

Sierra Fishing Company

Empowering Women Across Sierra Leone



Sierra Fishing Company provides a livelihood for thousands of women in Sierra Leone.

Fishing is an intrinsic part of life across the country – providing 70% of the nation's protein and some 200,000 jobs. Women traditionally work as fish traders, buying and selling fish in the local market.

As the country emerges from the widespread disruption caused by the Ebola outbreak, Sierra Leone's female fish traders are leading the way in rebuilding the economy.

SFC is the largest supplier of fish in Sierra Leone, providing livelihoods to over 10,000 women. The company was the only large-scale national supplier that continued to operate during the Ebola epidemic, providing micro-loans and financial support to key fish traders.

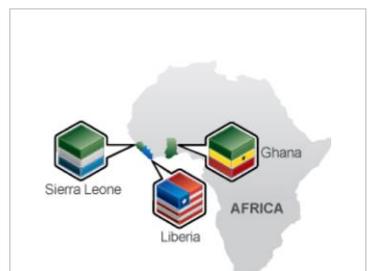
These women are at the heart of ensuring fish is available in Sierra Leone – acting as suppliers to large networks of customers. In many cases, they are also the main breadwinners in their family, paying for the education and healthcare of their dependents. SFCs support allowed these enterprising women to stay afloat in difficult times and to continue to earn a secure income for themselves and their families.



ManoCap is a private equity fund manager that makes equity investments in small to mid-cap enterprises in West Africa. We currently manage the Sierra Investment Fund (SIF) and the ManoCap Soros Fund (MSF).

SIF is a multi-sector fund with a mandate to invest in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ghana.

MSF invests in agribusiness and related services in Sierra Leone.



Sierra Fishing Company: Supporting local fisher women

Adama Kanu Kano is one of SFC's 400 key agents and has worked with the company for over 32 years. Adama has a network of 100 customers who in turn provide fish to a number of market women across the country. SFC played a critical part in keeping her business open during the outbreak, by continuing to operate while others left the country.

"This is a big company and helps many customers taking fish to all the provinces. It's my main source of income and enables me to support a family of four." Adama Kanu Kano, Agent

Sierra Fishing Company: Supporting the livelihood of over 10,000 women in Sierra Leone

Sierra Fish Company supports the livelihood of over 10,000 women in Sierra Leone

All business operations continued during the Ebola outbreak after the company put in place a range of safety measures to protect staff and customers

The company was the only large-scale national supplier of fish to continue operations during the epidemic.

Uninterrupted fish supplies secured livelihoods for thousands of fish traders across the country.

Micro-loans and financial support was provided to key agents minimizing Ebola's impact on their businesses.

Many of the women that SFC works with act as the bridge between business and the family. Kadiatu Kargbo, a fish trader from East Freetown, has relied on SFC for her fish supplies for over five years. She lost both her husband and parents to Ebola last year and uses her income to support her seven children. Kadiatu is the only breadwinner for her family, and like many women traders in Sierra Leone is a vital part of the food chain – she earns her income from drying her fish in Freetown and then transporting it to the Northern provinces.

Although Kadiatu had fewer clients during the outbreak because of the various restrictions imposed by the government, SFC allowed her to continue to earn a living throughout the epidemic's peak. Kadiatu is determined to keep building for the future.

"The income I earn from my fish helps me feed my children, clothe them and send them to school ... Sierra Fishing Company helped me to continue doing business." Kadiatu Kargbo, Fish Trader



Investing in Local Communities



Fish trader Mariama Seray Thomas and her family were quarantined for 21 days during the Ebola outbreak

"We struggled for food because of these quarantines. I didn't earn an income during this time," she said.

Mariama makes a living by supplying fish to sales women in Aberdeen market in Freetown. She is dependent on this income to provide for her family and 2 children, as her husband is unemployed. When the quarantine restrictions were lifted, SFC provided her with micro-credit to rebuild her business.

"I wouldn't have survived without this job, I wouldn't have money, this is the only job I know. I would have suffered with my family." Mariama Seray Thomas, Fish Trader



Ahwa Kabu, another trader from Freetown, lost her daughter and two grandchildren to Ebola. She has been working with Sierra Fishing Company for 30 years, "this company is good, it has allowed me to educate my children." Ahwa's husband has been unemployed for 10 years, making her the main income earner for the family. Throughout the outbreak Sierra Fishing Company continued to support Ahwa, even when burial costs limited her ability to pay for fish up-front.

"Ebola didn't stop us, we continued to work, this makes me feel good and reduced my worries." Ahwa Kabu, Fish Trader