

CAPACITY STATEMENT

AIDE LIBERIA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT / RESILIENCE / SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

1.1. Presentation of AIDE profile

1.1.1. Overview: History, Structure, and Capacity

AIDE is a national Non-Governmental Organization with experience in humanitarian and development aid, and structural poverty reduction. AIDE (African Institute for Development and Equity) was borne during the exit of CORDAID (a reputable International NGO Project Office, with over 120 years of global operations). With the International NGO Foundation operations ending in Q3 of 2022 after twenty-two years of operations—the entire staff began to find ways to:

1. Sustain the gains made by the exiting International NGO in the areas of Healthcare; Community Development; and Systems Strengthening
2. Continue to utilize the staff and keep them gainfully employed in an organization which will harness and develop their skills—as well as use them for the common good.
3. Close the gaps in expertise that will be needed for future development grants and projects.
4. Strengthen localization and achieve Global Development localization goals by creating a local entity with similar expertise as the dissolving entity.
5. Create partnership channels where the expertise of Local Experts, Communities of Practices; and Networks can be utilized when the opportunity allows.

In January 2022, the staff under the leadership of their Country Lead requested a formal transition from the International NGO to a Local Non-Governmental Organization—which was agreed to be led by the former head of the outgoing organization alongside the existing team. We took the first step to realizing this dream by incorporating a legal local Non-Governmental Organization named AIDE (AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EQUITY).

We support local communities in their efforts to improve health care, food security, education, employment, entrepreneurship, security and justice. Where disasters strike, we offer humanitarian assistance. Our multi-stakeholder approach seeks and promotes alliances of civil society organisations, as well as the public and the private sectors. We focus on local agents for change and implement innovative digital and financial methods to increase the impact of interventions.

In Sierra Leone AIDE recently implemented a project that has a coverage of 10,802 households in the Food Security and Livelihood Sector (self-reliance, skills development, and energy and environment). Besides, we also have our development projects focusing on food security, climate change adaptation, disaster preparedness, nutrition governance and skills development running in different districts of the country.

In terms of managerial capacity, AIDE has a Code of Conduct, Gender Policy, established financial procedures and an anti-corruption policy and an open data policy. Through AIDE's Open Data policy, we strive to be a transparent, results oriented and results driven organization.

We have strong HR, finance, procurement, and monitoring systems in place to support project implementation. The organization also has inclusion, integrity, gender equality, protection and safeguarding policies and complaint feedback mechanisms in place to ensure the projects delivered meet the highest humanitarian standards. AIDE has a country office in Liberia and Sierra Leone. It has been fighting poverty and exclusion in West Africa's most fragile societies and conflict-stricken areas. It delivers innovative solutions to complex problems by emphasizing sustainability and performance in projects that tackle security and justice, health and economic opportunity.

1.2. Technical Approach

AIDE is working with the aim to reduce fragility and the vulnerability of people where it is most needed and most difficult: in fragile¹ and conflict-affected societies in West Africa. We do this by promoting equality and social inclusion, by increasing the resilience of people and societies, and by strengthening the social contract between citizens and their governments. The AIDE Resilience program uses the Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) approach to enhance resilience in communities. This approach focusses on increasing the capacities of communities and civil society organisations (CSOs) to work on a Resilience process. CMDRR brings together multiple stakeholders to jointly analyze and address disaster risks, starting from the community's own knowledge on recurrent hazard events and possible solutions.

AIDE Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction approach included;

- ❖ **Community-Managed:** Empower the most vulnerable families and communities, including their local actors, to lead the process of better analyzing the hazards they face; bolster existing capacities; and strengthen skills, systems and structures for reducing risks and building resilience.
- ❖ **Systematic linkages:** Strengthen government mechanisms for disaster risk management and establish and advocate for linkages between communities and government to increase access to resources and services.
- ❖ **Increased resilience:** Strengthen the strategies of communities and households that enable them to anticipate, reduce, mitigate and manage risks. Increase their adaptive capacities to shocks and stresses, and to “build back better” in post-disaster crisis efforts.
- ❖ **Innovation and learning:** Use technology and innovation to make disaster risk reduction efforts more effective and involve information and communication technology for development (ICT4D) when appropriate.

¹ “Fragility is the combination of (a heightened) exposure to risk combined with insufficient (low) coping capacity of the state, system and/or communities to manage, absorb or mitigate these risks. This situation of vulnerability can lead to violence, conflict, chronic underdevelopment and protracted political crisis.” - **OECD Definition of Fragility.**

Young people represent a large part of AIDE works. Through our Sustainable livelihood pillar, AIDE supports youths to secure decent work and earn a living wage. Our interventions empower youths to tackle the root cause of poverty, allow them to participate in sustainable and inclusive economic growth, reduce inequality, conflict, and prevent illegal migration. We envisage a future where youths are able to realize their own aspirations, make a positive contribution to their communities and take part in climate action.

AIDE's unique approach for youth skills development includes-

- Using a multi-pronged approach for skills training such as Hub-based Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), informal apprenticeship training through local SMEs and master crafts people and group-based skills training through mobile or satellite VET hubs.
- A more formalized, upgraded approach to the informal apprenticeship i.e., Ostad model
- Building skills that support sustainable and green development (i.e., renewable solar light installation, waste upcycling, circular economy), focuses on high economic growth sectors (i.e., handicrafts), Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and gender transformative skills training
- Holistic learning approach combining technical trade specific training with age-appropriate life-skills, and blending classroom-based learning with on-the-job experience
- Targeting the most disadvantaged youths such as survivors of gender-based violence, girls who are in risk of early marriage and teen pregnancy, indigenous communities, people with disabilities (PWDs).

Our work also focuses on Economic empowerment for vulnerable women through capacity building on different livelihood opportunities followed by business skills training and asset support which allows them to start up small businesses and promoted their self-reliance.

Community participation is one of the key components AIDE uses for creating mass awareness on environmental protection, through involving them in waste management and creating a cleaner environment in the communities we work. Community volunteers also play a key role in engaging communities in mobilization events through awareness sessions and keep close follow-up at the household level. Besides, a community feedback mechanism ensures continuous information sharing to the participants/ communities and listening and addressing community feedback will uphold our accountability and trust. Necessary communication and coordination with the Government authorities is a key strategy that is used from the beginning to end of our projects and will help to overcome the day-to-day challenges in the community activities.

Our community activities implemented include:

- Rapid conflict mapping and analysis in target areas
- Identify and select young female and male volunteer change agents
- Conduct capacity building for youth change agents
- Organize joint **social and cultural events led by the youth**

- Facilitate community micro-initiatives identified through vision-setting and led by youth
- Conduct learning and dialogue events with **community dialogue committee members**
- Preparing a safe environment for children

1.3. AIDE Urban and Rural CMDRR IN Sierra Leone

AIDE has implemented two resilience project in Sierra Leone. CMDRR Resilience project in Bombali & Port Loko District Funded by Cordaid through a partner ADD-SL (Total project amt: €203,201) and Freetown CMDRR Resilience Project Targeting Tower Hill Catchment Area with 14 Communities funded by Cordaid (Total project Amt : €200,000).

The outcomes of the project was:

- Capacity building training of partners staff, local authorities and facilitators in CMDRR;
- Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment and Analysis (PDRA) – (using different tools to analyze hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities of people);
- Community Level Action Plans – (prioritizing identified capacity gaps, development of contingencies (disaster preparedness) plans, and development of (disaster risk reduction) plans and based on plans, providing scenario on how to act in cases of disasters;
- People’s organization – through formation of CDMC- Community Disaster Management Committees – (Committee are responsible for leading community planning, implementation and monitoring of the DRR action plans)
- Participatory Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning System (MEALS) – Ability to learn from events and activities can further enhance resilience.



THEMATIC AREA KEY CONTACT: Mr. Idrissa Sesay | idrissa@aideliberia.org | info@aideliberia.org