

Sierra Leone

National Higher Education Equity Policies

Governance

The Ministry of Education, through its Directorate of Higher Education Science and Technology, is responsible for defining national policies in higher education. The Ministry relies also on the Education Sector Plan (ESP) Secretariat and the Tertiary Education Commission (<http://tecsl.info/>), responsible for advising the government in matters relating to higher education and assessing the funding and resources for academic programs in HEIs.

Higher Education Policy Documents

What are the current official documents defining the national higher education strategy / policies?

- 2013 Education Sector Plan (discusses increased access to technical and higher education institutions)
- National Policy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2014 (gender focus)

Equity Policy Documents

What broad and specific equity objectives do the policy documents identify?

- “Increase equitable access to higher education by 0.2% additional GPI in 2020 relative to 2016 by developing a higher education strategy to consolidate policies for addressing equitable growth at the higher education levels, provisioning of scholarships to the neediest students (including the poor and students with disabilities), and continuing grant support for females in STEM (Science, Technology, English and Mathematics)” (ESP page III)
- Specific goals
 - “Develop a higher education strategy/framework to consolidate the policies for addressing equitable growth, quality, and relevance” (ESP, page 40)
 - “Provide better targeted financial support (scholarships/grants/loans) to the neediest students, and continue support for students with disabilities as well as females in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)” (ESP, page 40)

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents?

- Low-income students
- Gender groups
- Students from rural areas

Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups?

- No

Sierra Leone does not have a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

What specific interventions and/or instruments of equity promotion are included in the official strategy and policy documents (monetary and non-monetary)?

Monetary Policy Instruments

- Needs-based scholarships and grants / Other grants targeted for equity groups: female students in STEM and students with disabilities are the main beneficiaries of this scheme (SABER)
- Student loans are in the process of being established (ESP p.18)

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

- None defined so far

Financial Resources

What financial resources does the country devote to equity promotion measures?

- Not available

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance criteria do not take equity elements into consideration.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Tertiary Education Commission is responsible for monitoring the impact of equity promotion measures. Based on the ESP, the Commission monitors the indicator “Students in public HEIs per 100,000

inhabitants (by gender and location)” to determine whether there has been greater access to public Higher Education Institutions, taking into account gender and location [although there is no mid-range data, just the baseline (2014) and the 2018 target]. (ESP p. 6)

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

Sierra Leone does not have an agency dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Sources

SABER country report Sierra Leone 2017, World Bank Group
http://wbqfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/CountryReports/TED/SABER_Tertiary_Sierra_Leone_CR2017.pdf

Tertiary Education Commission (<http://tecsl.info/>)

Education Sector Plan 2018-2020. Getting It Right – Service Delivery, Integrity and Learning in Sierra Leone. Government of Sierra Leone, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
(<https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/education-sector-plan-2018-2020-sierra-leone>)