern	305,679	2.4	96.7	0.9	228,810	1.0	98.2	0.8	76,869	6.6	92.3	1.2
Southern	169,936	3.2	96.1	0.6	132,683	1.3	98.1	0.6	37,253	10.1	89.2	0.7
Western	166,349	14.5	84.8	0.7	4,943	3.6	96.0	0.4	161,406	14.8	84.5	0.7



Table 9.4: Distribution of population of persons aged 15-19 years by household ownership of computers and region

Region	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	871,348	6.1	93.2	0.7	484,769	1.2	98.1	0.7	386,579	12.3	87	0.8
Eastern	215,777	3.1	96.3	0.6	134,277	0.8	98.6	0.5	81,500	6.9	92.6	0.6
Northern	296,676	3.1	96.0	0.9	212,761	1.2	97.9	0.8	83,915	7.7	91.1	1.2
Southern	174,853	3.9	95.5	0.6	132,877	1.5	97.9	0.6	41,976	11.6	87.7	0.7
Western	184,042	16.6	82.7	0.7	4,854	3.7	95.8	0.4	179,188	17	82.3	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Youth: Again, ownership for the 20-24 and 25-35 year age groups by region reveals a similar pattern, with the Western Region recording the highest proportion of ownership. Computer ownership in the urban areas ranged from a low of about eight per cent to a high of 19 per cent respectively in the Eastern and Western regions among the youth group of 20-24 years. Again there are higher ownership in urban areas rather than rural areas. This is due to the relatively better living conditions and higher standards of living in the urban areas, in addition to the higher literacy rates in urban areas, as seen in Chapter Four.

What is quite clear from the results of the analysis on household computer ownership is that as age increases, there is a higher tendency for a higher proportion of households of young persons to own either a laptop or desktop. Rural households are at a disadvantage, but the authors are confident this will soon change. This assumption is based on the kind of transformation and education that is currently taking place regarding the use of ITC in the country.



Table 9.5: Percentage distribution of population of persons (20-24 years) by household ownership of computers and region

Region	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	660,438	8.2	91.1	0.7	329,293	1.4	97.9	0.7	331,145	14.9	84.4	0.7
Eastern	143,389	3.5	95.9	0.6	87,817	0.9	98.6	0.5	55,572	7.6	91.8	0.6
Northern	210,194	3.8	95.2	0.9	146,088	1.5	97.7	0.8	64,106	9.3	89.6	1.1
Southern	123,396	4.8	94.5	0.7	91,085	1.7	97.6	0.7	32,311	13.4	85.9	0.7
Western	183,459	19.1	80.3	0.6	4,303	4.4	95.0	0.5	179,156	19.4	79.9	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 9.6: Percentage distribution of young persons (25-35 years) by household ownership of computers and region

Region	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	1,253,670	6.9	92.4	0.7	695,539	1.2	98.2	0.7	558,131	14	85.2	0.7
Eastern	286,464	2.9	96.6	0.5	190,636	0.9	98.7	0.5	95,828	6.8	92.6	0.5
Northern	414,297	3.2	95.9	0.9	305,636	1.2	98	0.8	108,661	8.7	90.1	1.2
Southern	240,357	3.6	95.8	0.6	191,349	1.4	98	0.6	49,008	12.4	86.9	0.7
Western	312,552	18.1	81.3	0.7	7,918	4	95.6	0.4	304,634	18.5	80.9	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

9.3 Ownership of Mobile Phones

9.3.1 Place of residence and mobile phone ownership

The 2015 Census collected information on mobile phone ownership among all household members in Sierra Leone. The results in Table 9.7 show the proportion of young persons by ownership of mobile phones by rural-urban residence. From the results, there is some indication that ownership of mobile phones in Sierra Leone is higher (about 9 out of ten) in urban than rural areas (3 out of 10) across all age groups considered.

Children: As would be expected, the proportion of children owning mobile phones increases with age. More than half of children under the age of 10 reported owning a mobile phone, but considerably more of these lived in urban areas (85.7 per cent) compared to rural areas (43.8 per cent)

Adolescents: Ownership of mobile phones is about the same among older adolescents aged 15-19 years and younger adolescents aged 10-14 years, whether in the urban or rural areas. The proportion of adolescents aged 15-19 years with ownership of mobile phones in the rural areas was just about one per cent higher than those of age 10-14 years in the urban areas. This small difference between the urban and rural areas is quite unexpected because not all rural areas in Sierra Leone have access to electricity which is required to regularly charge the batteries of the mobile phones by their owners. At the same time, income levels in the rural areas are much lower than in the urban areas, making ownership of mobile phones become more affordable in urban areas than rural localities.

Youth: Table 9.7 shows that ownership of mobile phones among the youth in urban areas is about the same as that among adolescents 15-19 years. In the rural areas, however, ownership of mobile phones among the youth is slightly lower than that among their counterparts in the urban. Access to mobile phones is, therefore, quite high among the urban youth in Sierra Leone with as high as 98.8 per cent and 88.8 per cent of the youth aged 25-35 years and 20-24 years respectively with ownership of mobile phones. This compares with 66 per cent and 70 per cent respectively among the youth in rural areas in the country with mobile phone ownership.



Table 9.7: Percentage distribution of population of young people by household ownership of mobile phones, residence and age

Age group	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	5,677,696	63.1	36.1	0.8	3,347,327	46.1	53.2	0.8	2,330,369	87.7	11.5	0.8
0 - 9	2,046,103	58.3	41.0	0.8	1,339,486	43.8	55.5	0.7	706,617	85.7	13.5	0.8
10-14	846,137	63.5	35.8	0.8	498,240	46.7	52.5	0.7	347,897	87.4	11.8	0.8
15 - 19	871,348	65.7	33.5	0.8	484,769	47.8	51.4	0.8	386,579	88.2	11.0	0.8
20 - 24	660,438	69.6	29.6	0.8	329,293	49.3	49.9	0.8	331,145	89.8	9.5	0.8
25 - 35	1,253,670	65.7	33.5	0.8	695,539	47.2	52.1	0.7	558,131	88.8	10.5	0.8

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

Table 9.8 presents the distribution of young people by ownership of mobile phones and region of residence. It indicates that Western Region has the highest proportion (9 in 10 in urban and almost 7 in 10 in rural areas) of mobile phone ownership among all age groups, whether in urban or rural areas, followed by Eastern Region.



Table 9.8: Percentage distribution of young people (35 years and below) by household ownership of mobile phones, region and age

Region	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
Total												
Total												
0 - 9	5,677,696	63.1	36.1	0.8	3,347,327	46.1	53.2	0.8	2,330,369	87.7	11.5	0.8
10-14	1,322,975	58.2	41.2	0.6	875,218	45.6	53.8	0.6	447,757	82.8	16.6	0.6
15 - 19	2,019,513	53.5	45.5	1.0	1,521,695	44.3	54.8	0.9	497,818	81.6	17.2	1.2
20 - 24	1,145,912	57.1	42.2	0.7	916,328	48.6	50.7	0.7	229,584	90.7	8.6	0.7
25 - 35	1,189,296	90.8	8.5	0.7	34,086	65.7	33.8	0.5	1,155,210	91.6	7.7	0.7
0-9												
Total	2,046,103	58.3	41.0	0.8	1,339,486	43.8	55.5	0.7	706,617	85.7	13.5	0.8
Eastern	473,172	54.6	44.9	0.6	330,684	43.4	56.0	0.5	142,488	80.4	19.0	0.6
Northern	792,667	50.0	49.1	0.9	628,400	42.3	56.9	0.9	164,267	79.5	19.3	1.2
Southern	437,370	52.8	46.5	0.7	368,334	46.1	53.2	0.7	69,036	88.9	10.4	0.8
Western	342,894	89.4	9.9	0.7	12,068	63.1	36.4	0.5	330,826	90.4	8.9	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 9.8: Percentage distribution of young people (35 years and below) by household ownership of mobile phones, region and age (continued)

Region	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
10-14												
Total	846,137	63.5	35.8	0.8	498,240	46.7	52.5	0.7	347,897	87.4	11.8	0.8
Eastern	204,173	59.5	39.9	0.6	131,804	46.5	52.9	0.6	72,369	83.2	16.2	0.6
Northern	305,679	53.5	45.6	0.9	228,810	44.2	54.9	0.9	76,869	80.9	17.9	1.2
Southern	169,936	59.5	39.8	0.7	132,683	50.6	48.7	0.7	37,253	91.0	8.3	0.7
Western	166,349	90.7	8.6	0.7	4,943	65.3	34.3	0.4	161,406	91.5	7.8	0.7
15-19												
Total	871,348	65.7	33.5	0.8	484,769	47.8	51.4	0.8	386,579	88.2	11.0	0.8
Eastern	215,777	61.2	38.1	0.6	134,277	47.2	52.1	0.6	81,500	84.3	15.1	0.6
Northern	296,676	56.1	42.9	1.0	212,761	45.7	53.4	0.9	83,915	82.6	16.2	1.2
Southern	174,853	60.8	38.5	0.7	132,877	51.1	48.2	0.7	41,976	91.6	7.7	0.7
Western	184,042	91.2	8.1	0.7	4,854	67.1	32.3	0.5	179,188	91.9	7.4	0.7
20-24												
Total	660,438	69.6	29.6	0.8	329,293	49.3	49.9	0.8	331,145	89.8	9.5	0.8
Eastern	143,389	62.8	36.5	0.6	87,817	48.4	51.0	0.6	55,572	85.7	13.6	0.6
Northern	210,194	58.9	40.1	1.0	146,088	47.6	51.4	0.9	64,106	84.4	14.4	1.1
Southern	123,396	62.4	36.8	0.8	91,085	51.8	47.4	0.8	32,311	92.3	6.9	0.7
Western	183,459	92.0	7.4	0.7	4,303	69.8	29.7	0.5	179,156	92.5	6.8	0.7
25-35												
Total	1,253,670	65.7	33.5	0.8	695,539	47.2	52.1	0.7	558,131	88.8	10.5	0.8
Eastern	286,464	58.7	40.8	0.5	190,636	46.5	53.0	0.5	95,828	83.0	16.4	0.6
Northern	414,297	55.8	43.3	1.0	305,636	46.1	53.0	0.9	108,661	83.0	15.8	1.2
Southern	240,357	57.5	41.7	0.7	191,349	48.9	50.4	0.7	49,008	91.2	8.1	0.7
Western	312,552	91.6	7.7	0.7	7,918	67.0	32.5	0.5	304,634	92.3	7.1	0.7

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

9.4 Access to Internet

Analysis of the population distribution of young persons by household access to the Internet shows that overall, a little more than one in ten (13.6 per cent) households of young persons in Sierra Leone have access (Table 9.9).

Adolescents: Young adolescents from 10 - 14 years in rural areas (2.3 per cent) are worse off in accessing the Internet at the household level compared with those in urban areas (7.5 per cent). Older adolescents of age 15-19 years have a noticeably higher level of access to the Internet than children below that age. One in five of these adolescents have access to the Internet in urban areas compared to just 6 per cent of their counterparts in the rural areas.

Youth: The young age group with the highest rate of access to the Internet at the household level is the 20-24 age group with 32.1 per cent in urban areas but just 8.5 per cent in rural areas.



Table 9.9: Distribution of young persons (10 years and older) by access to Internet, residence and age

Age Group	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	3,631,593	13.6	86.0	0.4	2,007,871	5.8	93.8	0.4	1,623,752	23.3	76.4	0.3
10-14	846,137	4.4	95.2	0.3	498,240	2.3	97.3	0.4	347,897	7.5	92.3	0.3
15-19	871,348	13.1	86.5	0.4	484,769	6.0	93.6	0.4	386,579	22.1	77.6	0.3
20-24	660,438	20.3	79.3	0.4	329,293	8.5	91.1	0.4	331,145	32.1	67.6	0.3
25-35	1,253,670	16.6	83.0	0.4	695,539	6.8	92.8	0.5	558,131	28.8	70.9	0.3

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



CHAPTER 10: POPULATION PROJECTION OF YOUNG PERSONS

10.1 Introduction

Further analyses were done on the 2015 Census data to generate the projected population of children, adolescents and youth. One of the major uses of the census was to serve as the base data for projecting the future size and age structure of the population to guide development planning activities. The inclusion of projected population in this report is, therefore, essential given that Sierra Leone has not been able to keep to the decennial period of conducting censuses since 1963. This will provide data in various disaggregated age groups on children, adolescents and youth, and will be a vital reference point and an important data source for diverse purposes including planning in areas such as education, health and related physical infrastructure and formulation of programmes and policies. One outstanding use of the data will be to compute population-based indicators for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and short-term goals of the African Union Development Agenda 2063.

10.2 Sources of Data and Methodology

10.2.1 Sources of Data

The base data for the projections are the 2015 Census reported population at the national, regional and district levels. Trends in fertility and mortality were derived from data on births and deaths available from previous Sierra Leone population censuses and demographic and health surveys (SLDHS).

10.2.2 Methodology

Two techniques are used to compute the total population at the national level, which are the mathematical and cohort-component methods. The mathematical method uses mathematical formula to project the total population with data from one or more censuses.

In this report, the cohort-component method was used to project the national population

because it is responsive to changes in the three components of population change namely, fertility, mortality and international migration. Assumptions of the future trend of fertility and mortality were developed separately based on trend and current data from population censuses and demographic sample surveys. The assumptions were combined to determine the age, size and structure of the population from 2016 to 2030. This method is an elaborate and dynamic procedure of projecting the population. The cohort-component method which was used in projecting the population incorporates the three demographic variables of population change namely, fertility, mortality and migration. This method is the most common projection method used by demographers. According to the UN: "Technically, it is not a complete projection method on its own, as it requires that the components of change: fertility, mortality and migration should be projected in advance..." (UN 2015, P15) A software known as Demographic Projection (Demproj), a module in the Spectrum Model, was used to project the population at the national level. The software requires information on the number of people by age and sex in the base year as well as current year data and future assumptions about the total fertility rate (TFR); age-specific fertility rate (ASFR); sex ratio; life expectancy at birth by sex; the most appropriate model life table; and the magnitude and pattern of international migration.

As a result of decentralization and the need for data at the lower geographical levels, the ratio method was used to project the population at the regional and district levels. According to (GSS, 2014, P2) "The method is a highly practical method for estimating and projecting regional and district populations." (GSS, 2014, P2).

In projecting the population at the sub-administrative level, the percentage distribution of the population for regions in 2015 was held constant. The population by age and sex at the regional and district levels was proportionally adjusted to the national totals.

The main drawback of the ratio method is that it assumes that the sub-administrative level will grow at the same rate as the national level. It is necessary to caution the user that since the variables used in the projection at the lower levels are that of the national level, there is bound to be a much wider margin of error in the projection than that of the national projection because "...errors are inversely related to the population size; population trends are more irregular for small populations than large ones." (GSS, 2014, P2).

10.3 Population Projection Results

10.3.1 Total population

A summary of the total projected population by sex based on the three variants (high, medium and low) for the period 2016 to 2030 is presented in Tables 10.3a, 10.3b and 10.3c. They have been taken from the Thematic Report on Projections prepared by Gershon Togoh. The high variant projections show that the total population of Sierra Leone will reach 9.2 million in a decade from 2015 to 2025, an increase of 2.1 million. By 2030, the total population is expected to increase to 10.3 million. The medium and low variant projections show that the country's population will increase by 1.98 million and 1.7 million to 9.1 million and 8.7 million respectively in 2025.



Table 10.3a: Summary of projected population by sex, 2016 to 2030

High variant			
Year	Total	Male	Female
2016	7,304,085	3,591,484	3,712,601
2017	7,513,734	3,689,760	3,823,974
2018	7,716,424	3,787,568	3,928,856
2019	7,926,204	3,888,405	4,037,799
2020	8,115,829	3,987,731	4,128,098
2021	8,320,978	4,091,750	4,229,228
2022	8,529,615	4,198,822	4,330,793
2023	8,746,749	4,305,710	4,441,039
2024	8,969,980	4,415,450	4,554,530
2025	9,192,337	4,524,693	4,667,644
2026	9,420,638	4,636,855	4,783,783
2027	9,647,519	4,748,382	4,899,137
2028	9,880,084	4,862,556	5,017,528
2029	10,110,488	4,975,743	5,134,745
2030	10,345,378	5,091,024	5,254,354

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 10.3b: Summary of projected population by sex, 2016 to 2030

Medium Variant			
Year	Total	Male	Female
2016	7,296,402	3,591,542	3,704,860
2017	7,499,486	3,691,506	3,807,980
2018	7,701,185	3,790,791	3,910,394
2019	7,901,454	3,889,366	4,012,088
2020	8,100,318	3,987,250	4,113,068
2021	8,297,882	4,084,494	4,213,388
2022	8,494,260	4,181,167	4,313,093
2023	8,689,601	4,277,318	4,412,283
2024	8,884,032	4,373,020	4,511,012
2025	9,077,691	4,468,350	4,609,341
2026	9,270,700	4,563,350	4,707,350
2027	9,463,176	4,658,099	4,805,077
2028	9,655,219	4,752,626	4,902,593
2029	9,846,920	4,846,987	4,999,933
2030	10,038,361	4,941,221	5,097,140

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 10.3c: Summary of projected population by sex, 2016 to 2030

Medium Variant			
Year	Total	Male	Female
2016	7,255,651	3,571,292	3,684,359
2017	7,421,084	3,652,562	3,768,522
2018	7,588,718	3,734,936	3,853,782
2019	7,758,276	3,818,269	3,940,007
2020	7,929,456	3,902,396	4,027,060
2021	8,101,894	3,987,135	4,114,759
2022	8,274,983	4,072,022	4,202,961
2023	8,448,357	4,157,115	4,291,242
2024	8,621,661	4,241,994	4,379,667

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census



Table 10.3c: Summary of projected population by sex, 2016 to 2030
(continued)

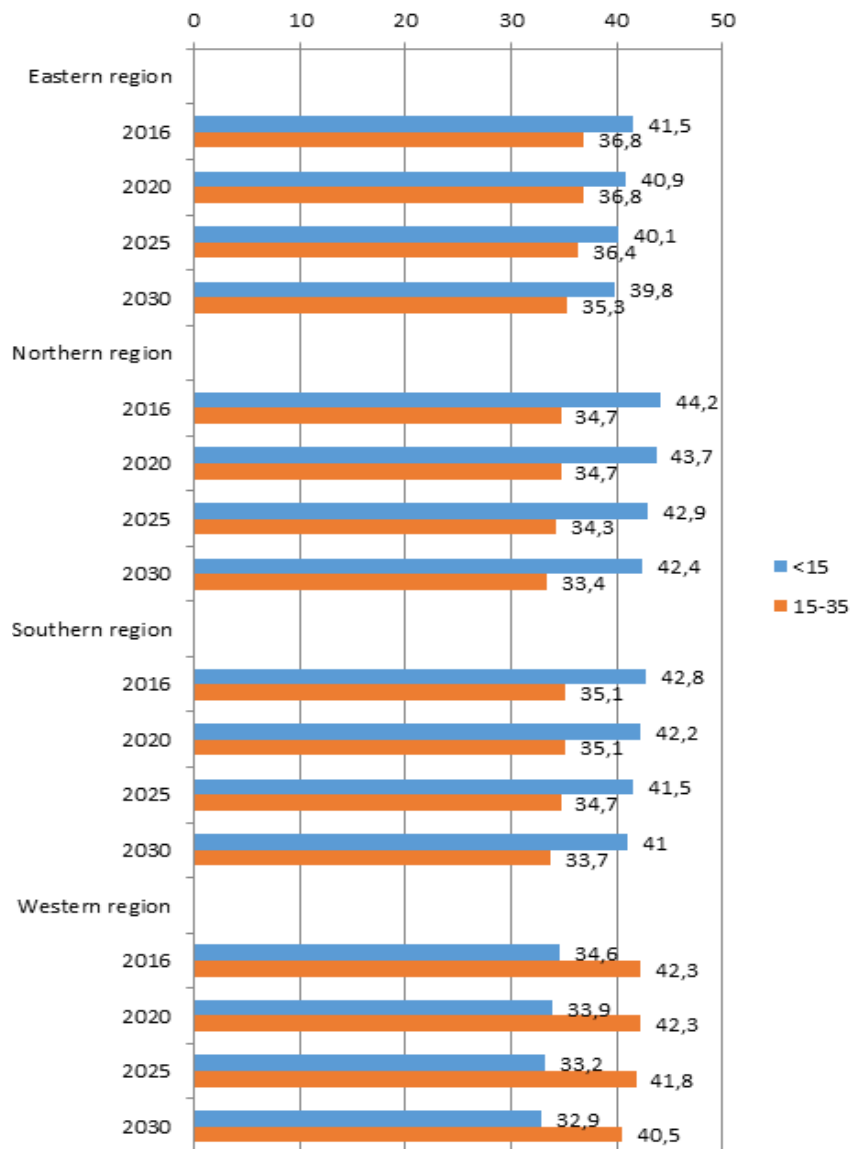
Medium Variant			
Year	Total	Male	Female
2025	8,794,817	4,326,744	4,468,073
2026	8,970,239	4,412,578	4,557,661
2027	9,147,742	4,499,515	4,648,227
2028	9,326,994	4,587,148	4,739,846
2029	9,507,708	4,675,589	4,832,119
2030	9,688,979	4,764,168	4,924,811

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

10.4 Age Structure at the Regional Level

Figure 10.1 is a pictorial representation of the age structure of children and youth in the various regions from 2016 to 2030. It indicates that the proportion of the population less than 15 years shows a decline from 41.5 per cent in 2016 to 40.9 per cent in 2025 and to 39.5 per cent in 2030. Similarly, the proportion is expected to decline slowly from 2016 across all regions. The proportion of the population 15-35 years constitute more than a third of the population in all the regions.

Figure: 10.1: Age Structure of Children and Youth



10.5 School-Age Population

Table 10.5 shows the projected school-age population in the different years. The projected population of 6-17 year olds, which represent the school-age population from primary to senior secondary, is expected to increase from 2.2 million in 2016 to 2.6 million and 2.8 million in 2025 and 2030 respectively. In terms of proportion, the 6-17 year olds represent 30.7 per cent, 29.7 per cent and 28.9 per cent of the total population of Sierra Leone in 2016, 2025 and 2030.

In 2016, the corresponding proportion for 6-11 year olds, 12-14 year olds and 15-17 year olds is 16.0 per cent, 7.3 per cent and 6.7 per cent respectively. Even though there will be an increase in the numbers at the primary, junior and senior secondary levels over the projection period, there will be minimal decline in terms of the proportion of the primary level population to 15.7 per cent in 2025.

The proportion of the population at the junior and senior secondary levels will decline to 7.2 per cent and 6.0 per cent respectively in 2025. By the end of the projection period (2030), the proportion of the school-age population to the total Sierra Leone population will be 15.3 per cent, 7.1 per cent and 5.8 per cent for primary, junior and senior secondary school levels.

As the school-age population increases in absolute terms, there will be the need to put in place plans and programmes that will expand physical infrastructure and related services to accommodate the increasing numbers.



Table 10.5: Projected school-age population by different years, 2016-2030

Age Group	6-11 years	12-14 years	15-17 years	6-17 years	% of total population		
Year	Primary	Junior Secondary	Senior Secondary	Total	Primary	Junior Secondary	Senior Secondary
2016	1,170,860	532,967	489,718	2,193,545	16.0	7.3	6.7
2017	1,201,557	546,906	496,180	2,244,643	16.0	7.3	6.6
2018	1,231,671	560,724	502,638	2,295,033	16.0	7.3	6.5
2019	1,261,142	574,395	509,092	2,344,629	16.0	7.3	6.4
2020	1,289,916	587,896	515,537	2,393,349	15.9	7.3	6.4
2021	1,317,940	601,202	521,971	2,441,113	15.9	7.2	6.3
2022	1,345,180	614,293	528,394	2,487,867	15.8	7.2	6.2
2023	1,371,597	627,150	534,797	2,533,544	15.8	7.2	6.2
2024	1,397,163	639,753	541,184	2,578,100	15.7	7.2	6.1
2025	1,421,856	652,087	547,546	2,621,489	15.7	7.2	6.0
2026	1,445,662	664,136	553,883	2,663,681	15.6	7.2	6.0
2027	1,468,565	675,885	560,196	2,704,646	15.5	7.1	5.9
2028	1,490,565	687,327	566,480	2,744,372	15.4	7.1	5.9
2029	1,511,657	698,451	572,729	2,782,837	15.4	7.1	5.8
2030	1,531,849	709,247	578,945	2,820,041	15.3	7.1	5.8

Source: Statistics Sierra Leone, 2015 Population and Housing Census

10.6 Policy Implications and Recommendations

From the population projection results, the population will continue to be youthful since persons under the age of 15 years constitute 41.5 per cent and 40.1 per cent of the projected population in 2016 and 2025 respectively. The implementation of national development strategies and frameworks like the Vision 2025 and the SL-PRSP (Agenda for Prosperity) are, therefore, bound to be affected by demographic concerns.

The projections show that urbanization levels will continue to increase for young persons and demand for quality housing, schooling and other social services, especially in Freetown, should be a concern for governments both at the national and local levels. In addition, the projected population shows that a large army of young people will continue to enter the work force and become economically active, with all the potential consequences for youth empowerment and competition for jobs.

CHAPTER 11: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Population Size, Age-Sex and Household Structure

Eight out of ten people living in Sierra Leone is aged below 35 years. The country has high fertility rates and the typical structure of a young population. Young females aged 35 years and below constitute a relatively higher proportion of all females in the country (81.6) than their male counterparts (79.5 per cent of the male population). The same pattern is observed in both urban and rural areas.

About one in four of the 7,076,119 people enumerated in the country in 2015 was a child below 10 years of age. Children under 5 years make up 13.3 per cent of the national population. The 5-9-year age group is a higher proportion of the total national population which may suggest fertility decline in the recent past or some increase in infant and child mortality in recent times. One in five persons in the country is an adolescent of age 10-19 years. The proportion is, however, higher in urban areas than in rural areas.

This large population of children constitutes a burden on the state, regarding their education and health. At the same time, the state must consider their economic wellbeing by expanding job opportunities and helping the private sector absorb the increasing available labour force.

To address these challenges, the Government should continue to embark on educational infrastructure expansion at all levels, to ensure that all persons of school-going age have access to primary school education.

Efforts by the Government and UNFPA to intensify the campaign for educating people about family planning should be strengthened through the provision of adequate funds. This will enable Sierra Leone to reduce the burden on families and the state in providing for children.

The youth in Sierra Leone constitute 39.3 per cent of the total national population. In urban

areas it is more likely that a young person is head of the household (10 per cent) than in rural areas (7 per cent). Half of the young people in the country live with their biological parents as either sons or daughters. This is more so in rural areas (55 per cent) than in urban areas (2 in 5).

11.2 Housing Characteristics

One in two young persons aged 20-24 years live in separate houses. About one in five young adults aged between 20 and 35 years live in dwellings that are rented from the private sector. Three per cent of young people live in tents, improvised houses such as kiosk and container board pans. More than half of young people live in dwelling units that are owner-constructed. One in five are owned through inheritance and about 15 per cent are rented from the private sector.

The main sources of drinking water for young people are public tap (3 in 10), protected well (one in five) and the river stream (one in five). Children aged less than 10 years are most likely to be living in households whose main source of drinking water is either a public tap (27.3 per cent), river stream (23.8 per cent) or a protected ordinary well (20.1 per cent). It means that water should be boiled before drinking by young people, particularly infants.

Refuse is mainly disposed of in the bin (58 per cent) or burnt (13 per cent) by households in which children dwell. However, 16 per cent of children's households dump their refuse anywhere. This will lead to poor sanitary conditions for children who live in such communities, leading to the possible outbreak of diseases that could threaten their lives and the lives of those they depend on. Efforts should, therefore, be intensified to prevent the dumping of refuse anywhere. Also, refuse deposited in bins should be properly disposed of by local authorities responsible for waste disposal.

11.3 Literacy and Educational Attainment

Three in five young adolescents aged 10-14 years are literate. Half of them are literate in English language while three per cent are mainly literate in Arabic, a local language, French or a combination of languages. Only one per cent of young adolescents aged 10-14 are literate in local languages.

This implies that in the future, communication in local languages may not be common and the use of English will be sufficient. More than six in ten older adolescents aged 15-19 years are literate in English only. This is a higher proportion than for children in younger ages. Young people (20-25 years) have lower literacy rates than those in younger age groups. This is particularly true for women. Women aged 25-35 years in rural areas have the highest illiteracy rate.

Half of children 3-9 years have not attended school, compared to three in 10 of their counterparts of 10-14 years. In rural areas, half of children under 10 years have never attended school whereas about three in ten of children in the same age group have ever attended school in urban areas. These results indicate that there is the need to bridge the gap between urban and rural areas with respect to the rate of school attendance by young people.

11.4 Marital Status and Fertility

Almost all young adolescents aged 10-14 years have never married before. However, there seems to be some cases of misreporting of ages, as 0.5 per cent of boys are recorded to be married with more than one spouse.

Young people 20-24 years, however, reported the highest proportion to be ever married. For females, the 25-34 age group record almost nine in ten to have ever married compared to three in five among the 20-24 age group. About 20 per cent of males of age 20-24 years have ever married compared to 65 per cent of their

counterparts in the 25-35-year group.

Furthermore, of the 4,948,126 children ever born in the country recorded in the 2015 Census, 44.2 per cent were contributed by people of age 35 years and below. These are the age groups among which sexual activity is highest.

A higher percentage of young females are in polygamous marriages (30.1 per cent and 51.0 per cent for the 20-24 and 25-35 age groups respectively). The results also show that 17.5 per cent and 22.5 per cent of females of 20-24 and 25-35 years respectively are in monogamous marriages.

About two per cent of young females and males of similar ages are reported to be divorced, separated or widowed. In rural areas, a higher (4.2 per cent) proportion of children have ever married than in urban areas (2.6 per cent). Similarly, adolescents are more likely to have married in rural areas (19.3 per cent) than in urban areas (9.6 per cent). It is, therefore, recommended that programmes to reduce high fertility should place more emphasis on rural areas to make more impact.

11.5 Health and Mortality

Some progress has been made in reducing infant and child mortality in Sierra Leone over the years. There is, however, a lot that needs to be done to further reduce these avoidable deaths. The analysis on recorded deaths in the past 12 months prior to the census showed that 7.6 per cent of deaths of persons aged 10-54 years were among young adolescents aged 10-14 years. It also showed a higher proportion of the deaths to have occurred among female adolescents (11.2 per cent) compared to the males (10.3 per cent). Pregnancy-related deaths during the same period were quite substantial and most of them (3 out of 5) occurred whilst the woman was pregnant.

Malaria is the most predominant cause of deaths among young people, especially those under ten years, as reported by households.

The factors determining high infant, child and maternal mortality include early age at sex, little efforts at family planning use by parents, early childbearing and poor access to health care services. There should, therefore, be increased and sustained public education on sexual and reproductive health among young persons throughout Sierra Leone.

To achieve this, there should be comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education as part of the basic school curricula. Alongside this, institutions of state and in the private sector should be supported to sustain family planning and reproductive health service delivery everywhere in the country.

The state, as a matter of policy, should create family planning and reproductive health desks in all ministries, departments and agencies to facilitate a sustained family planning and reproductive health service delivery and counselling among workers. This could be extended to private sector organizations and companies through public-private sector partnerships. When early sex and early pregnancies are reduced, it would have a rippling positive effect on infant, child and maternal deaths.

There should also be increased public health education on antenatal and post-natal health care as well as delivery at health facilities with professionally trained health personnel in attendance. This is because there is a big gap between the high antenatal attendance at health facilities in the country and low health facilities delivery among women.

11.6 Economic and Employment Characteristics

Agriculture-related work and the private informal sector were the leading employers of young people in the labour force, perhaps due to the relatively lower skills and experience many of them have.

Less than 10 per cent of adolescents and youth receive some form of wages. There should be a

rigid enforcement of the child labour law while intensifying public education to bring out the dangers child labour presents.

Furthermore, many adolescents and youth in the country require jobs to do by the time they are 20 years old. Investing in their education and supporting those out-of-school young people with apprenticeship training could go a long way to address the employment needs of young people in Sierra Leone.

In addition, since the public sector is limited in offering employment to a large proportion of young people, entrepreneurial programmes should be integrated into tertiary level education to equip more graduates from tertiary institutions to embark on private sector initiatives with support from the state.

11.7 Disability

Data from the 2015 Census suggest very low levels of disability in the country among young persons. In most cases, the proportion of the population with any form of disability was found to be less than one per cent for those less than 25 years and about one per cent among older ones.

Among the small numbers with disabilities, however, the most common ones were those who have physical disability with polio (27.3 per cent), amputees (10.1 per cent), partially sighted (8.5 per cent), deaf (7.8 per cent), blind or visually impaired (5.9 per cent), mute (5.8 per cent), speech difficulty (5.7 per cent) partially deaf (5.5 per cent), epileptic (3.9 per cent) and psychiatric disability (1.2 per cent).

The general population should be educated on the general causes of disability and enforce laws particularly on employment, that help to integrate them in society. Infrastructure in public places (for example, toilets in schools and stairways in hospitals) should be constructed so that persons with disability can access them.

The general population (including persons with a disability) should be educated to understand that people with disabilities can contribute a lot to society if they receive assistance and encouragement.

11.8 Information and Communication Technology

The results of the 2015 Census indicate that in urban areas, a little less than one in ten young people live in households that own a computer. The figure for rural areas is even lower, just one in one hundred.

With the widespread use of technology in the home and workplace, it is important that government and private schools help young people grow their knowledge of ICT and skills so they can function better in modern society.

11.9 Projections

From the results of the population projection, the population of Sierra Leone will continue to be youthful. The figures show that persons under the age of 15 years will still constitute 40.1 per cent of the population in 2025, only slightly down from 41.5 per cent in 2016. Persons 15-24 years and 15-64 years will constitute 36.6 per cent and 56.1 per cent respectively of the projected population in 2016 and 2025 respectively.

As such, the youthful population structure will continue to put pressure on existing educational infrastructure and services and pose major challenges for service providers. The implementation of national development strategies and frameworks like the Vision 2025 and the SL-PRSP (Agenda for Prosperity) are, therefore, bound to be affected by these demographic concerns.

The projections further show that urbanization levels will continue to increase in the country and will lead to increasing demand for quality housing, schooling and other social services, especially in Freetown. These should engage government attention as issues to be addressed

both at the national, regional and district levels. Consideration should be given to making reproductive health information and services, including family planning, available and accessible to the people, especially young people, who need them alongside other development interventions.

In addition, the projected population shows that a large population of young people will continue to enter the work force and become economically active with all the potential consequences for youth empowerment and competition for jobs. Government should, therefore, embark on strategic interventions to ensure job creation for young people who enter the job market every year to make them socio-economically productive.

REFERENCES

Statistics Sierra Leone. (2006). Final results, 2004 Population and Housing Census, Government of Sierra Leone, UNFPA and EU.

Statistics Sierra Leone and ICF Macro (2009). Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey 2008. Maryland, USA.

Statistics Sierra Leone and ICF International. (2014). Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey 2013. Freetown, Sierra Leone, and Rockville, (MD) USA, SSL and ICF International.

Statistics Sierra Leone. (2015). Population and Housing Census, Key Figures, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Ghana Statistical Service (2016). Population Data Analysis Report, Policy Implications of Population Trend, UNFPA.

Ghana Statistical Service. (2014). 2010 Population and Housing Census. Population Projections/ Prospects. Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), Accra

United Nations. 2015. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division.

World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, Methodology of the United Nations. Population Prospects and Projections. Working Paper No.ESA/ P/WP . 242. The United Nations. New York. USA.

