



# IFC's CASA Initiative in Sierra Leone

*Supporting Private Sector Development through the Conflict Affected States in Africa Initiative*

## SIERRA LEONE AT A GLANCE:

Population: 5.7 million (2011)  
GDP per capita: \$341 (2011)  
*Ranked 141<sup>st</sup> of 183 countries in the World Bank Group's 2012 Doing Business Report*

A lengthy civil war that ended in 2001 badly damaged Sierra Leone's economy, which continues to suffer from weak infrastructure, high unemployment, and limited investment.

Confidence has been rising along with stability, however, and Sierra Leone's commitments to improving public services and strengthening and diversifying its private sector are laying the foundation for future growth.



## CASA's Support

IFC's CASA Initiative is helping strengthen smaller businesses in Sierra Leone and is working with the government and private sector partners to introduce regulatory improvements to the country's investment climate.

## Supporting Smaller Businesses

IFC is helping improve access to finance in Sierra Leone for individuals and businesses through the Africa MSME Program, the Microfinance Program, the Trade Finance Program, and the Leasing Program.

IFC's SME Ventures Program is providing risk capital and advisory services to smaller businesses in the country, which are receiving training support through IFC's Business Edge and SME Toolkit training products. IFC is also helping strengthen Sierra Leone's financial markets by supporting the establishment of a Credit Bureau and a Collateral Registry.

CASA has also provided advisory support to the National Revenue Authority, which has authorized all major banks to accept tax payments. In the past, taxpayers could pay their taxes only at tax offices, so this innovation is saving taxpayers a considerable amount of time.

## Improving the Investment Climate

IFC has helped Sierra Leone improve its investment climate, supporting reforms that have led to tax simplification, the reduction of fees for exporters and importers, and more streamlined access to credit information and construction permits.

## WHAT IS THE CASA INITIATIVE?

IFC's CASA Initiative, launched in 2008, is helping design and implement integrated strategies specially targeted to support economic recovery in conflict-affected countries. The Initiative is supported by Ireland, the Netherlands, and Norway, while Denmark and Sweden provide additional support in South Sudan and Liberia respectively.

The CASA Initiative focuses on:

- **Improving** the business environment through regulatory reform
- **Strengthening** small and medium sized businesses and support institutions, such as chambers of commerce
- **Rebuilding** financial markets, banks, and other financial institutions
- **Increasing** private sector involvement in providing and rebuilding infrastructure such as roads, ports, schools, and power stations

## ABOUT IFC

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector. We help developing countries achieve sustainable growth by financing investment, providing advisory services to businesses and governments, and mobilizing capital in the international financial markets. In fiscal 2011, amid economic uncertainty across the globe, we helped our clients create jobs, strengthen environmental performance, and contribute to their local communities—all while driving our investments to an all-time high of nearly \$19 billion. For more information, visit [www.ifc.org](http://www.ifc.org), [www.ifc.org/africa](http://www.ifc.org/africa) or [www.ifc.org/casa](http://www.ifc.org/casa)

## CASA DONORS IN SIERRA LEONE



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