

NOTES AND ACRONYMS

LINGUISTIC CONVENTIONS

Mende words and phrases are italicised in the text. Mende citations follow the orthographic conventions of Innes' *A Mende-English dictionary* (1969) and *A practical introduction to Mende* (1971). The symbols ɔ, ε and ŋ in written Mende are pronounced as follows:

ε like the 'e' in English 'pet'

ɔ like the 'o' in English 'pot'

ŋ sometimes as a consonant similar to English 'ng' as in 'sing', and sometimes to add nasality to the preceding vowel.

Words which do not occur as part of sentences are usually given in the indefinite singular form, but I have occasionally used plurals (formed with the addition of *nga* [indefinite] or *isia* [definite]). Although most of the Mende words are translated each time they occur, some common terms are defined only once and subsequently used without translation. For the reader's reference, I have included all of these in the glossary. The Mende language has four functional tones; these are not marked in the text, but are given in the glossary.

MONEY

The unit of currency in Sierra Leone is the leone. At the time of fieldwork in 1987-8 the official exchange rate was approximately 60 leones = £1. As an indication of relative value, the official salary of a government clerk or primary schoolteacher was about 700 leones per month at this time. Since then currency values have been considerably altered by inflation, devaluation and currency flotation. In late 1993 the exchange rate was approximately 850 leones = £1.

UNITS OF MEASUREMENT

I have indicated quantities of produce, etc. with the volumetric units most familiar to Mende villagers. The main units for solids (e.g. rice and coffee) are the bag, the bushel, the thruppence pan and the butter cup.

1 bag = approximately 3 bushels

1 bushel = approximately 21 thruppence pans

1 thruppence pan = approximately 5 butter cups

One bushel contains approximately 38 kg of clean rice, 38 kg of coffee, and 29 kg of cocoa.

The main units for liquids (e.g. palm oil) are the 4 gallon kerosene tin and the 'pint'. The Sierra Leonean pint is gauged on a standard local beer bottle, which is 16 fl oz instead of the usual 20 fl oz.

ACRONYMS

The following acronyms appear in the text:

EIADP	Eastern Integrated Agricultural Development Project
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
ILCA	International Livestock Centre for Africa
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
WID	Women in Development
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature