

Risk Management and
Women's Empowerment
:Sierra Leone Bumbuna
Hydroelectric Project

*Presentation at the MDB
Regional Meeting on
Mainstreaming Gender In
Infrastructure*

**Nilufar Ahmad, World Bank,
Social Development
November 10, 2009
Manila**





Sierra Leone Background

- Between 1991 and 2002, a civil war raged in Sierra Leone, preventing the completion of Bumbuna hydroelectric dam that would bring electricity to Freetown and surrounding areas
- Human development indicators are among the lowest in the world, with high rates of maternal and infant mortality, limited access to health, education, water sanitation and energy services; all of these indicators have worsened since the civil war.
- Thousands of men died in the war; child soldiers; large number of internally displaced people; women had to fend for the families
- In 2002, the GoSL asked donors re-invest in the Bumbuna project and by 2005 it was again underway with additional social mitigation and post-conflict measures.
- The project required the resettlement of 5 villages and livelihood restoration of nearly thousand of people

Ensure Women's equal participation in public consultations

- Comprehensive public consultations were undertaken for the preparation of the project
- Women were included in all of the public consultations for the project
- Consultation was held with a women farmers and their farming associations; and their suggestions were included in the project design.
- Consultations with young people had a 50:50 male-female ratio and their ideas were developed into youth skills training programs



Bumbuna Trust for Benefit Sharing

- GoSL, with support from donors and private sector established Bumbuna Trust and a portion of the profit is being deposited in this Trust. The Trust will support the Upper Seli Community Development Initiative with the aim of sharing benefits with the indirectly affected population in the area around the reservoir and downstream of the dam. This Trust has two main activities:
 - **Participatory Community Driven Development:** Community groups will be formed through social mobilization and they will design sub-projects, receive funds from the Trust and implement these. These sub-projects are mostly rehabilitation of community infrastructure e.g. access roads, water and sanitation; health and school facilities. This way communities and future generation are and will be receiving benefit from this investment.
 - **Youth Capacity Building.** Grants will be given to community-based youth organizations and young men and women will be offered training in business, trade and life skills.



Social Development
Department





Strategic interventions for risk mitigation

- 1. Food Support Program:** Part of the project design was a food support program to offset the negative consequences of loss of farmland and relocation.
 - Food bundles for families were selected based on interviews and the preferences of PAPs and delivered to specified pickup points in towns and villages and with a third party monitoring
- 2. Stabilized Agriculture Program (SAP)** for women for both farm and off-farm commercial activities
- 3. Livelihood Assessment and Income Restoration (LAIR) Program for women:** alternate livelihood, skill and entrepreneurship development, literacy and management training



Resettlement Site Construction at Bumbuna in January 2008





Using Bank's OP for the empowerment of Women

- Compensation mechanisms provide fund and support directly to women
- Under the project rules, women are required to have access to Savings group, revolving loan facility and skill training.
- Joint titles of lands, houses and assets are given in the names of the wife and the husband.
- Having a title to asset improves women's access to credit
- Women are the decision makers in community sub-projects e.g. water and sanitation committees; mini-hydropower and renewable energy.
- women are playing key roles as community leaders