

PD-ABZ-433

UMCOR KAILAHUN REINTEGRATION, FOOD SECURITY AND REHABILITATION PROJECT

**Final Report Submitted by
The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)
Sierra Leone to
OFDA**

**Reporting Period:
August 2002 – October 2003**

I. Executive Summary

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Summary of project

The intention of this project was to implement an integrated community-based program that focuses on reducing the risk of food insecurity and to facilitate the return of refugees and IDPs by addressing some of the shelter needs in the communities. This was done by improving the food security status of some 4,000 returnee families in the chiefdoms of Yawei and Penguia, in Kailahun District, located in Sierra Leone's Eastern Province. Complimenting the emergency seeds and tools distribution, UMCOR also provided technical assistance for agricultural extension services, food security surveillance. Further, UMCOR provided shelter assistance to more than 1,000 returnee families in the Yawei and Penguia areas.

In the end, UMCOR reached its target of assisting 4,000 families with agricultural assistance and also conducted surveillance activities to improve the overall understanding of the food security needs in the Penguia and Yawei areas of Kailahun District. In the shelter component

of the project, UMCOR was able to more than double its beneficiaries, and provided shelter assistance to 1,234 families.

Background

Just prior to the commencement of this project, much of the country has only recently emerged from years of fighting and rebel control which accounts for the flow of refugees and internally displaced people currently returning to their home regions in northern and eastern Sierra Leone. In the former rebel-held area of Kailahun, the people want to return home, however there are no houses, no schools, no clinics and no decent water supply or sanitation facilities for them to return to. The infrastructure was in great need of rehabilitation and food security programs need to be implemented in order for this war-weary population to resume their normal lives and overcome their dependency on humanitarian assistance.

Not a sector of daily life was unaffected by the war in Kailahun district. Even after the fighting has ended, the eastern part of Sierra Leone suffered from a serious food security deficit. Families suffered on a daily basis from the inability to procure foodstuffs. Although there had been a general improvement in the state of food imports in Sierra Leone prior to the start of this project, many households lacked the resources to engage in petty trade, or resume economic or agricultural activities to obtain that food. Insecurity, and the after effects of an international embargo, led to a short but acute, decline in food availability in 1998, leading to a reliance on food imports. The distribution of food imports is in turn reliant on security. As a result, one of the main issues affecting food security up-country was access to urban markets, both by traders and those in need, a situation which becomes particularly dire during the hunger season (July-October).

In response to these needs, UMCOR approached OFDA in its intention to implement a food security and shelter program in Kailahun designed to facilitate the reintegration of those forced from their homeland as a result of the war. This project initiative began in August 2002 and was completed in October of 2003.

With this project, UMCOR took a three-pronged approach to addressing the food and shelter needs in its areas of operation. The first was to support an agricultural relief programme in Penguia chiefdom and two sections (Quiviar and Buuma) in Yawei chiefdom of the Eastern Province through the provision of seeds and tools and technical extension services for the planting seasons. This portion of the programme assisted some 4,000 farming families. The households assisted included ex-combatants, resettled IDPs and returning refugees. The second mode of intervention was the establishment of a food surveillance system which enabled UMCOR and other national and international partners to better understand, plan and prepare for the cycles of food production and factors which effect food security. Thirdly, UMCOR provided shelter materials to some 1,000 families whose homes had been destroyed as a result of the war.

Summary of activities during the implementation period:

The following activities were carried out in the course of the implementation period, i.e. from August, 2002 to October, 2003 by UMCOR staff in Penguia and Yawei chiefdoms in Kailahun District, Eastern Province of Sierra Leone.

Agricultural Relief:

- UMCOR/OFDA targeted 4000 beneficiaries with seed rice and tools (hoes and cutlasses), 2000 beneficiaries with cassava cuttings in Yawei and Penguia chiefdoms.
- In addition 571 further beneficiaries received rice and groundnuts in Penguia chiefdom selected by FAO from FAO stock
- UMCOR received from FAO 22.84MT rice and 5.70MT Groundnut. This was distributed to women groups and elderly households who received 10kg each of groundnut in three section of Penguia chiefdom.

- A total number of 2,700 vegetable kits and 200 watering cans were distributed to 81 women groups in the two chiefdoms from FAO supplies.
- During the implementation period, food security training was conducted for the agricultural extension workers. The aim of the training was to describe the Food Economy Approach and to discuss its benefits and limitations.
- Distribution of Food for Agriculture from CRS to beneficiaries who had previously received seeds and tools.
- Training of women engaged in vegetable production to prepare nursery beds and transplant seedlings
- Identification and registration of beneficiaries using UMCOR criteria.
- Technical assistance in cropping strategies to limit the degradation of natural environment and preserve precious soil and nutrient resources

Food Security Surveillance:

- Participatory needs assessment surveys, including surveys prior to and during implementation of project, food security assessment June 2003, and post distribution monitoring
- Post distribution monitoring in Yawei and Penguia chiefdoms
- Held periodic meetings with beneficiaries to identify problems and find solutions.
- Conducted weekly market surveys to determine availability of local food crops in the market (Market surveillance)
- Submission of monthly field report to the Head of Mission through the Program Manager.

Shelter assistance:

- UMCOR distributed 4,000 Bundles of CI-sheets and 2,468 boxes of roofing nails to 1,234 households in Yawei and Penguia (see annex). Thus, UMCOR surpassed its target number of beneficiaries. Some families with smaller houses received lesser number of sheets, so UMCOR was able to stretch the consignments to more families as a result.

II. Program Overview

A. Goals and Objectives

Agricultural Relief

Goals:

- To reduce the risk of food insecurity among 4,000 families within target areas of the Yawei and Penguia Chiefdoms of Kailahun District, Sierra Leone.

Objective:

- To address the food security needs of target families through a diverse needs-based emergency agricultural intervention.

Food Security Surveillance

Goal:

- To be better prepared to meet the food needs of communities by the continual monitoring of the food security situation of the targeted areas.

Objective:

- To clearly understand the food security strategies and needs of families living within targeted chiefdoms by continuously monitoring the food security situation in the area.

Shelter and Infrastructure Rehabilitation

Goal:

- To facilitate the return of refugees and IDPs by addressing the shelter and community infrastructure needs of returnees.

Objective:

- To assist in rehabilitating up to 1,000 dwellings in which returnees will take up residence

B. Target Population

The project initially targeted 4,000 newly returned, resettled, and vulnerable farming families in eastern Sierra Leone in agricultural relief, and 1,000 families in shelter assistance. In addition, the food security surveillance segment of project indirectly assisted these people and the general population of Sierra Leone as it provided much needed information on the food security situation of the country. The shelter component of the project was designed to assist up to 1,000 families with shelter assistance.

C. Geographical Location

The project is assisting vulnerable populations in two chiefdoms, Penguia and Yawei, in Kailahun District in the Eastern Province of Sierra Leone.

III. PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

AGRICULTURAL RELIEF

A. Program Performance in Relation to Objectives

Goals:

- To reduce the risk of food insecurity among 4,000 families within target areas of the Yawei and Penguia Chiefdoms of Kailahun Districts of Sierra Leone.

Objectives:

- To address the food security needs of target families through a diverse needs-based emergency agricultural intervention.

Summary

In all, UMCOR distributed agricultural inputs of seeds and tools to some 4,000 farming families in the Yewai and Penguia areas of Kailahun in Eastern Sierra Leone. Early on in the project, participatory needs assessments were conducted to determine the specific needs of the area. Based on this, beneficiaries were determined and distributions were made, which were then followed up with post distribution monitoring – to determine the success of the interventions and identify what, if any, adjustments were needed. Technical assistance was also provided to beneficiaries and other areas farmers throughout the duration of this project to augment their farming skills, and also to limit the degradation of natural environment and preserve the nutrient resources in the soil with environmentally friendly practices. There was also a component of the project that targeted women with vegetable seed distribution and vegetable production to prepare nursery beds and transplant seedlings.

Description of assessments and surveillance data used to measure results.

Agriculture field technicians followed the work of farmers in UMCOR operational area and maintained regular contact with all farmers in the area, encouraging the implementation of recognized and proven crop management techniques. An additional priority of the field

technicians was to follow-up the progress of the work of the women's groups that received vegetable kits in the March.

Some of the tools utilized to conduct assessments and monitor activities included the following:

- Participatory needs assessment surveys, including surveys prior to and during implementation of project, food security assessment in June 2003
- Post distribution monitoring in Yawei and Penguia chiefdoms
- Conducted weekly market surveys to determine availability of local food crops in the market (market surveillance)

Total number of targeted beneficiaries and reached beneficiaries.

- Some 4,000 farming families in the Penguia and Yawei chiefdoms of Kailahun were assisted with seeds and tools inputs.
- Of the above, 2,000 also received cassava cuttings
- A total of 2,000 women in women's groups received vegetable seed inputs – and also received training allowing them to engaged in vegetable production to prepare nursery beds and transplant seedlings

Please see table in Annex for complete data on distributions.

An explanation of successes achieved, constraints encountered and adjustments made for achieving each objective

Due to the deplorable road conditions in both chiefdoms, UMCOR staff found it extremely difficult to reach their final destinations with trucks, especially during the rainy seasons. Thus, UMCOR was forced to set-up remote distribution locations as it was simply impossible to deliver items direct to the villages. As a result, many of the villagers had to walk long distances, sometimes as far as 4-20miles, to the distribution centres. In Penguia Chiefdom, Woroma and Nyandehun was identified as a distribution centres, while in Yawei the distribution centres were in Bandajuma and Baaka. As part of its strategy to overcome this constraint was with a no-cost extension – which allow additional time at the end of the project for the final distributions. while road conditions improved with the reduction in precipitation, to allow for greater access.

The issue of the roads was raised by UMCOR in various forums with no success. UNAMSIL was unable to assist, a project organized by the EU to support the Sierra Leone Roads Authority has yet to address the issue. As a result, the communities are truly suffering. So it was in desperation that people walked up to 20 miles each way to receive their roofing materials and seeds and tools. Entire families made the trip in order to carry the items home, sleeping in the distribution centre for a night before returning home.

Another constraint faced by UMCOR was in relation to total agricultural inputs received by FAO. Items available to UMCOR by FAO changed during the course of the project, and thus UMCOR did not receive the expected quantities of inputs (rice seed and tools) from FAO. As communicated by UMCOR to OFDA back in March, FAO was not able to provide hoes and machetes as previously expected.¹ In addition, rice seeds available by FAO fell short of expectations. However, with some resourceful initiatives by UMCOR staff in the field, and

¹ At that time, UMCOR proposed to use some OFDA funds earmarked for shovels to procure hoes and cutlasses, in addition to shovels. This request was approved by OFDA.

the availability of additional funds to UMCOR, UMCOR was able to meet the goals and objectives of the project.

One way in which UMCOR compensated for the less than anticipated resources from FAO was with funds from an ecumenical donor. UMCOR received a small grant (USD18,316) from Action by Churches Together (ACT) for agricultural activities in Sierra Leone which was used to supplement agricultural activities associated with this project and inputs not cover by FAO. It should also be noted that UMCOR distributed more vegetable kits than initially anticipated. While FAO's fell short of rice seeds and tools, it was able to provide far more than expected vegetable seeds and FAO made these goods available to UMCOR. Instead of 200 vegetable kits, UMCOR was able to distributed 2000 kits to women's groups.

- **Adjustment:**

Modification of original strategy occurred as a result of realities on the ground. For example, some beneficiaries received 40 kg. of rice, while others received 20kg. The reason for this was the availability of cultivated land and the type of environment in which they live requiring different varieties of rice (upland vs. swamp varieties).

Regular surveys and post distribution monitoring allowed UMCOR field staff to be able to better tailor the training and distributions to local conditions.

- **Food for Agriculture**

Food for Agriculture was delivered to farmers who receive seeds from UMCOR during the previous quarter. The purpose of Food for Agriculture is to maximize production of the crop. Food for Agriculture has the following uses.

- To protect the seeds which have been distributed during planting period especially for the swamp farms
- To provide sustenance during heavy work periods: There are three periods in the farming calendar that required considerable energy –brushing, weeding and harvesting. The Food for Agriculture was also provided to support farming families to carry out this work. The distribution in UMCOR operational area started during weeding for upland rice and transplanting IVS.
- To prevent farmers going into dept: Experience in UMCOR operational area indicated if farmers have no food to pay the labor on their farm they may take the labor “ on loan”. It means the labors force paid back after the harvest.

The Food for Agriculture distribution was done in collaboration with CRS. The roll of UMCOR staff was to identify UMCOR beneficiaries. All UMCOR farm family beneficiaries who had received seeds and tools during the previous quarter also received two shots of 30 kg bulgur, 3,75 oil and 4,5 kg lentils.

Cassava cuttings were bought in Kailahun and Kenema districts. Each household received a bundle of cassava cuttings. A bundle of cassava cuttings consisted of 50 sticks. There were a total of 2,000 beneficiaries in Penguia chiefdom for cassava cuttings.

A pre-distribution assessment rapid assessment, which was conducted by UMCOR, indicated that most of the households who did not want to receive the cassava cuttings were either elderly people or people who were engaged in petty trading. The later group of households preferred to plant rice or groundnuts in order to be able to sell after the harvest. The retail

from groundnuts or rice is higher than cassava. Unlike the petty traders the elderly are not able to cultivate large acreage, and were only able to prepare about 2 acres land for rice and groundnuts.

There had been cases of insect pests damaging crops, especially the leaf part of the vegetables. UMCOR encouraged local method to control the pests, such as hand picking and application of wood ash. It should be noted that the groups are experiencing the pest attack primarily with greens and okra. One method suggested by UMCOR field staff to beneficiaries in an effort to control the pests is by hand picking the grasshoppers off the plants, then crushing them and leaving their crushed bodies in the water. The water is then used as a repellent on the plants to ward off other grasshoppers. UMCOR is worked very closely with the Ministry of Agriculture to share experiences and find together a solution which is locally available.

Overall performance of project – including details of any discrepancies between expected and actual results and any recommendation for improving the design of the program.

- **Methodology**

UMCOR supported farm families through the distribution of targeted agricultural inputs. This was carried out through three kinds of activities: Identification of beneficiaries, sensitisation, quality control of seeds and tools bought by UMCOR, and distribution.

- **Identification and Registration of Beneficiaries**

All farming families in Penguia and Yawei chiefdom according to UMCOR vulnerability criteria were registered prior to distribution. This registration is necessary so that beneficiary numbers are verified before distribution begins. The identification of the beneficiaries based on the following criteria.

- The family should have access to land and be a farming family
- The family should include at least one of the following individuals: resettled families, elderly, pregnant or woman, children under 5, or disabled persons.

- **Sensitisation**

Prior to all distributions, sensitization meetings took place with local authorities in order to organize the distribution and to explain to all concerned, the rationale for the beneficiary criteria. On the dates of distribution, the identity of beneficiaries was verified and all inputs signed for and received directly by the beneficiaries themselves. All the agriculture extension staff and six-laborer team took part in the registration and distribution exercise. Through household visits, a rapid verification was conducted by UMCOR, in order to evaluate the efficiency and appropriateness of the targeting process. Simultaneously, a registration database was established for the purpose of compiling beneficiary lists, which will be used during the distributions.



The above photo was taken at a sensitization in a rural village with community leaders and members.

The content and the use of the seeds' packages were explained to the chiefs. Each chief had then to inform the target population of its section, village by village about the registration/verification process, in association with the UMCOR field staff.

- **Quality Control**

All seeds bought by UMCOR were sourced from a certified supplier. UMCOR undertook independent germination tests before accepting the seed rice and pre-positioning the packages. The germination percentage limit was fixed at 85 % minimum in order to accept or not the lots. UMCOR contract with the supplier notified that UMCOR would take possession of the seeds only after the results of the tests would have been provided and conformed to the standards fixed.

- **Distribution**

The distribution took place twice, in 2003, May-June for the first planting season and in October for the second planting season. ROK 3 –suitable for both upland and swamp- or ROK 5 –for swamp only- was provided to each of the beneficiaries according to cultivated land., Households who specialised in cultivating swamp rice were provided with ROK 5 and for the upland rice mainly ROK 3. Both varieties are suitable for the ecology of Kailahun. UMCOR beneficiaries in Penguia chiefdom have received 20kg, whilst in Yawei each beneficiary received 40kg. Beneficiaries were individually informed at the distribution point about the type of seeds they were receiving and the use of the seeds. The varieties distributed in each section depended on the ecology of the area and availability of seed and the land availability of the individual farm families. With some 4,000 families were provided with rice, another 2000 with cassava cuttings, 2,000 women in women's groups received groundnuts, Vegetable kits and jerry cans (from FAO stocks).

During all distributions, field extensionists made roll calls of the targeted villagers and verified all registered beneficiaries during each distribution. With records kept of all recipients (either signed or thumb printed after having received their inputs). Villagers coming from long distances were given priority to receive their packages before those living closer to the selected distribution centres. This allowed beneficiaries living far away to have enough time to go back to their villages and begin planting.

Similar to the tools distribution, rice seed, groundnut and cassava cuttings were to be distributed on a household level. The household ('*BONDE*' in Mende) is the unit of production and consumption of food and agricultural produce. The number of households registered in each chiefdom were determined by the level of vulnerability. Sensitization visits were made to each of the sections explaining the package (10 kg groundnuts and 40kg rice) and the number of households to be registered. It should be noted that 5.70 MT- 285 of FAO groundnuts was distributed mainly for the women headed household and elderly in Penguia chiefdom. The targeting of the chiefdom was decided by FAO.

- **Technical support**

In addition to improved strategies for the exchange of information and interaction between agricultural extensionist and farm farmers, a strong emphasis was organized in agricultural production workshops that deal with each major crop (Upland rice and IVS) separately and at different stages during the growing season. For instance, workshops included information that covers many aspects of planting, followed by organized training on pest (disease, weed, bird, and insect) management, harvest recommendations, as well as other important subjects related to rice production. As part of this, Agriculture extensionists conducted training in both chiefdoms, in such areas as sensitization of weeding practices and transplanting methods for the Inland Valley Swamp – IVS.

In order to accomplish training objectives, the agriculture field staff, received rapid training through a one-week intensive course on recommended seeds crop management practices.

Agriculture field technicians followed the work of farmers in UMCOR operational area and maintained regular contact with all farmers in the area, encouraging the implementation of recognized and proven crop management techniques. An additional priority of the field technicians followed up the progress of the work of the women's groups that received vegetable kits in the March.

- **Recommendations for future programming**

Now that some of the immediate food security needs have been met through agricultural inputs, namely seeds and tools distribution, the next step is for more self-sufficient transitional focused interventions. Interventions that focus on income generating activities associated with agricultural activities would be useful in further supporting self reliance. Also, it is UMCOR's observation that assistance in food processing is also an area of great need in the Kailahun area.

Success stories

Vegetable Cultivation Training for Women

All targeted women's groups had been previously selected for the training. The training included practical training on the preparation of nursery beds, nursery management practice and planting and transplanting of seeds and seedlings as well as pest control in a traditional way.



Figure 1: Women carrying harvested vegetables from the vegetable garden.

Each the targeted women's groups constructed five beds 4' X 12' and applied compost manure in all beds. Men's groups from the community participated in cutting palm fronds, sticks to prepare the platform and digging wells by the nursery site where there are no streams, in order to assist the women group to prepare their vegetable garden. In addition, the UMCOR extensionists explained and provided training to the groups in areas such as caring for plants, and pest control etc.

After the basic vegetable cultivation training in the field, the groups shared among themselves different responsibilities. Each group consists of about 15-20 members. The groups agreed to subdivide into four to five groups to perform the following tasks in a rotational basis.

- Daily visit to the vegetable site
- Weeding the young plants
- Regular watering
- Brushing/cleaning around nursery site

Some of the distributed seeds, like greens, okra and pepper, were harvested and consumed by each individual family group. It was expected that part of the harvest of vegetables will sold so as to increase income of the household. Money saved will not only enable the household to diversify their daily meals but also accessing markets more easily. The harvest of okra and greens allows more goods into the market at more affordable price.

Through the provision of vegetable seeds to groups, it was expected that the household food security will improve. The provision of vegetable seeds enabled farmers to increase the number of acres cultivated and maintain their rice seed stock which they would otherwise use to barter for short season seeds (vegetable seeds).

Food Security Surveillance

A. Program Performance in Relation to Objectives

Goal:

- To be better prepared to meet the food needs of communities by the continual monitoring of the food security situation of the targeted areas

Objective:

- To clearly understand the food security strategies and needs of families living within the targeted chiefdoms by the continual monitoring of the food security situation of the targeted areas

Summary

On-going food security monitoring and the analyses of accumulated data provided a clearer understanding of the evolving food security situation in Penguia and Yawei. This information on the food security situation in the target areas provided UMCOR and other implementing agencies with more accurate data to better enable agencies to design and implement more effective future interventions, as well as fine tune exiting programs, both with respect to materials and methods. In addition, the information output provided information that allows for a better preparedness to react to changes.

Description of assessments and surveillance data used to measure results

UMCOR monitored all the phases of the program at all stages of implementation. During the distribution, UMCOR closely supervised the process in order to make sure that registration criteria were respected and that the distribution process was smooth. After distribution, UMCOR undertook Post Distribution Monitoring in order to assess the efficiency of the distribution and the use of the provided inputs.

Pre and post harvest monitoring was also conducted before and after harvest, in order to assess the level of harvest of the target beneficiaries, as well as the use of the harvest by the household. Findings of this assessment enabled UMCOR to better estimate the actual impact of the program on the household's food security level.

These monitoring exercises were based on quantitative data collected from a representative sample of the target farming families, and backed up with qualitative information provided by semi-structured interviews conducted with individuals and groups of farmers. UMCOR also measured how much was planted, harvested, and utilization of harvest, as basic measurements.

Approach and Methodology:

Participatory rural appraisal and rapid rural appraisal methods were utilized to assess the food security needs in the areas early on in the project. The food security surveillance activities carried out used a predominantly participative approach, based on (PRA) and RRA. Different steps were considered:

- Collection of existing information from the knowledge of the local people in the district, town or community level as well as other INGOs that were working in these areas. This information helped to know the existing undocumented knowledge of the local people who have a good understanding of how the local economy works.
- Collection of data by semi-structured interviews at community and household levels.
- Analysis of the collected data in order to gain an in-depth understanding of what the food security situation was at the household and intra-household levels.
- Presentation of the data collected and the analyzed results

This information collected was for the benefit of the government and non-governmental organizations as well as others decision-makers like the donors. Locally, it was intended to be of use in the design, targeting and evaluation of food security projects for UMCOR and other agencies operating in the region. Indeed, the food security assessments have helped and will assist in the following areas:

- to get an in-depth understanding of the socio-economic context
- to monitor and evaluate UMCOR program,
- to inform the design and targeting of UMCOR projects
- to disseminate information on the food security situation to other organizations
- to gain an in-depth understanding of the socio-economic context in which they are operating,
- to provide information of use in the monitoring and evaluation of their program and to inform the design and target projects.

The overall approach was therefore qualitative in order to gain in-depth understanding on complex situations. Qualitative information was then backed up by quantitative data, in order to obtain statistics where and when appropriate. Moreover, the Food Security Forum used the assessments to develop a common understanding of the food security situation in the eastern province of Sierra Leone and to inform and influence decisions regarding possible interventions (mainly in terms of strategy).

The findings of the rapid food security assessments in Panguia and Yawei revealed that most of the resettled households were repatriated through UNHCR facilitation and had sold their resettlement package in order to cover transportation costs.

The deficit of the food stock was occurring within a situation of intensive population pressure. Returnees were not able to cultivate due to late arrival to the place of origin. Thus, people are forced to share harvest with relatives or friends. This had potential to impact the planting activities. Thus, the objective of this assessment was to assess the food security situation in all UMCOR operational area and to appraise the feasibility and pertinence of agriculture IGPs (Income Generating Activities) with the groups in UMCOR operational activities.

Throughout the project, monitoring was conducted within households and with community groups. These included both registered beneficiaries of the agricultural program, and families or community groups not included in UMCOR's agricultural caseload. Key informants and focus groups representing different sectors of local community - education, health, traditional leaders, traders and religious groups – aided in the cross-referencing of information. Qualitative information, as already mentioned, was also collected through a process based upon Participatory Rural Appraisal methods, which encourage people to analyze their own situation.

Total number of targeted beneficiaries and reached beneficiaries.

This segment of the project was unique as it did not have a specific number of targeted beneficiaries, unlike the other two sections of the project (agricultural relief and shelter assistance). However, it is safe to say that at a minimum, populations in the Yawei and Penguia Chiefdoms of Kailahun Districts benefited, directly or indirectly, by the food security surveillance segment of this project, as it provided not only UMCOR, but other agencies, with more accurate and comprehensive information on the food security situation and needs in the area.

Successes achieved, constraints encountered, and adjustments made for achieving each objective

Post Distribution Monitoring

One key element of the surveillance part of the project was post distribution monitoring. The post distribution monitoring activities that took place enabled UMCOR to better assess the success of the project, and to better understand the food security realities of those in UMCOR's area of operation. The following indicates the key objectives of the post-distribution segment of the project:

General objective

- The Post-Distribution monitoring aims at assessing the efficiency of the distribution and the use of the items distributed.

Specific objectives

- To verify that the objectives of the distribution were achieved –with respect to the criteria, quantity given.
- To assess the use of the items distributed
- To collect information on the beneficiaries' profile –status, origin, composition of the family, intentions
- To assess the difficulties the beneficiaries may have faced with the inputs distributed.

Methodology:

A few weeks after each distribution, UMCOR always organised Post Distribution Monitoring exercises to ensure whether seeds given to beneficiaries for planting were used for the intended purpose. The sample was fixed to 10% of the total number of beneficiaries, starting with the key informants later at the household level. The households were randomly selected from both chiefdoms.

As the Post-Distribution Monitoring aimed at verifying the efficiency of the distribution and the use of the inputs, a quantitative approach was chosen in order to obtain accurate information that can be converted into statistics. The impact of the distribution on the household's food security was further assessed through a pre and post-harvest monitoring exercise that combined qualitative and quantitative approach. For this exercise, a quantitative form was therefore established and field-tested before administration.

Findings:

- The Post-Distribution Monitoring revealed that the sensitisation, registration and distribution process was efficient: criteria for registration were respected, and all the registered beneficiaries interviewed said they had received the planned package of seeds and tools.
- Almost all beneficiaries had prepared the land and planed the distributed seeds at the time of assessments.
- According to the beneficiaries, seed rice and groundnuts harvested were used as seed bank to be planted for the next season. Majority of them also intends to use the harvest for home consumption and for sale. These intentions fit with the objectives of the distribution that were to improve the food security situation of the returnees.
- Information resulting from surveys and monitoring were regularly presented at Agriculture Technical Committee Meetings and reported to FAO.

Constraints:

- Due to high expectation of assistance, sometimes data collection and surveys may have contain biases, so it is difficult to have fully accurate information when asking beneficiaries their future needs.
- Some of the households were still engaged in other activities – constructing their houses, farming work-, thus, they want to finish the interview quickly.
- Transport as a major constraint as some areas could not be accessed as readily due to poor roads, so field staff spent less time in the more remote areas.

- Some of the households were still engaged in other activities – constructing their houses, farming work-, so they often wanted to finish the interview quickly.

Household Food Economy Analysis

UMCOR conducted a training in Household Food Economy The training of Household Food Economy Analysis was conducted prior to the distribution of the Food for Agriculture for the entire UMCOR agricultural extensionist team in beginning of July 2003. The training had three objectives:

- Method of analyzing food security at the household level
- Looking for alternative to food aid
- Better estimation of food aid and
- Gathering the information: the use of key informant

By the end of the training, the team was able to define indicators like population movement, wealth groups, source of food, source of income and expenditure. In addition, the team identified groups who may able to give reliable source of information in order to collecting primary data's in UMCOR operational area.

Overall performance of project – including details of any discrepancies between expected and actual results and any recommendations for improving the design of the program

Experiences and general agricultural information collected during our food security project in the area has shown the marketing and processing limitations. The communities themselves have requested assistance with post harvest processing and storage methods as well as markets. The same communities have been targeted for the agricultural interventions proposed in this project. One of the biggest complaints and constraints UMCOR noted during the project involved cassava processing: crucial in helping fill the hunger gap between rice harvests. At present, the processing of cassava is not popular in the county but the consumption of the product is widely favoured. The poor quality and availability of tools used in cassava processing are major constraints. Also, the level of peoples' knowledge in processing cassava is low.

Success stories

Information resulting from food security surveys and monitoring were regularly presented at Agriculture Technical Committee Meetings and reported to FAO, thus sharing the information obtained in this project with other agencies involved in food security.

Summary of cost effectiveness

One area where UMCOR experienced cost savings was with local staff salaries. Salaries, benefits, and number of staff needed were lower than anticipated when putting the budget together. UMCOR was able to utilize these funds toward direct agricultural inputs.

Shelter Rehabilitation

A. Program Performance in Relation to Objectives

Shelter and Infrastructure Rehabilitation

Goal:

- To facilitate the return of refugees and IDPs by addressing the shelter and community infrastructure needs of returnees.

Objective:

- To assist in rehabilitating up to 1,000 dwellings in which returnees will take up residence

Summary

A total of 4,000 bundles were distributed in Yawei and Penguia chiefdoms, more than the targeted 1,234 families were able to receive assistance as some families with smaller houses received smaller quantities since they required less. This meant an additional 234 families, over the original 1,000 families, actually benefited from the program with no family receiving more than the 4 bundles originally allocated. The number of sheets distributed varied in some cases to meet the need of the families. Virtually all targeted households that received shelter assistance completed the construction of their shelters in the two chiefdoms. This success rate was in part due to UMCOR's strategy that roofing materials would only be given AFTER families had constructed to houses to roof level.



Houses, such as this one, had to be build up to roof level before beneficiaries would receive CI sheets.

The extensive destruction in Kailahun during the years of conflict virtually leveled entire communities. In early assessments conducted by UMCOR prior to the commencement of this project, it was revealed that in four villages surveyed in the chiefdom of Yawei, there existed only 718 homes from the 2,630 houses that were standing before the war in 1991. In the town of Bandajuma, for example, out of 1500 prewar houses, only 100 remain. Clearly, shelter posed a major issue for those living in, and wishing to return to, the area.

UMCOR thus proposed to assist some 1,000 of the most vulnerable returnees in shelter reconstruction through distribution of shelter materials and tools. Families were then expected to construct their own walls, floors and stores using locally available materials and labor. UMCOR provided assistance with supervision by UMCOR's Construction Supervisor, and the above-mentioned inputs. This intervention was critical as returnees were living in make shift shelter which did not provide protection against the elements.

Description of assessments and surveillance data used to measure results

Initial assessments were conducted prior to the start of the project in each of the villages covered by this project in the two chiefdoms on Penguia and Yawei in Kailahun. UMCOR assessment teams met with villagers and community leaders to determine the conditions at that time, and the needs of the communities. This was done via various means, including PRA, surveys, and focus groups.

Following the commencement of the project, and the distribution of shelter materials, UMCOR staff returned to villages and house sites on a regular basis to assess progress made on the project. And, when needed, would provide technical assistance. UMCOR determined that overall, households were eager to rebuild their homes, and did so soon after receiving materials (with the exceptions of elderly headed households, and during planting season – discussed elsewhere in this report).

Following distribution, UMCOR staff followed-up in each of the villages and to each house site to see progress being made on construction of shelters and how many were being occupied. UMCOR staff found that of the 1,234 roofing kits distributed, virtually all were constructed and being lived in.

Total number of targeted beneficiaries and reached beneficiaries.

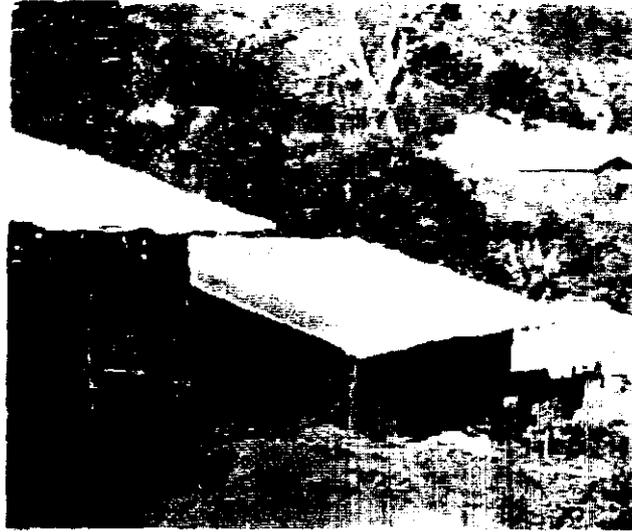
UMCOR initially proposed to assist 1,000 families with shelter assistance. By the end of the project, UMCOR exceeded those expectations, and was able to provide some 1,234 families with shelter kits, allowing them the basic materials and tools so that they were able to protect themselves from the elements.

Because the shelter resources are limited, UMCOR considered only the most vulnerable families. Criteria that was used to identify beneficiaries included single and female-headed households, families with large number of children, and those who have received the most damage to their houses. UMCOR made efforts to provide shelter assistance to the same beneficiaries who received agricultural assistance, enabling beneficiaries to successfully re-establish themselves.

As indicated above, the goal of providing 1,000 families with shelter assistance was surpassed, and in the end, an additional 224 people received shelter kits, for a total of 1,234 beneficiaries under this segment of the project. All in all, some 4000 bundles of CI-sheets were distributed to beneficiaries in Penguia and Yawei chiefdoms.

Quantitative and qualitative data that reflects results

A total of 1,234 families received shelter assistance. Monitoring and assessments from staff indicate that virtually all beneficiaries under this segment of the project constructed and are inhabiting their homes. One of the reasons for this high rate of success is that UMCOR required that beneficiaries construct their homes up to roof level before distribution of roofing materials.



These shelters in Bandajuma were reconstructed by the villagers themselves and the roofing sheets were provided by UMCOR.

An explanation of successes achieved, constraints encountered and adjustments made for achieving each objective

UMCOR is delighted that it was able to exceed the number of target beneficiaries under the provisions of this project. UMCOR's building supervisor and construction staff worked with local communities and village leaders to identify beneficiaries and mobilize local labor for the construction of homes. Most communities already had in place a system of community help, whereby less able persons are assisted through volunteer or in-kind payment of labor.

One major constraint was access to rural areas due to poor roads. Unfortunately, some of the distributions were delayed as a result of lack of access. This was one of the reasons for the change in implementation plan that prompted the request for the no-cost extension. To adjust, UMCOR delayed some of its distributions until the rains subsided. While this allowed access to the general areas, roads still did not permit access into actual villages as initially hoped. Thus, beneficiaries were required to come to distribution sites outside of villages, sometimes having to walk many miles, to collect shelter items. While this was an extra burden on beneficiaries, it was the most effective solution UMCOR was able to reach given the time constraints.

It was decided early on in the project, in consultation with the CTO, to modify what was to constitute the shelter kit. In an effort to standardize shelter assistance being provided by other NGOs working in the areas, UMCOR adjusted the kits accordingly. Instead of providing doors and windows, along with CI sheets, UMCOR increased the bundles of CI sheets being provided from 2 bundles to 4 bundles (except in cases where shelters were smaller and did not require all sheets). The decision, made in coordination with other NGOs and local donor representative, was based on the fact that the doors and windows of wood could be locally made by the community, but the imported CI sheet roofing materials were not available locally. Thus, the \$100,000 originally designated for doors and windows was reallocated to CI sheets.

Taking delivery of roofing materials



The above photo was taken during distribution of CI sheets for shelter assistance.

UMCOR shelter targeted beneficiaries in Bandajuma, Bendu and Baaka in Yawei chiefdom, had a serious storm mid-way through the project and some 30% of the distributed CI sheets were destroyed representing some 105 households. However, as UMCOR had hired a construction technician who had supervised and trained the beneficiaries during the initial construction of their roofs they were able to reconstruct their houses by themselves and had re-constructed nearly all of the damaged roofs. Approximately 10% were completely damaged and cannot be repaired.

Overall performance of project – including details of any discrepancies between expected and actual results and any recommendations for improving the design of the program

This segment of the project went well overall. One reason was the sensitization sessions that took place in the communities prior to the commencement of the project and distribution of inputs. At these meetings, the communities were informed the rationale of the beneficiary criteria. And on dates of distribution, the identity of beneficiaries were verified and all inputs signed for and received directly by beneficiaries. Thus, by making the process as transparent as possible, there was minimal space for misunderstandings, and misallocation of resources.

As one of the main constraints in this segment of the project was access to the rural areas due to poor road conditions, it was clear that distributions should be scheduled for the dry seasons. There is no question that all humanitarian intervention projects in Kailahun (as well as other rural areas) would be greatly assisted by road rehabilitation. This could be easily integrated into a food security project, or perhaps as a separate rehabilitation project. But, access to rural areas is key to effective humanitarian intervention, as well as for overall economic revitalization, as the greater access to markets will promote trade and income generating activities.

UMCOR also noted that construction on shelters dropped dramatically during planting season. The need for families to prioritize their agricultural activities is important to recognize, and UMCOR should not have expected significant construction during this time.

One aspect of the project that was not achieved, as UMCOR was not able to secure funding, was the rehabilitation of schools and clinics. UMCOR had hoped to gain funds from USAID and UNHCR to implement these activities to complement this project – and was disappointed when funding was not available.

Conclusion –

The chiefdoms selected by UMCOR were among the worst devastated during the war, and had the greatest number of persons fleeing the disaster. The UMCOR OFDA project was singularly successful in accelerating spontaneous return as UMCOR's first distribution of OFDA funded roofing materials and vegetable kits (from FAO stocks) set the stage for residents to spread the word to those still in Guinea camps that activities of assistance were taking place.

While OFDA had targeted Kailahun and Kono Districts, few NGOs were targeting chiefdoms like Penguia because of the terrible road network. The timely intervention afforded UMCOR by the OFDA project enabled the worst affects of the return to be avoided. Coordinating OFDA seeds and tools, shelter assistance with CRS Food for Agriculture and supplemented by the FAO Vegetable kits and groundnuts allowed a semblance of normalcy to return to the Chiefdoms. In this project, UMCOR its utilized agricultural extension activities including cash box management training to the women's groups – which proved successful. The distribution of tools was an important component to allow farmers to sustain their agricultural activities in future, and as production increases, they will be able to purchase replacement tools on their own.

We hope to build on this success in a future proposal to OFDA (2004-5) focusing on the sustainability of agriculture by providing equipment and training for food processing, marketing and drying floors for the same target chiefdoms. We also hope to be able to assist in future with improving WATSAN in these chiefdoms as they are presently extremely far below minimum SPHERE standards, some villages not having any wells at all.

Annex I
OFDA-UMCOR SHELTER REHABILITATION PROGRAM SIERRA LEONE
DISTRIBUTION SUMMARY FOR C I SHEETS IN PENGUJA AND YAWEI CHIEFDOMS IN KAILAHUN DISTRICT 2002-2003.

Chiefdom	Section	Village	Total No of Beneficiaries	2.5 bundles Receipt	Sub Total CI sheets	3 bundles Receipt	Sub Total CI sheets	3.5 bundles Receipt	Sub Total CI sheets	4 bundles Receipt	Sub Total CI sheets	Total No. of CI Sheets in bundles distributed	No of Nails (boxes)
Yawei	Quivawa	Bandajuma	69							69	276	276	138
"	"	Tantihun	30	16	40	14	42					82	60
"	"	Fouta	17	8	20	9	27					47	34
"	Bendu	Bendu	91	1	2.5	6	18			84	336	356.5	182
"	"	Baaka	52							52	208	208	104
"	Quivajagor	Malema	75					R	2R	67	268	298	150
"	"	Madina II	2			2	6					6	4
"	"	Kavuyama	10	5	12.5	5	15					27.5	20
"	"	Yawandor	3			3	9					9	6
"	"	Kollugela	44	22	55	24	72					127	88
"	"	Kpangulma	24	12	30	12	36					66	48
"	"	Moimandu	25	13	32.5	12	36					68.5	50
"	Quiva Buima	Massyema	50							50	200	200	100
"	"	Maska	15	7	17.5	8	24					41.5	30
"	"	Levuma	22	10	25	12	36					61	44
"	"	Madina I	8	2	5	6	18					23	16
Pengula	Builma	Woroma	117	7	17.5			1	3.5	109	436	457	234
"	"	Bambawolo	16	3	7.5	1	3			12	48	58.5	32
"	"	Nyandehun	9	1	2.5					8	32	34.5	18
"	"	Tufawonde	13				6			11	44	50	26
"	"	Njala	6			2	6	1	3.5	3	12	21.5	12
"	"	Sengema	72	29	72.5	43	129					201.5	144
"	Kumatandu	Kumatandu	86	46	115	40	120					235	172
"	"	Sanderu	137	70	175	67	201					376	274
"	Lombama	Kongonanie	88	33	82.5	55	185					247.5	176
"	Njagor	Lalahun	153	71	177.5	82	248					423.5	306
TOTALS			1234	356	890	408	1215	10	35	465	1860	4000	2468

Annex II
OFDA-UMCOR AGRIC. REHABILITATION PROGRAM SIERRA LEONE
Distribution summary for Agric inputs in Yawei and Penguia chiefdoms-Kallahun District 2002-2003

Chiefdom	Section	Village	No of Beneficiaries	Receipts of seed rice (20 Kg)	Receipts of seed rice (40 Kg)	Quantity of Tools distributed		Qty of cassava cuttings(bundles)
						Hoes	Cutlasses	
Yawei	Quivawa	Bandsjuma	132	105	27	132	132	129
"	"	Tentihun	20	20		20	20	20
"	"	Kporqboru	55	55		55	55	
"	"	Gbalma	83	83		83	83	
"	"	Fouta	12	12		12	12	12
"	Bendu	Bendu	150	150		150	150	150
"	"	Boabu	90	90		90	90	
"	"	Baaka	96	96		96	96	96
"	Quivajagor	Malema	186	186		186	186	186
"	"	Madina II	10	10		10	10	
"	"	Njaluhun	62	62		62	62	
"	"	Kavuyama	63	63		63	63	
"	"	Yawandor	10	10		10	10	
"	"	Koilugela	119	119		119	119	
"	"	Kpangulma	79	79		79	79	
"	"	Molmandu	85	85		85	85	
"	Quiva Bulma	Masayema	95	95		95	95	95
"	"	Maaka	83	83		83	83	
"	"	Levuma	75	75		75	75	
"	"	Gbangulma	65	65		65	65	
"	"	Madina I	62	62		62	62	
Penguia	Bulma	Woroma	175		175	175	175	175
"	"	Bambewolo	22		22	22	22	22
"	"	Nyandehun	26		26	26	26	