



BRIEFING FOR A JOB OPENING IN SIERRA LEONE

10 February 2016

1. Context

- a. **Sierra Leone** is a republic located on the Atlantic coast of tropical western Africa; a former British colony, it gained its independence in 1961. In recent years the country seems to have moved past a long period of political turbulence and precarious health conditions linked both to the economic situation and to Ebola¹.
- b. **Makeni** is the one of the largest cities in Sierra Leone as well as the administrative and economic center of the Northern Province. It is also the location of the University of Makeni (**UNIMAK**), an important focal point for the country's development.
- c. UNIMAK was founded and is directed by the Catholic **Diocese** of Makeni. The previous Italian Bishop, now retired, contributed to bringing the country's civil war to an end (in 2002); the current Bishop, also Italian, plays a similar sort of role. The Diocese is not only a historically important player in the management of the country; it also plays a crucial role in guiding and fostering Sierra Leone's economic and social development through UNIMAK, which was accredited as a university by the government in 2009.
- d. The **Saint Lawrence Foundation Onlus (SLF)** is a private family foundation founded in 2008 with the mission of implementing social and sustainable economic projects to promote development. Activities are carried out primarily in Sierra Leone, where SLF has developed a solid network of relationships with local communities, working closely with the Diocese of Makeni and UNIMAK².

2. Mission and objectives of the Foundation

- a. To cooperate with local structures and operators in Sierra Leone – the Diocese, UNIMAK and individual parties – to carry out social and training projects.
- b. To make sustainable investments³ by training and encouraging the participation of local communities (*training* ⇒ *culture* ⇒ *work*) with a key focus on agricultural and food production (*agriculture/farming* ⇒ *nourishment* ⇒ *health* ⇒ *well-being*), an axis that is also the Sierra Leonean government's top development priority.
- c. To implement projects initially financed by the Foundation, but designed to become self-sustaining in the medium term, so that the funds can be recouped and re-invested in new projects.

¹ See Attachment

² www.saintlawrencefoundation.org

³ Based on the economic and social theories of Muhammad Yunus



This is the reason that SLF recently set up a Financial Fund and is now looking for a Fund Manager. This individual will reside in Sierra Leone on a full-time basis and ensure that the Fund's resources are used to implement development projects in line with the Foundation's principles and objectives.

3. Activities of the Foundation thus far

- a. Thanks to the Foundation's financing in 2012 of three new buildings for residency and training, a library and a computer lab, a Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences was instituted at UNIMAK. A partnership was also launched with the University of Milan, whose own Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences has made available professors and know-how.
- b. A collaboration was begun with the Catholic University of Milan's ALTIS program⁴ to support training and assistance initiatives for local entrepreneurs.
- c. Study and assessment of projects already carried out (e.g., rice distribution and cotton growing) as well as of ongoing projects (e.g. poultry farming, animal feed production chain, high-quality cocoa production, waste management) have been undertaken. The Foundation's ability to ensure the involvement of qualified human resources and skills has been critical to the success of the above-mentioned activities.⁵
- d. Support was provided to Sierra Leone's EXPO 2015 Pavilion.
- e. It is important to note that during the 2014-15 Ebola outbreak the Foundation's resources were directed primarily toward combating the health crisis. In 2016 – and with the establishment of the aforementioned Fund – a new phase will commence, making it possible to develop further projects.

4. The Fund Manager position

- a. The Foundation is seeking a candidate fluent in English to act as **the Foundation's resident point person (Fund Manager)**. He/she will be responsible for:
 - ▷ representing the Foundation in its relationships with local institutions both in the phase of identification of possible projects and the phase during which requisite permits and authorizations are requested and obtained;
 - ▷ concretely implementing development projects, training and encouraging the participation of local communities;
 - ▷ acting as a liaison with the Foundation and Italy.
- b. **The position will report to** the Foundation's Chief Executive Officer and the management of UNIMAK, where the Fund is legally based.
- c. **The job position**, which is renewable, is for an initial period of 2 to 3 years.

⁴ Year-long residential business training courses for individuals from less-developed countries

⁵ www.saintlawrencefoundation.org



- d. **Target candidates.** We are interested in two possible types of candidates:
- ▷ Former managers or entrepreneurs, ideally from the agri-food sector, highly-motivated and with a proven ability to promote social development;
 - ▷ Social workers with adequate operational experience and technical expertise.
 - ▷ **Prerequisite:** In both of the aforementioned cases, several years of work experience at the field level in Africa would be a key credential.
- e. **Requirements/qualifications:**
- ▷ Adequate seniority (at least 10 years of professional work experience);
 - ▷ Proven spirit of initiative, independence and mobility;
 - ▷ Ability to develop positive working relationships with people and institutions in a multiethnic setting;
 - ▷ Good motivation and social sensitivity;
 - ▷ Proven skills in operations management and the economic supervision of projects and investments; good computer skills;
 - ▷ Training experience;
 - ▷ Technical/economic degree or similar;
 - ▷ Fluent English and good knowledge of Italian
- f. **Main responsibilities,** to be carried out in the different project phases:

IDENTIFICATION/ PLANNING	ASSESSMENT	IMPLEMENTATION	HANDOVER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Gathering ideas ▷ Assessing benefits ▷ Carrying out prefeasibility studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Market and import/export studies ▷ Competitive assets ▷ Defining businesses, costs/revenues, technical, operational and financial characteristics, project timing ▷ Assessing benefits ▷ Operational project planning ▷ Identifying people (partners) for project implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Suppliers and contracts ▷ Permits ▷ Staffing ▷ Training ▷ Supervising work progress ▷ Accounting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ Transfer ▷ Replacement training ▷ Contribution to management ▷ Supervision of results

- g. **Contract terms and conditions**
- ▷ Project-based position for a Resident Fund Manager.
 - ▷ Duration: 2 to 3 years with residency in Sierra Leone for at least 80% of the time
 - ▷ Local housing in the UNIMAK area + insurance + intercontinental travel
 - ▷ Offices and services on UNIMAK's premises
 - ▷ Salary to be agreed upon (semi-voluntary position).

Please email a detailed resume and cover letter explaining your interest in and qualifications for the position. Both documents should be in English and sent to Sergio Vitali (sergio.vitali@gea.it), the person handling the candidate search.



Attachment

SIERRA LEONE

(see www.saintlawrencefoundation.org/SierraLeone)

1. Geography/Politics

- ▶ Atlantic Western Sub-Saharan Africa, bordered by Guinea and Liberia.
- ▶ Former British colony; official language: English.
- ▶ Independent Presidential Republic since 1961 and UN affiliate.
- ▶ Currently a stable unicameral Parliament with two majority parties.
- ▶ Capital: Freetown (population: 1 million), a major port city.
- ▶ Divided into 4 Provinces/14 Districts.

2. Economy

- ▶ Population approximately 6.3 million, total area 71,740 km², population density approximately 88 people/km².
- ▶ GDP per capita PPP: \$1,541 (rank: 167).
- ▶ Resources: extractive (diamonds, etc.), palm oil, forests.
- ▶ The civil war (1991-2002) had a devastating impact on the country's economic well-being. Since the end of the war the situation seems to be slowly improving, despite the recent health scourge.

3. Social indicators

- ▶ Fertility rate: 4.9.
- ▶ Human development index (HDI): 0.413 (181 out of 188).

4. Health

- ▶ High infant mortality.
- ▶ Ebola: the virus disease initially (2014) developed in Guinea and Liberia, then travelled south east and began its spread in Sierra Leone, a country ill-equipped to prevent or react to an epidemic that has by now caused thousands of deaths. The peak of the epidemic came toward the end of 2014, and 2015 was spent setting up prevention systems and strengthening health care structures. SLF, too, played its part

in supporting the Diocese, the local hospital and UNIMAK, committing its resources toward combating the health crisis. In January 2016 the WHO formally declared that the epidemic was over, with the few remaining cases now contained.

5. **Religion:** 60% Muslim, 20-30% animist, 10-20% Christian.

6. **Climate:** tropical, hot and humid.

7. **Hydrography:** rivers and abundant water

