

**Sierra Leone**

# *Ethnicity in Sierra Leone*

## *Group selection*

We identify the following ethnic groups as politically relevant in Sierra Leone: **Creole, Kono, Mende, Temne and Limba**. In some periods, the Temne and Limba are combined as “Northern Groups.” The Susu, Loko, Sherbo, Kissi and Koranko groups are not listed here because at the national level, they are not politically relevant as individual groups but rather subsumed under the larger ethnic identities like Temne or Mende (<sup>4487</sup>).

<sup>4487</sup> [Kandeh, 1992]

According to the Encyclopedia of the Nations (<sup>4488</sup>), both the Mende population and the Temne groups make up about 30% of Sierra Leone’s population.

<sup>4488</sup> [Encyclopedia of the Nations, 2014]

There is contradictory information concerning the size of the Creole group from the Encyclopedia of the Nations and the CIA World Factbook (<sup>4489</sup>, which estimate the group sizes at 10% vs. 2% respectively. Other sources either reproduce these data or give an absolute number of Creole people (about 60’000). As a consequence, it appears reasonable to opt for Fearon’s (<sup>4490</sup>) number that lies exactly in the middle (6%).

<sup>4489</sup> [CIA World Factbook]

<sup>4490</sup> [Fearon, 2003]

Fearon’s estimate is also used for the size of the Kono ethnic group (rounded up to the next half percentage point).

## *Power relations*

*1961-1963: from independence to the death of Milton Margai, the country’s first president.* This period is characterized by the dominance of the Southern **Mende** group. Sierra Leone’s oldest political party, the SLPP, which also becomes the governing party after independence, is a Mende-based party (<sup>4491</sup>; <sup>4492</sup>; <sup>4493</sup>). However, its leadership in the first years is ethnically quite diverse (<sup>4494</sup>), and the country’s first president, Milton Margai (a Mende) of the SLPP, forms a coalition government, co-opting and including **Temne** and leaders of other **Northern groups** into the cabinet (<sup>4495</sup>). Also the **Creole** group, the political elite of the colonial period, is well-represented in the government (<sup>4496</sup>).

<sup>4491</sup> [Davies, 2002]

<sup>4492</sup> [Kandeh, 1992]

<sup>4493</sup> [Keen, 2003]

<sup>4494</sup> [Hayward, 1984]

<sup>4495</sup> [Kandeh, 1992]

<sup>4496</sup> [Kandeh, 1992]

Note that during these first two periods of Mende leadership/dominance, no separate ethno-political identities of the **Limba** and Temne groups developed. There was, however, a joint northern feeling of relative deprivation and underrepresentation (<sup>4497</sup>). This is why the Temne and Limba groups are combined to one politically relevant

<sup>4497</sup> [Kandeh, 1992]

group during the first two periods.

Hence, the Mende are coded as “senior partner”, and the combined northern group (Temne and Limba) and the Creole as “junior partners” in a power-sharing regime.

On the contrary, no **Kono** leader is included in the government, which leads to sentiments of marginalization among this group (4498). Already in the 1950s, the Kono Progressive Movement (KPM) was formed as a political vehicle to pursue the interests of the Kono region. The party made demands for a fair return from the diamond wealth of the region that was exploited by a foreign company with the help of the central government, but also for the economic and infrastructural development of the region, for a solution to the situation of lawlessness caused by the massive influx of foreign diamond diggers, and more generally for the recognition of the rights of the Kono people. Although the party was not restricted to a particular ethnic group, it also raised concerns about the disadvantages faced by the Kono group itself. Overall, the Kono people saw themselves insufficiently benefiting from and even harmed by the diamond mining in their district (4499; 4500). Despite winning several parliamentary seats and the fusion with a small Freetown party, the party did not have any influence in the central government and soon came into open conflict with the ruling SLPP (4501; 4502). Thus the Kono group as was coded as being “powerless” in this period.

4498 [Kandeh, 1992]

4499 [Hayward, 1972]

4500 [Minikin, 1973]

4501 [Hayward, 1972]

4502 [Minikin, 1973]

*1965-1967: Albert Margai's rule from 1964 to 1967.* Ethnic favoritism in the cabinet and civil service aggravates under Albert Margai (4503; 4504). Northern elites defect from the governing SLPP (4505), and the northern representation in the government is cut in half, accounting for only 2 out of 14 cabinet members in 1964 (4506). A tendency of “ethnic chauvinism” by the Mende president can be observed (4507), and Sierra Leone's society becomes more ethnically polarized while the northern groups become increasingly alienated from the SLPP (4508). Also the army is getting politicized with a Mende-dominated officer corps (4509; 4510; 4511). Therefore, in this second period, the Mende are coded as “dominant”, and the northern groups as “powerless”.

4503 [Hayward, 1984]

4504 [Kandeh, 1992]

4505 [Kandeh, 1998]

4506 [Kandeh, 1992]

4507 [Kandeh, 1998]

4508 [Minikin, 1973]

4509 [Hayward, 1984]

4510 [Kandeh, 1992]

4511 [Keen, 2003]

The situation of the Kono group becomes even worse under Albert Margai. Foundation of a new Kono party (DPC), collaborating with the opposition APC (4512). Thus, the Kono are still coded as “powerless”.

4512 [Hayward, 1972]

Under Albert Margai, also the colonial rivalry between the Creole and the SLPP resurges. The SLPP regime breaks up the Creole domination within the civil service. As a result, the Creole elite becomes disaffected and begins to support the opposition party APC (4513). Therefore, the Creole group is also coded as “powerless” during this period.

4513 [Davies, 2002]

*1968-1992: Siaka Stevens' rise to power and the APC rule.* Since EPR focuses on the main ethno-political changes, the short-lived

alterations in the course of the subsequent military coups after the 1967 elections are disregarded here. Thus, the new period starts in 1968.

The northern groups now dominate the government and the army (4514; 4515; 4516). At the same time, however, as political power is concentrated among these northern groups (especially during the APC one-party rule after 1978), there is a growing consciousness of intra-northern ethnic distinctions, and separate ethno-political identities begin to develop, especially among the Temne and Limba groups (4517). This is why the two groups are listed as two separate politically relevant ethnic groups in this period.

The APC, the new dominant party after its victory in the 1967 elections, is a northern party, founded as an alternative to the Mende-dominated SLPP (4518; 4519; 4520). The Temne form a clear majority in the cabinet, but the Limba hold key posts and increasingly dominate the inner circles of political power (4521). Also, both presidents of this period, Stevens and his handpicked successor Momoh, are Limba. Especially under Momoh, Ekutay - a Limba association - becomes a major political force. President Momoh, the chief of police, the commander of the armed forces, the minister of trade and industry, and the party affairs minister are all members of this association (4522, 1998; 4523; 4524). Scholars speak of a "Limbazation" of the state apparatus and the security forces, beginning in the Stevens era, culminating under Momoh, and resulting in greater access to the state and its resources for Limba elites as the most powerful positions in the cabinet are held by Limbas (4525; 4526; 4527).

Thus, the Limba group is coded as "senior partner", and the Temne as "junior partner" in a mainly northern-based power-sharing regime. Yet, also the Creole group is well-represented in the government in this period (especially compared to their tiny share of the whole population) (4528), as Creole elites collaborate politically with the APC (4529). Hence: The Creole group is also coded as "junior partner" again.

The SLPP opposition is harassed by the army and the police (4530; 4531), and the Mende people feel deprived of power (4532). The SLPP sees itself forced to withdraw from the 1973 elections, leaving the APC unopposed, and in 1978 a one-party state is established legally ruling out any (SLPP-)opposition (4533). Particularly the southern region, but also the eastern region, are targets of state violence and, moreover, deprived of developmental efforts and welfare provision (4534; 4535). Some scholars have argued that for these reasons, elements of the SLPP supported the RUF in the early part of its rebellion (in 1991) by mobilizing young combatants in the Mende heartland (where the war actually started). Yet, this support came to an end when the APC regime was overthrown (see e.g. 4536).

It seems that the political discrimination aimed more at the SLPP party elite (although they were mostly Mende, too) than the Mende people as a whole. There were also some Mende members in the cab-

4514 [Kandeh, 1992]

4515 [Kandeh, 1998]

4516 [Keen, 2003]

4517 [Kandeh, 1992]

4518 [Hayward, 1984]

4519 [Kandeh, 1992]

4520 [Ndumbe, 2001]

4521 [Kandeh, 1992]

4522 [Kandeh, 1992]

4523 [Kpundeh, 1994]

4524 [Zack-Williams, 1999]

4525 [Kandeh, 1992]

4526 [Kandeh, 1998]

4527 [Kpundeh, 1994]

4528 [Kandeh, 1992]

4529 [Hayward, 1984]

4530 [Hayward, 1984]

4531 [Zack-Williams, 1999]

4532 [Zack-Williams, 1999]

4533 [Hayward, 1984]

4534 [Davies, 2002]

4535 [Zack-Williams, 1999]

4536 [Keen, 2003]

inet during APC rule (<sup>4537</sup>). Therefore, the whole group is not coded as “discriminated”. However, given their clear political marginalization and the repression of “their” party, the SLPP, the Mende have to be seen as “powerless” during this period.

Despite its earlier collaboration with the party in removing the ruling SLPP, also the Kono group is affected by the APC’s subsequent repressive rule and illegal exploitation of diamonds (and other natural resources) in the Kono heartland (<sup>4538</sup>; <sup>4539</sup>). Members of the Kono group become increasingly alienated from their parliamentary representatives (<sup>4540</sup>). Therefore, the Kono are coded as “powerless” during this period as well.

*1993-1996: Military coup and NPRC rule.* President Momoh is ousted by young army officers in April 1992, and a military National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), headed by Capt. Valentine Strasser, takes over power. The constitution is suspended, and all political parties and activities are banned (<sup>4541</sup>). (Note that due to EPR’s January-1st-rule, the new period is coded as starting in 1993.)

Meanwhile, the civil war - started in 1991 by the RUF - continues, as Strasser does not achieve to defeat the rebels despite his hiring of the South-African mercenary firm Executive Outcomes.

Mende perceptions of a northern-dominated army led to the formation of the Kamajors, a Mende civil defense militia. Because of their military success against the RUF, the Kamajors’ influence increased considerably over the years (<sup>4542</sup>; <sup>4543</sup>). There is information that Strasser favored the Mende over other ethnic groups in both the government and the military (<sup>4544</sup>). However, this seems highly doubtful, especially with regard to the situation in the military after the Stevens and Momoh era which is commonly said to have been rather northern-dominated (see e.g. <sup>4545</sup>). Furthermore, the RUF rebels apparently did not hail from any specific ethnic group (<sup>4546</sup>). Overall, the situation becomes extremely nebulous during this period as different armed forces (NPRC, RUF, Kamajors) autonomously control different parts of the war-torn country. Thus, this period is coded as “state collapse” here.

*1997: short interlude of order and democracy.* The SLPP wins the 1996 general elections, and its candidate Kabbah is elected president.

Although Kabbah is a Mandingo, as the SLPP candidate (and a protégé of Albert Margai) he is considered a representative of the southern and eastern groups (mainly the Mende) (<sup>4547</sup>). The SLPP itself is still a Mende-dominated party and also draws its support in both elections predominantly from the southern and eastern regions, while remaining very weak in the north (<sup>4548</sup>). The Mende become the dominant group again during this short period, after winning both the presidential and the parliamentary elections. As a result, the Mende militia, the Kamajors, now becomes an extremely influential security force in the country, a sort of an ethnic praetorian guard for the president, protecting the economic and political interests of

<sup>4537</sup> [Kandeh, 1992]

<sup>4538</sup> [Ndumbe, 2001]

<sup>4539</sup> [Zack-Williams, 1999]

<sup>4540</sup> [Kandeh, 1992]

<sup>4541</sup> [Kandeh, 1998]

<sup>4542</sup> [Keen, 2003]

<sup>4543</sup> [Zack-Williams, 1999]

<sup>4544</sup> [Minorities at Risk, 2004–2018]

<sup>4545</sup> [Keen, 2003]

<sup>4546</sup> [Zack-Williams, 1999]

<sup>4547</sup> [Kandeh, 1998]

<sup>4548</sup> [Kandeh, 1998]

the Mende elite, and entering in competition with Sierra Leone's regular army (<sup>4549</sup>; <sup>4550</sup>). (The RUF uses this situation in turn as a justifying reason for its rebellion, claiming to fight Mende hegemony in politics (<sup>4551</sup>).)

<sup>4549</sup> [Keen, 2003]

<sup>4550</sup> [Zack-Williams, 1999]

<sup>4551</sup> [Keen, 2003]

However, Kabbah forms a National Coalition Government after coming to power that includes the major parties in parliament (<sup>4552</sup>). These parties are mainly the ones representing the north (UNPP, PDP, and APC) (<sup>4553</sup>). The Mende are therefore coded as "senior partner" and the northern groups as "junior partner". (In times of Mende domination, the Limba and Temne groups again are more relevant as a combined identity category of northerners rather than as separate ethnic groups.)

<sup>4552</sup> [Zack-Williams, 1999]

<sup>4553</sup> [Kandeh, 1998]

The DCP, the party representing the Kono group's interests (or at least the interests of the Kono elite), fails to win a single parliamentary seat (<sup>4554</sup>). Hence, the Kono group remains politically marginalized and is coded as "powerless".

<sup>4554</sup> [Kandeh, 1998]

There is no evidence of political relevance of the Creole during this period, which is why they are coded as "irrelevant".

*1998-2002:* Kabbah's government is removed from power in a new military coup by the armed forces in May 1997. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) is established as the new government, and Major Johnny Paul Koroma invites the RUF to join his government. (Note again that due to EPR's January-1st-rule, the new period is coded as starting in 1998.)

The civil war reaches its peak in 1997-1998 (<sup>4555</sup>), which leads to the total breakdown of all institutions of the state and the functioning of the government (<sup>4556</sup>). The government even lacks an official army after 1998, being completely dependent on foreign peacekeepers and local militias (<sup>4557</sup>). Although Kabbah is reinstalled by ECO-MOG forces in March 1998, the civil war continues, with rebels reentering the capital Freetown in January 1999. Several peace accords are ignored, and even the (small) UN mission is not able to compel their implementation. The dramatic increase of warring parties and the shifting alliances completely blur the picture of who holds political power (<sup>4558</sup>). Due to the virtual loss of control by the central government and the totally nebulous situation regarding political power during this period of intensified civil war, this period is coded as "state collapse."

<sup>4555</sup> [Ducasse-Rogier, 2004]

<sup>4556</sup> [Ndumbe, 2001]

<sup>4557</sup> [Ducasse-Rogier, 2004]

<sup>4558</sup> [Ducasse-Rogier, 2004]

A ceasefire is finally achieved in November 2000, with the disarmament process starting in May 2001, and an official end to the conflict being declared in January 2002.

*2003-2005:* The long-standing ethno-regional divisions in Sierra Leonian politics resurface in the context of the 2002 general elections held in May. The SLPP remains mainly based in the south and east while the APC draws its support from the north (<sup>4559</sup>; <sup>4560</sup>).

<sup>4559</sup> [Davies, 2002]

<sup>4560</sup> [Keen, 2003]

The SLPP wins a clear majority and Kabbah is reelected. In the cabinet, only the SLPP is represented, according to the U.S. State

Department Human Rights Reports 2002-2005 <sup>(4561)</sup>. This leads to a sense of marginalization among the northern Temne and Limba groups <sup>(4562, 12)</sup>.

<sup>4561</sup> [US State Department, 2002–2019]

<sup>4562</sup> [Davies, 2002]

Therefore, the Mende group is coded as “dominant”, and the northern groups and the Kono as “powerless” during this period.

No evidence of political relevance of Creole, which is why they are coded as “irrelevant”.

*2006-2007: second part of Kabbah’s and the SLPP’s rule.* In 2006 (but not before), the U.S. State Department Human Rights Report notes that the country’s ethnic groups are well represented in the SLPP government (with Temne cabinet ministers even outnumbering Mende ministers in 2006) <sup>(4563)</sup>. Thus, the last two calendar years of SLPP rule are coded as a power-sharing arrangement. Although Kabbah is a Mandingo, and not a Mende, the latter are coded as “senior partner” since the SLPP is still clearly rooted in the Mende south and east <sup>(4564)</sup>. Accordingly, the northern groups - again combined to one politically relevant group during “southern rule” - are coded as “junior partner”, as well as the Kono group (although this coding is a little more doubtful).

<sup>4563</sup> [US State Department, 2002–2019]

<sup>4564</sup> [Kandeh, 2008]

There was no evidence of any renewed political relevance of the Creole minority, so they remain coded as “irrelevant”.

*2008-2009:* Ernest Bai Koroma is elected president in Sierra Leone’s 2007 elections and inaugurated in mid-September 2007, becoming the country’s first president of Temne origin. His rival in the run-off election was Solomon Berewa, a Mende and Kabbah’s hand-picked SLPP candidate.

Under “northern rule” - analogous to the codings in previous periods - the Temne and Limba groups are coded as separate politically relevant ethnic groups again.

Koroma’s vice-president is Samuel Sam-Sumana from the Kono group. And according to the U.S. State Department Human Rights Report of 2007 <sup>(4565)</sup>, Koroma’s new government also included members of the Mende and Limba groups, although the Temne were clearly overrepresented with 12 out of 20 ministers (apart from president and vice-president). Successive governments seem to have remained ethnically inclusive, according to the U.S. State Department Human Rights reports from 2008 and 2009 <sup>(4566)</sup>. Note that Koroma’s APC party also went into an alliance with the new PMDC in order to win the run-off presidential election of 2007. The PMDC - whose leader Charles Margai is former president Albert Margai’s son - is a southern-based party composed of disaffected former SLPP members and supporters (and thus clearly Mende based) <sup>(4567)</sup>. After the election, the PMDC was rewarded for its support by Koroma with 4 ministerial appointments <sup>(4568)</sup>. This also points to a power-sharing arrangement between north and south.

<sup>4565</sup> [US State Department, 2002–2019]

<sup>4566</sup> [US State Department, 2002–2019]

<sup>4567</sup> [Kandeh, 2008]

<sup>4568</sup> [International Crisis Group, 2008, 4]

Therefore, the Temne are coded as “senior partner”, and the Mende, Limba and Kono groups as “junior partners” in this pe-



riod. Again, no evidence of renewed political relevance of the Creole group.

*2013-2015:* In 2012, Ernest Bai Koroma was reelected, in elections considered to be free and fair (<sup>4569</sup>). However, Koroma's junior partner PMDC lost many votes in the parliamentary elections in 2012 and failed to stay in parliament subsequently. As the parliament was only made up of the APC (Limba and Temne-based) and the SLPP (Mende-based) which are competing along ethnic lines (<sup>4570</sup>, <sup>4571</sup>) and Koroma is member of the APC, the Temne are coded as "senior partner" and the Limba as "junior partner", whereas the Mende, who are excluded from government, are coded as "powerless". This coding decision is supported by data on individual ministers - of the 13 members of the cabinet ethnic information is available on Wikipedia (<sup>4572</sup>), only one is reported to belong to the Mende group. Samuel Sam-Sumana, the Vice-President is a Kono; therefore the Kono are coded as being "junior partner".

<sup>4569</sup> [US State Department, 2002-2019]

<sup>4570</sup> [Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2014]

<sup>4571</sup> [Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016]

<sup>4572</sup> [Wikipedia, 2014]

There is still no evidence suggesting that the Creole people are politically relevant in Sierra Leone.

*2016-2018:* The ethno-political situation changes somewhat in mid-2015, when a cabinet reshuffle removed Samuel Sam-Sumana from his position as Vice President, thus removing the "junior partner" status of the Kono ethnic group. In this and a consequent reshuffle in 2016, there is no evidence to suggest that a significant role was given to a member of the Kono ethnic group. Also, there is no evidence suggesting that the group are discriminated, therefore they are coded as "powerless".

Furthermore, Sam-Sumana's replacement is Victor Bockarie Foh, a member of the Mende ethnic group, who is also in the APC party (<sup>4573</sup>). The question at hand, is whether Foh represents the Mende, or whether his long-standing allegiance to the APC party undermines his position as a true representative of the Mende people: The SLPP traditionally represent the Mende, at least, the support for the SLPP is highest in Mende-dominant regions (<sup>4574</sup>, <sup>4575</sup>, 7). However, whereas the binary choice between SLPP and APC was previously defined by ethnic allegiance (<sup>4576</sup>, 81-99), in recent years the binary divide has become less clear (<sup>4577</sup>, 8). Interviews with Foh reinforce his allegiance to the APC's democratic and post-ethnic narrative, which suggest that he aims to stand for all ethnicities, whilst acknowledging his own (<sup>4578</sup>). Given the recent historical context of ethnic partisanship, notwithstanding the fact that he is a member of a predominantly Temne-Limba party, Foh's Vice President position warrants a change of status for the Mende to "junior partner".

<sup>4573</sup> [Thomas, 2015]

<sup>4574</sup> [Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016]

<sup>4575</sup> [Batty, 2010]

<sup>4576</sup> [Kandeh, 1992]

<sup>4577</sup> [Batty, 2010]

<sup>4578</sup> [Awoko, 2014]

Another development in the ethno-political situation of the country is the election of two ministers from the Creole ethnic group. For example, media sources cite Sylvia Blyden, the minister for Social Welfare, Gender and Childrens' affairs, as one of the most popular politicians in the country (<sup>4579</sup>). However, it does not seem prudent

<sup>4579</sup> [Thomas, 2017]



to consider the Creole group as “junior partner”, as with previous consideration of this group, they are not politically relevant, as this would require at least one significant political actor to represent the interests of the group, and even the Grand Alliance Party, which is led by a Creole, Raymond Bamidele Thompson, did not incite the Creole electorate to vote along ethnic lines. Only 10% of Creole voters placed a vote for this party in the 2002 and 1996 elections (<sup>4580</sup>, 108). This suggests that the ethnic identity of Creole is not significant politically and does not encourage voting along ethnic lines. According to a 2010 Statistical analysis of voting patterns (<sup>4581</sup>), there is no significant statistical relationship between Creole identity and voting. Therefore, this justifies their continued status as “irrelevant”.

<sup>4580</sup> [Batty, 2010]

<sup>4581</sup> [Batty, 2010]

*2019-2021:* In March 2018, Julies Maada Bio of the SLPP was elected president of Sierra Leone. In a close race with Samura Kamara from the APC-party, Bio received 51.8% of the votes against Kamara’s 48.2% in the second round of the presidential election (<sup>4582</sup>). Former president Ernest Bai Koroma was ineligible to run again after serving two five-year terms in office. The elections and subsequent transition of power took place peacefully. However, local and international election observers reported that the campaigning efforts in the run-up to the elections were strongly ethnically centered, further deepening the existing ethnic cleavages in the country (<sup>4583</sup>, <sup>4584</sup>).

<sup>4582</sup> [Al Jazeera, 2018]

<sup>4583</sup> [EU Election Observation Mission, 2018]

<sup>4584</sup> [Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2020]

Although president Bio is from Sherbro descent, Bio and his SLPP party are considered to be primarily representing the Mende. Hence, the Mende are coded as “senior partner” in Bio’s first government. Furthermore, in spite of the APC’s critique about disproportionate representation of SLPP-members in the cabinet, the APC obtained a significant number of positions in the government (<sup>4585</sup>). In accordance, the Temne and the Limba (APC’s support base) are coded as “junior partner”. With the appointments of Morie Komba Manyeh (Minister of Mines and Mineral resources) and Aiah Gbakima (Minister of Technical & Higher Education) the Kono received important ministerial positions. Although Manyeh stepped down from her position, the continuous presence of Gbakima suggests the Kono are represented in the executive body. The Kono are therefore coded as “junior partner” in the power-sharing arrangement. No evidence suggests mobilization or representation of the Creole in executive power. They remain coded as “irrelevant”.

<sup>4585</sup> [US State Department, 2002–2019]

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## Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone

From 1961 until 1964

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	0.38	JUNIOR PARTNER
Mende	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Creole	0.06	JUNIOR PARTNER
Kono	0.04	POWERLESS

From 1965 until 1967

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	0.38	POWERLESS
Mende	0.3	DOMINANT
Creole	0.06	POWERLESS
Kono	0.04	POWERLESS

From 1968 until 1992

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Temne	0.3	JUNIOR PARTNER
Mende	0.3	POWERLESS
Limba	0.08	SENIOR PARTNER
Creole	0.06	JUNIOR PARTNER
Kono	0.04	POWERLESS

From 1993 until 1996

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Mende	0.3	STATE COLLAPSE
Temne	0.3	STATE COLLAPSE
Limba	0.08	STATE COLLAPSE
Creole	0.06	STATE COLLAPSE
Kono	0.04	STATE COLLAPSE

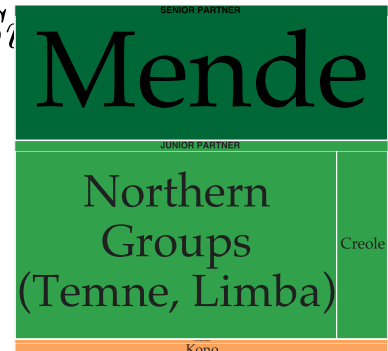


Figure 898: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1961-1964.



Figure 899: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1965-1967.

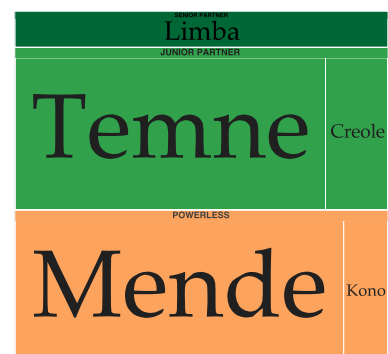


Figure 900: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1968-1992.

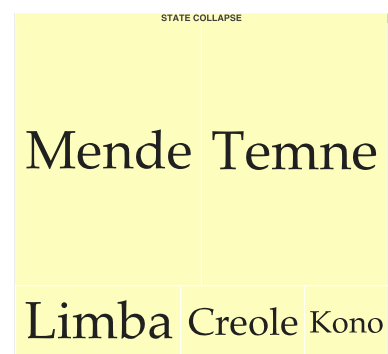


Figure 901: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1993-1996.

*From 1997 until 1997*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	0.38	JUNIOR PARTNER
Mende	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Creole	0.06	IRRELEVANT
Kono	0.04	POWERLESS

*From 1998 until 2001*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	0.38	STATE COLLAPSE
Mende	0.3	STATE COLLAPSE
Creole	0.06	STATE COLLAPSE
Kono	0.04	STATE COLLAPSE

*From 2002 until 2005*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	0.38	POWERLESS
Mende	0.3	DOMINANT
Creole	0.06	IRRELEVANT
Kono	0.04	POWERLESS

*From 2006 until 2007*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	0.38	JUNIOR PARTNER
Mende	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Creole	0.06	IRRELEVANT
Kono	0.04	JUNIOR PARTNER

*From 2008 until 2012*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Temne	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Mende	0.3	JUNIOR PARTNER
Limba	0.08	JUNIOR PARTNER
Creole	0.06	IRRELEVANT
Kono	0.04	JUNIOR PARTNER

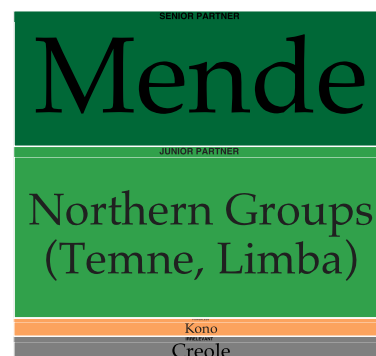
*From 2013 until 2015*

Figure 902: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1997-1997.



Figure 903: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1998-2001.

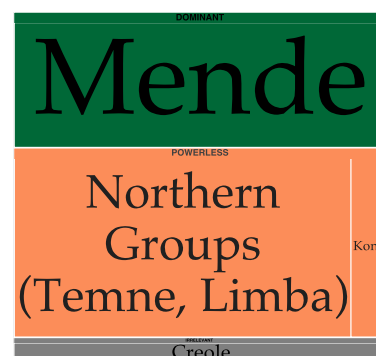


Figure 904: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 2002-2005.

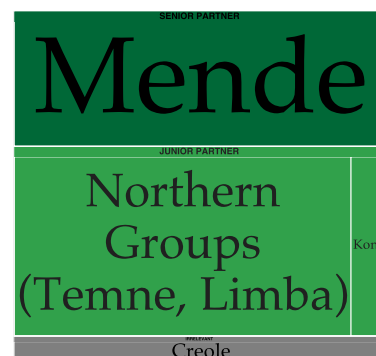
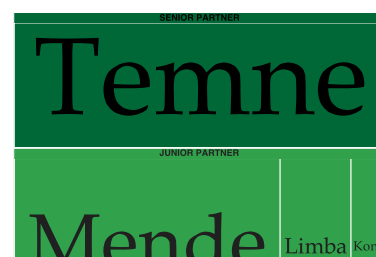


Figure 905: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 2006-2007.



Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Temne	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Mende	0.3	POWERLESS
Limba	0.08	JUNIOR PARTNER
Creole	0.06	IRRELEVANT
Kono	0.04	JUNIOR PARTNER

*From 2016 until 2018*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Temne	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Mende	0.3	JUNIOR PARTNER
Limba	0.08	JUNIOR PARTNER
Kono	0.04	POWERLESS
Creole	0.03	IRRELEVANT

*From 2019 until 2021*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Mende	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Temne	0.3	JUNIOR PARTNER
Limba	0.08	JUNIOR PARTNER
Kono	0.04	JUNIOR PARTNER
Creole	0.03	IRRELEVANT

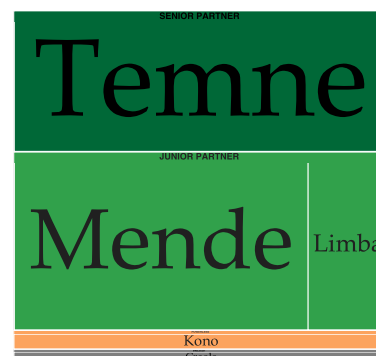


Figure 908: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 2016-2018.

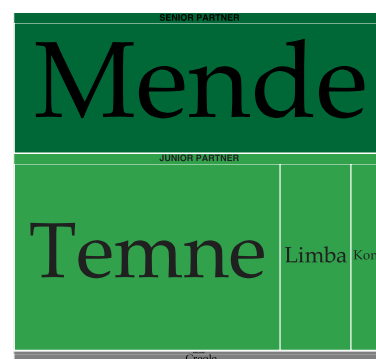


Figure 909: Political status of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 2019-2021.



Geographical coverage of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone

From 1961 until 1961

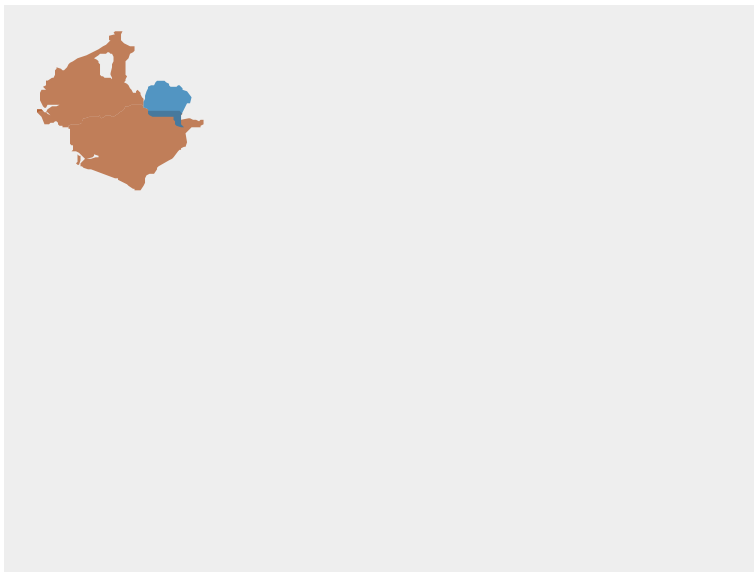


Figure 910: Map of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1961-1961.

	Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
■	Mende	28 412	Regionally based
■	Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	22 399	Aggregate
■	Kono	5754	Regionally based
■	Creole	0	Urban

Table 334: List of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1961-1961.

From 1962 until 1967



Figure 911: Map of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1962-1967.





	Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
	Mende	28 412	Regionally based
	Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	22 399	Aggregate
	Kono	5754	Regionally based
	Creole	0	Urban

Table 335: List of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1962-1967.

*From 1968 until 1996*

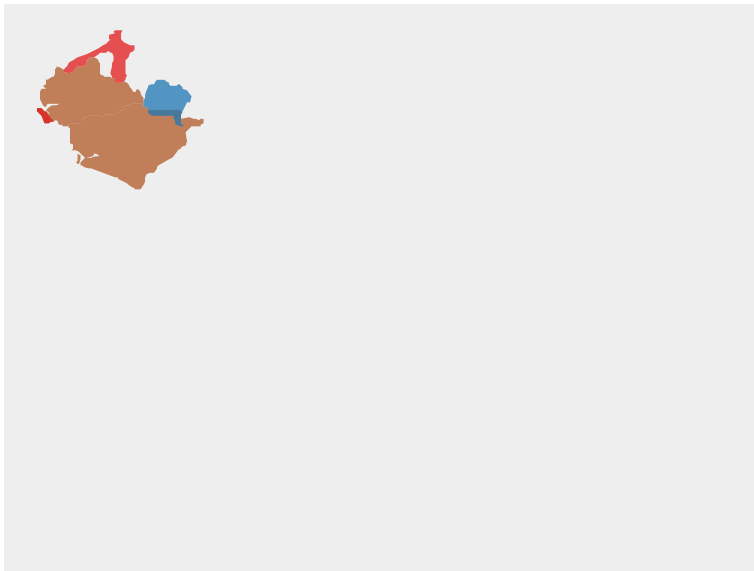


Figure 912: Map of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1968-1996.






Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
 Mende	28 412	Regionally based
 Temne	17 604	Regionally based
 Kono	5754	Regionally based
 Limba	5305	Regionally based
 Creole	0	Urban

Table 336: List of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1968-1996.

*From 1997 until 1997*

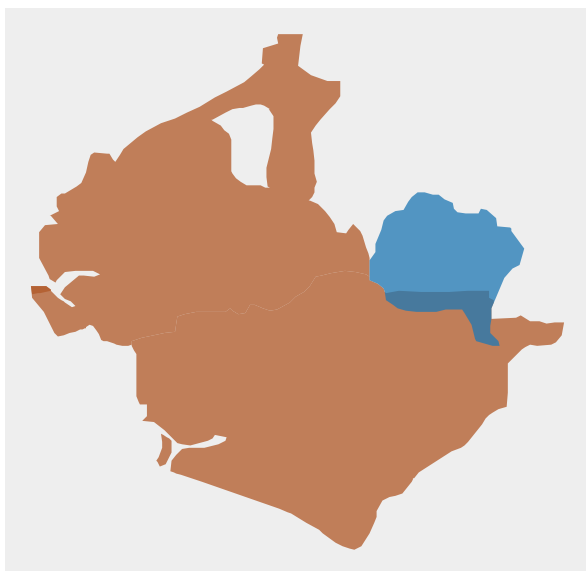


Figure 913: Map of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1997-1997.




Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
 Mende	28 412	Regionally based
 Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	22 399	Aggregate
 Kono	5754	Regionally based

Table 337: List of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1997-1997.

*From 1998 until 2001*

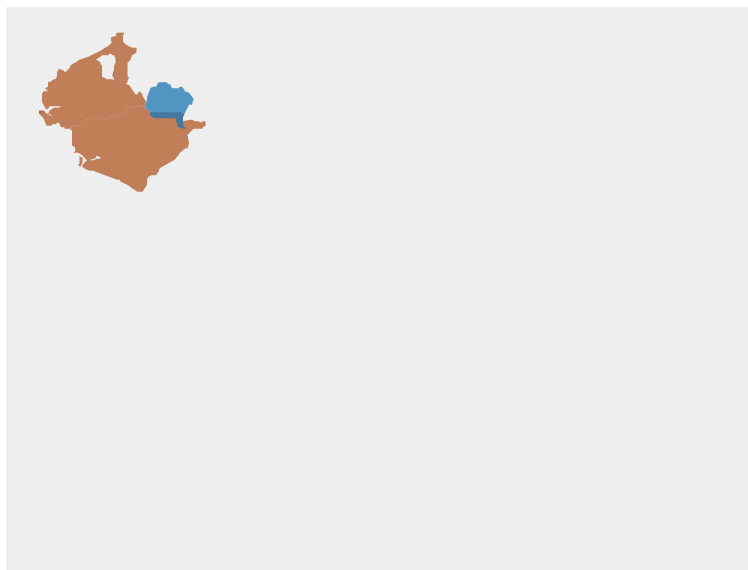


Figure 914: Map of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1998-2001.

	Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
<span style="color: brown;">■</span>	Mende	28 412	Regionally based
<span style="color: brown;">■</span>	Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	22 399	Aggregate
<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	Kono	5754	Regionally based
<span style="color: red;">■</span>	Creole	0	Urban

Table 338: List of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 1998-2001.

*From 2002 until 2007*

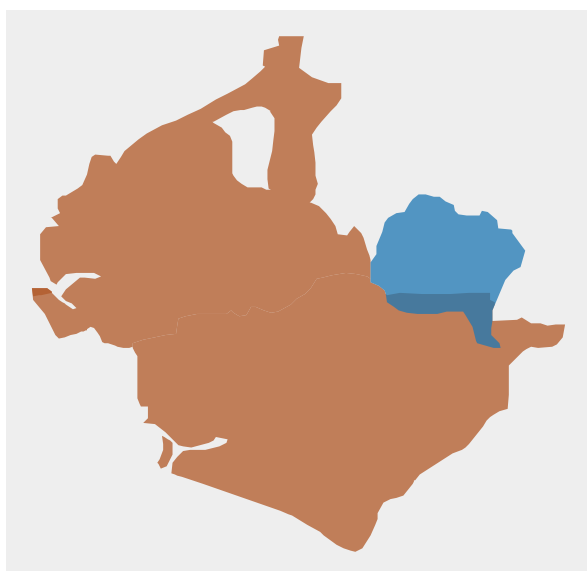


Figure 915: Map of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 2002-2007.

	Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
<span style="color: brown;">■</span>	Mende	28 412	Regionally based
<span style="color: brown;">■</span>	Northern Groups (Temne, Limba)	22 399	Aggregate
<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	Kono	5754	Regionally based

Table 339: List of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 2002-2007.

*From 2008 until 2021*

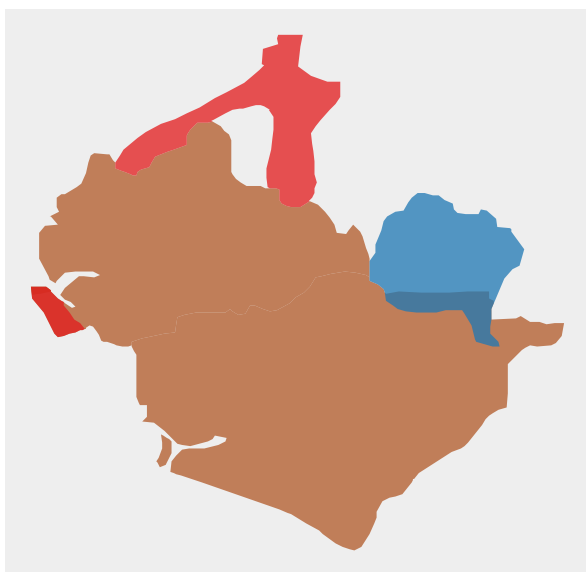


Figure 916: Map of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 2008-2021.

	Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
■	Mende	28 412	Regionally based
■	Temne	17 604	Regionally based
■	Kono	5 754	Regionally based
■	Limba	5 305	Regionally based

Table 340: List of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone during 2008-2021.

# Conflicts in Sierra Leone

*Starting on 1991-03-22*

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Sierra Leone	RUF		1991-03-22			
Government of Sierra Leone	AFRC		1997-05-24			
Government of Sierra Leone	Kamajors	Mende	1997-05-26	No	Yes	Yes
Government of Sierra Leone	WSB		2000-09-09			