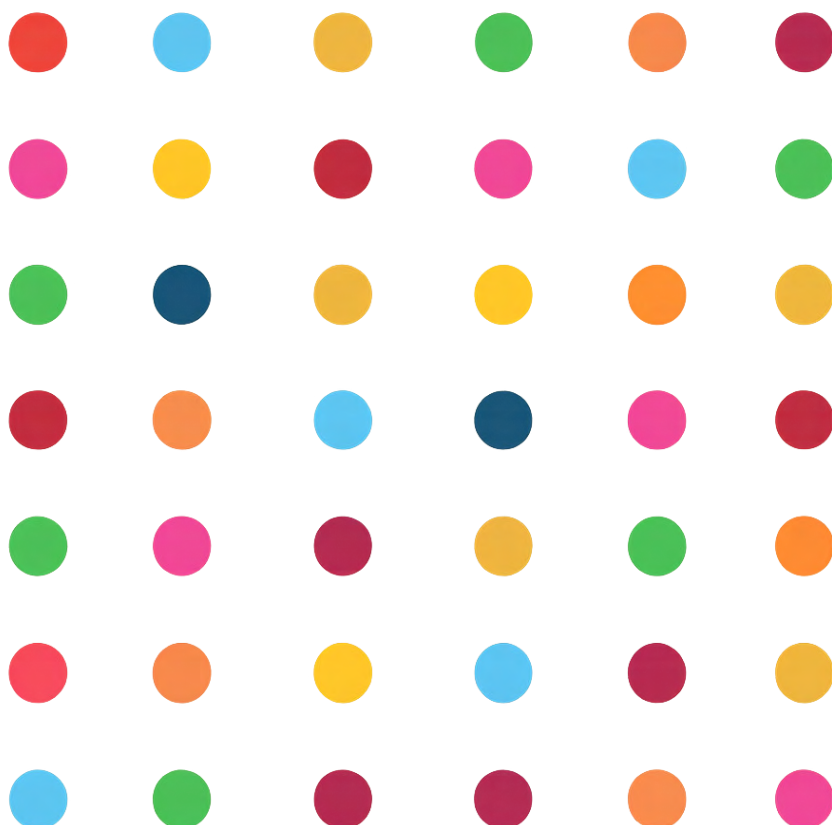




UN Country Team

Sierra Leone

UNSDCF Mid-Year Report 2025



UNITED NATIONS
SIERRA LEONE



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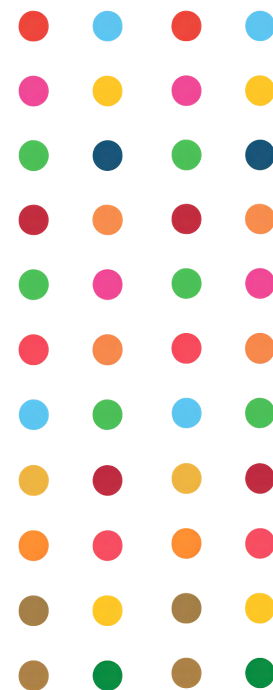
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Resident Coordinator's **FOREWORD**



Sierra Leone's journey toward the 2030 Agenda continues against a backdrop of resilience, reform, and transformation. Despite ongoing global economic shocks, climate pressures, and governance complexities, the nation has demonstrated steadfast commitment to advancing sustainable development, peace, and equity.

The United Nations remains a trusted partner in this national journey, aligning its Cooperation Framework (2025–2030) with the Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024–2030) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This report outlines key results for the period 1st January - 30th June 2025.

As Sierra Leone advances through the second half of 2025, the United Nations, in close partnership with the Government, will intensify efforts to translate national priorities into tangible results for communities across the country. Emphasis will be placed on strengthening sustainable food systems to increase productivity, enhance nutrition, and reduce dependency on imports. Investments in human capital will continue to expand opportunities for young people, women, and marginalized groups through education, healthcare, and access to essential services. At the same time, governance and economic transformation will remain central, with reforms aimed at building resilient institutions, fostering private sector growth, and ensuring greater accountability in service delivery. Innovation, data-driven solutions, and South-South cooperation will be leveraged to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring that no one is left behind.

The United Nations sincerely thanks the Government of Sierra Leone, partners, civil society, and the private sector for their unwavering collaboration. We especially commend the resilience of Sierra Leone's people, whose dedication to peace and progress inspires us all. Together, we show that transformative change is achievable when we unite for a sustainable and inclusive future.

Seraphine Wakana
UN Resident Coordinator
Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone Country Context

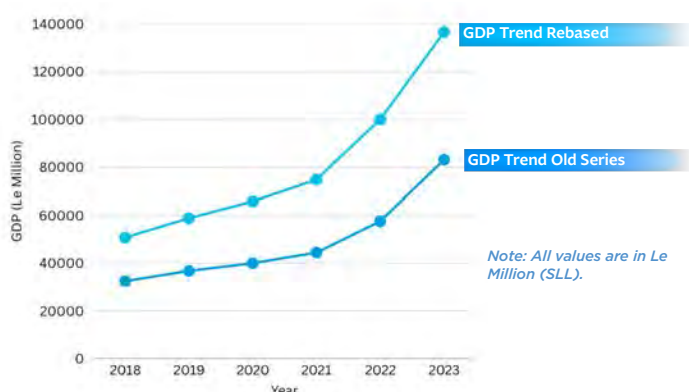


1.1 THE ECONOMY

Sierra Leone has witnessed a relatively steady growth in the period following the end of the civil conflict in 2002, outperforming the West Africa and Sub-Saharan averages. However, this era of high growth was short-lived due to adverse shocks including the Ebola epidemic in 2014 and 2015 and the COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, which resulted to significant reduction in its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), truncating the country's growth prospects in the short to medium term.

In 2024, Sierra Leone rebased its GDP, migrating from 2006 base year to 2018¹ base year. With the new base year, the Sierra Leone economy has expanded by 100 percent, from USD4 billion to USD8 billion, transitioning from an agrarian (rural) to services- based (modern) economy. This has changed the sectoral composition and contribution to the economy; making the services sector the largest contributor to the economy (46 percent), while the share of agriculture declined from 60 percent to 34 percent, and industry increased from 7 percent to 21 percent.

Comparative GDP Trends (2018–2023): Rebased vs. Old Series

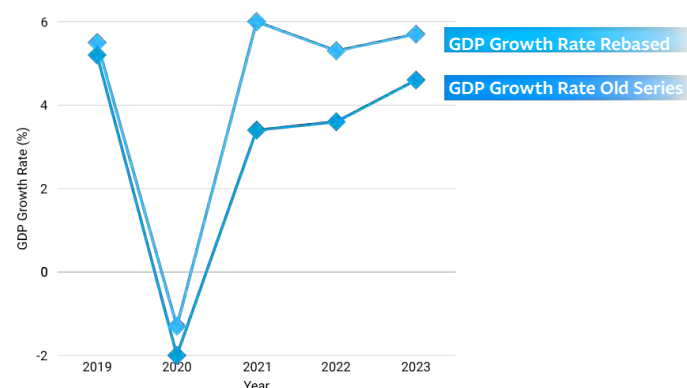


Source: STATS SL

Line Graph: Nominal Re-based GDP Vs Old GDP Trends



GDP Growth Rate (Old and New Series)



Source: STATS SL

Line Graph: Nominal Re-based GDP Vs Old GDP Growth Rate

The revised estimates indicate that the economy grew by 5.3 percent and 5.7 percent, in 2022 and 2023 respectively, with a slight decrease in growth of 4.4 percent in 2024². The economy is projected to continue to grow by 4.5 percent in 2025³ and the medium term due to investments and increased activities in agriculture and mining sectors. However, a full recovery has been curtailed by external shocks, including geopolitical conflicts and global economic shifts which translate to high inflationary pressures up to 55 percent in October 2023 and 47.4 percent in January 2024. Inflation has since declined to 7.1 percent in June 2025⁴, including a reduction in food inflation, which has declined to 4.63 percent.

It is important to note that the rebasing of the GDP has implications on key macroeconomic indicators such as debt and domestic revenue as a proportion of GDP.⁴ While debt figures as a percentage of GDP fell drastically – an indication of debt sustainability, revenue figures as a percentage of GDP are well below the 15-25 percent range for developing countries, indicating fiscal pressure on the national budget. Domestic revenue to GDP is estimated at 9.8 percent of GDP in 2025 from 10.2 percent in 2024. The reduction in the debt-to-GDP ratio does not necessarily translate to a reduction in the debt stock. Between 2024 and 2025, fiscal deficit has increased by 5 percentage points (from 3.5 percent in 2024 to 8.5 percent in 2025) largely due to an increase in repayments of domestic debt commitments.

1 Statistics Sierra Leone, 2024. Report on the Rebased GDP at 2018 Prices

2 Supplementary Government budget and statement of economic and financial policies for the financial year 2025

3 2025 supplementary budget speech - MOF

4 https://www.statistics.sl/images/StatisticsSL/Documents/cpi/2025/June_2025_CPI_Press_Release.pdf



1.2 SOCIAL

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Free Quality School Education Programme (FQSE)

The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has made notable strides over the past decades in enhancing the social well-being of its citizens. A key milestone is the Free Quality School Education Programme, launched in 2018, which has led to an increase in school enrolment across all levels—from pre-primary to senior secondary.⁶



Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR)

Significant progress has also been recorded in health outcomes. The maternal mortality rate declined sharply from 1,165 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2013 to 717 in 2019, and further to 443 in 2020. Similarly, the infant mortality rate dropped from 92 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013 to 71 in 2024.⁷ The under-five mortality rate also saw a substantial reduction, from 156 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013 to 122 in 2019,⁸ and down to 101 in 2024.⁹



Income Poverty

Despite these gains, income poverty remains a pressing challenge, with high rural (73.9 percent) - urban (34.3 percent) disparity¹⁰ as indicated in the 2018 Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey (SLIHS). As of 2024, approximately 32.7 percent of the population lived on less than US\$2.15 per person per day (2017 PPP).¹¹ Notably, female-headed households are statistically less likely to experience multidimensional poverty compared to male-headed households. Households with members who have attained secondary or higher education are also significantly less likely to be poor.¹² In terms of regional disparities, the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) in 2019 identified the poorest districts as Pujehun (0.500), Karene (0.473), Falaba (0.448), Moyamba (0.433), Tonkolili (0.418), and Bonthe (0.406)—all exceeding the national average MPI of 0.309.¹³



Labour Market Dynamics

Labour market dynamics have shifted as well. Labour force participation has declined for both men and women over the past two decades, with the gender gap widening from nearly zero in 2003 to 0.8 percentage points in 2023. Nearly 50 percent of women aged 15 and above are currently outside the labour force, compared to 44 percent of men in the same age group.¹⁴



Human Development Index (HDI)

Further, Sierra Leone has shown only a minor improvement in the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) score, with an increase of 0.077, since 2021. Sierra Leone's HDI value for 2024 is 0.400, which puts the country in the low human development category and keeps it ranked 184 out of 195 countries and territories.¹⁵

⁵ https://www.statistics.sl/images/StatisticsSL/Documents/gdp/gdp_2023/Rebased_GDP_Report_2018_base_year_and_revised_series.pdf#:~:text=after%20the%20rebasin%2C%20services%20show%20the%20main,the%202018%20base%20prices%20after%20the%20rebasin

⁶ https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/country-profile/Sierra%20Leone_SDG4-Profile.pdf

⁷ <https://www.globaldata.com/data-insights/macroeconomic/the-infant-mortality-rate-in-sierra-leone-218194/>

⁸ Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024 - 2030: Transformative Acceleration Agenda for Food Security, Human Capital Development and Job Creation

⁹ <https://data.unicef.org/country/sle/>

¹⁰ https://www.statistics.sl/images/StatisticsSL/Documents/SLIHS2018/SLIHS_2018_New/SLIHS_2018_One_Page_Poverty_Results.pdf

¹¹ <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/bae48ff2efc5a869546775b3f010735-0500062021/related/mpo-sle.pdf>

¹² Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024 - 2030: Transformative Acceleration Agenda for Food Security, Human Capital Development and Job Creation

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2024/322/article-A006->

¹⁵ Global MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX-UNDP- 2024



1.3 ENVIRONMENT



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Challenges to Rich Biodiversity and Natural Resources

Sierra Leone is endowed with rich biodiversity and natural resources, but its environment faces severe degradation due to deforestation, mining, and unsustainable land use. Once heavily forested, the country has lost significant tree cover - over 5600 hectares in 2025 alone¹⁶, contributing to carbon emissions and biodiversity loss. The country's tropical climate, with distinct wet and dry seasons, is increasingly affected by climate change, leading to erratic rainfall, rising temperatures, and more frequent extreme weather events such as floods and landslide in 2017 and subsequent flash floods in recent years.

Sierra Leone is among the most climate-vulnerable countries globally, ranking third in exposure to climate risks.¹⁷ Coastal erosion, sea-level rise, and unpredictable weather patterns threaten livelihoods, especially in agriculture and fisheries. In response, the government has adopted a National Climate Change Policy (2021)¹⁸ and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)¹⁹, focusing on renewable energy, climate-smart agriculture, and integrating climate resilience into national development. The country's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)²⁰ under the Paris Agreement is committed to both mitigation and adaptation and outlines its commitment to reducing emissions and enhancing adaptive capacity.

16 WFP Report on WAPFOR (2025)

17 Microsoft Word - Climate Change Policy-Final.docx

18 <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/sie214139.pdf>

19 <https://epa.gov.sl/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Sierra-Leone-National-Adaptation-Plan.pdf>

20 <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/210804%20125%20SL%20NDC%20%281%29.pdf>

21 [Preparedness-Response-and-Recovery-Plan-for-Sierra-Leone.pdf](#)



Disaster Risk Management (DRM)

The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) has been leading efforts on National Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Plan, which emphasizes early warning systems, community-based preparedness, and inclusive planning. The country faces multiple hazards - floods, landslides, droughts, and epidemics-exacerbated by climate change and rapid urbanization.²¹ Strengthening infrastructure, local capacity, and policy coordination remains critical to reducing vulnerability and building long-term resilience.



Overview of the 2025 Joint Work Plan (JWP)



Delivering the UNSDCF through the 2025 JWP

The 2025 Joint Work Plan (JWP) represents the operational roadmap for the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Sierra Leone, translating the strategic priorities of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2025–2030 into coordinated, results-driven actions and interventions. It reflects the collective commitment of the UN system to support national development priorities and accelerate progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Anchored on the three (3) strategic pillars of the UNSDCF, the JWP fosters inter-agency collaboration through joint programming, joint initiatives, and shared accountability mechanisms. As indicated in table 1 below, the total programmatic interventions for the UN in 2025 is 273, with a total budget of \$197.6 million, out of which 121 million is available, representing 61.2% coverage of required resources for the year. See the table.

Outcome	Output Area	2025 Programmatic Interventions	2025 Required Res.	2025 Available Res. (USD)	Funding Gap
Pillar 1: Food Systems, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change	Output 1.1: Food Systems	34	\$26.5m	\$24.6m	\$1.9m
	Output 1.2: Natural Resources Management	35	\$24.3m	\$23.9m	\$0.4m
	Output 1.3: Climate Change & DRM	13	1.4m	\$0.6171m	\$0.7829m
Pillar 1 Total		82	\$52.3m	\$49.1m	\$3.2m
Pillar 2: Human Capital, Essential Services and Employment	Output 2.1: Essential and Social Protection Services	101	\$108.2m	\$54.9m	\$53.3m
	Output 2.2: Livelihood Skills and Access to Finance	23	\$11.8m	\$7m	\$4.8m
	Output 2.3: Data, Energy, Digitalization, & Infrastructure	16	17.5m	\$6m	\$11.5m
Pillar 2 Total		140	\$137.4m	\$67.8m	\$69.6m
Pillar 3: Governance & Economic Transformation	Output 3.1: Economic Diversification	14	\$2.7m	\$1.6m	\$1.1m
	Output 3.2: Governance and Decentralization	20	\$3.1m	\$1m	\$2.1m
	Output 3.3: Peace, Justice and Human Rights	17	\$2.1m	\$1.4m	\$0.7m
Pillar 3 Total		51	\$7.8m	\$4m	\$3.8m

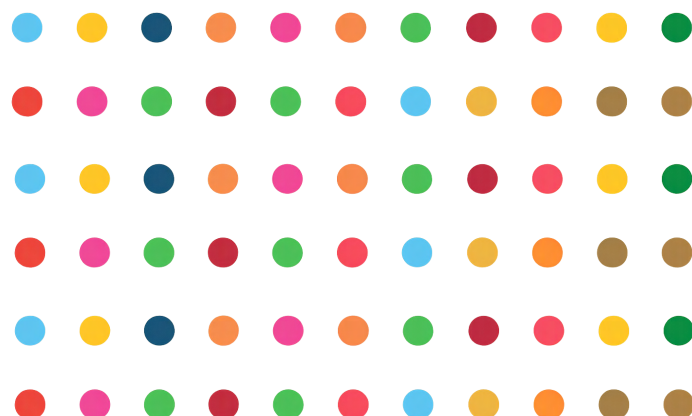
Table 1: Overview of the 2025 JWP



Key Results by CF Pillar (Jan-Jun 2025)



Pillar I Food systems, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change



Output 1.1: Farmers, fisherfolks, and nature-based SMEs adopt sustainable practices and standards and benefit from increased access to technology, finance, information, and facilities for improved income, livelihoods, and production of diverse, safe and nutritious food.



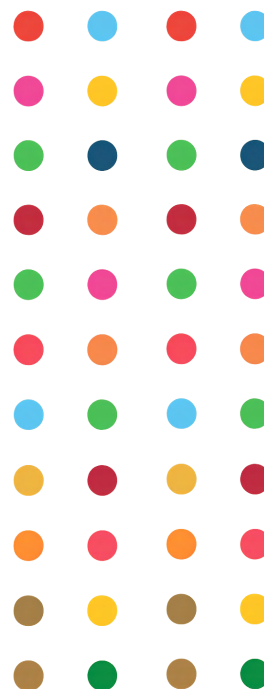
© UN Sierra Leone

The UN is promoting a more resilient and food-secure future by empowering rural communities with the skills and resources to thrive in a changing climate. Over 5,000 households, many led by women, are now better equipped to adopt sustainable farming practices. For instance, in Bonthe, 1,200 households are cultivating the nutrient-rich, drought-tolerant, Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSPs), thanks to training in 40 new Farmer Field Schools. Across Moyamba, Kenema, and Bo, another 3,800 women smallholder farmers in 20 agricultural cooperatives have enhanced their expertise in climate-smart techniques, agribusiness, and financial literacy. For some women, this has created the opportunity for better record-keeping. With the establishment of peer networking platforms, over 100 women now using a WhatsApp group to share real-time market prices, directly boosting their economic independence. The distribution of improved, drought-resistant seeds to 2,000 of these women further ensures they can look forward to more productive harvests and stronger livelihoods for their families.

UN under the Salone Access to Finance Project contracted GTB and RCB to deploy financial access points through bank agents to improving access to financial services for underserved populations. To date, 205 Financial access points have been established in Kono, Portloko, Kenema, Bo, Moyamba, Kambia, Falaba, Bombali and Koinadugu districts providing financial services to 8,119 (3547 F & 4572 M) rural farmers, Agric MSMEs and youths.

The UN has established four Rice Cooperatives and Boards in Pujehun and Bonth districts, which was complemented by strengthening the capacity of front-line staff in cooperative development and management, food safety and quality Management. About 3,926 farmers have also benefitted from conditional cash transfer through IVS development and rehabilitation.

UN supported the design and piloting of the first climate risk insurance product aimed at protecting farming communities from climate-related financial risks. The product has been approved by the regulator Sierra Leone Insurance Commission (SLICOM) and the product launched. To date, 1,200 farmers nationwide have signed up to the climate risk insurance product.



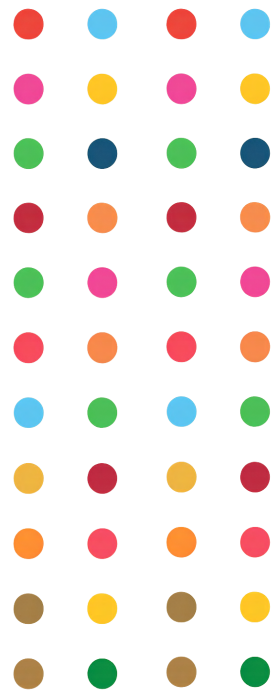
5,000+ rural households empowered through climate-smart agriculture



3,800 women smallholder farmers trained in agribusiness, finance & climate techniques



1,200 farmers signed up nationwide Climate Risk Insurance



**4000 household
targetted energy-efficient fish dryers**



**1,650 households benefit from
Irrigated Inland Valley Swamps**



**3,926 farmers supported
through conditional cash
transfers for irrigated farming**

As of June 2025, a total of 4000 households has been targeted to adopt environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient technology through access to energy efficient fish dryers in two Islands (Plantain and Yelibuya islands) in Moyamba and Kambia Districts respectively. Already, a contractor has been selected for the construction of the stoves and project sites have been identified in both communities. This will support the women beneficiaries to adopt green energy and reduce their dependence on forest resources such as wood, charcoal and mangroves for fish drying. This support, which is a pilot, will enhance household resilience to climate shocks, reduce environmental degradation of mangrove, and contribute to more sustainable livelihoods.

In a bid to promote efficient water management and year-round farming practices, the UN supported the development of 150 hectares of irrigated Inland Valley Swamps, which is expected to benefit up to 1,650 households. In addition, the UN has established four Rice Cooperatives and Boards in Pujehun and Bonthe districts, which was complemented by strengthening the capacity of front-line staff in cooperative development and management, food safety and quality Management. Farmer Based Organisations /Cooperative will produce quality rice for market competitiveness and consumption, and post-harvest loss will be well managed. About 3,926 farmers have also benefitted from conditional cash transfer through Inland Valley Swamps (IVS) development and rehabilitation.



© UN Sierra Leone

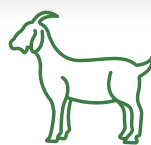
In support of the Feed Salone initiative, the UN promoted livestock production across the country, with a focus on small ruminants. Between January-June 2025, the UN in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security distributed 9,910 poultry birds, 4,935 live goats, 73,500kgs of poultry starter feed, and vaccinated 51,462 small ruminants across the country.

On horticulture, the UN through three (3) out-growers' schemes comprising of 440 vegetable farmers strengthened the vegetables value chain focusing on tomatoes, onions, pepper and other leafy vegetables. These pilot schemes are expected to strengthen the capacity of the farmers to produce at the required levels.

To enhance post-harvest processing and handling, the UN has established a solar-powered cold storage refrigeration facility which is expected to support 750 women households by reducing post-harvest losses and improving food preservation using clean energy. Through the establishment of 10 rice milling hubs (where), 8,670 households gained access to improved post-harvest processing, reducing losses, encouraging sustainable value addition, and supporting cleaner production chains.

In addition, the UN has facilitated the use of appropriate technologies in the processing of red palm oil across 4 districts - Bombali, Port Loko, Bo and Kenema. Compared to the old stomping method, which is labor-intensive, this new technology is expected to increase oil palm production yields by 33%, hence reducing losses during processing.

To reduce the vulnerability of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in agriculture, the UN is supporting the development of climate-risk insurance schemes tailored with a focus on water systems and decentralized energy sectors. This is complemented by awareness-raising across communities and on risk mitigation strategies. Technical and Policy Support (TPS) tools to assess climate vulnerability across three sectors are being developed.



51,462 small ruminants vaccinated nationwide



9,910 poultry birds & 4,935 goats distributed



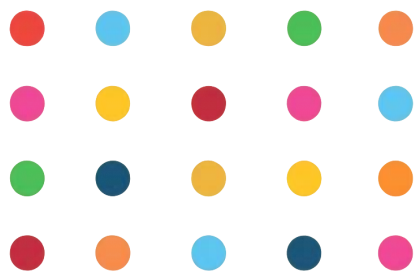
440 vegetable farmers supported through 3 out-grower schemes



Solar-powered cold storage benefits 750 women



Vaccination Programme small ruminants across the country © UN Sierra Leone



Output 1.2: Government and community stakeholders ensure development and enforcement of laws and policies, monitoring, and management systems, to effectively manage waste and protect natural resources and valuable ecosystems.

With technical and financial support from UN, Sierra Leone's Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation (MoWRS) has finalized the Climate-Resilient Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Policy, to guide sustainable and climate-resilient WASH service delivery nationwide.

Complementing this, the Ministry of Environment is leading the development of new climate change legislation, currently in the stakeholder consultation phase across all 16 districts. These consultations aim to embed community perspectives, foster inclusiveness, and build national ownership.

In addition, the Environment Protection Agency-Sierra Leone (EPA-SL) is spearheading the update process of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0), having completed the first phase of national consultations in sixteen districts. These initiatives aim to strengthen climate governance, enhancing public awareness, and laying the groundwork for effective, community-driven implementation of climate resilient policies.

The UN is also supporting the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change through the EPA to establish a national carbon market office and carbon market registry, including a regulatory framework to track the procedures for the development, authorization, issuance and the sales of carbon credit.

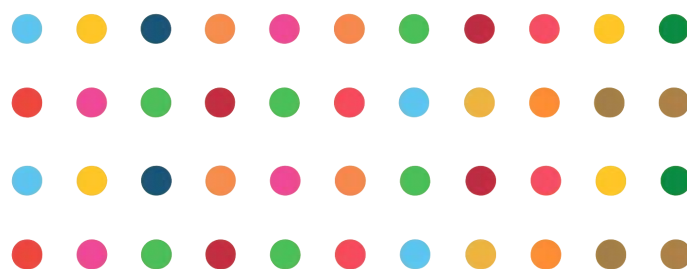
The UN is supporting the construction of solar-powered water supply systems in 16 rural communities across Port Loko, Moyamba, Bonthe, Pujehun, and Kenema Districts. Once completed, these systems are expected to provide safe water to over 55,000 people, including women and children.



UN Water Security Project promoting sustainable water conservation. © UN Sierra Leone

Through a highly competitive selection process, the UN is promoting local solutions to tackle plastic pollution in Sierra Leone. Already, a promising group of innovators and organizations have been identified, bringing forth a range of solutions from advanced recycling technologies to scalable, community-based approaches. These pre-vetted innovators are now positioned to receive tailored support and funding, a crucial step in transforming their forward-thinking ideas into practical, sustainable enterprises that will strengthen the nation's resource recovery systems and address plastic waste.

The UN have completed formalization and strengthening of Sierra Leone's National Multi-stakeholder platform (NMSP) on Land and capacity training of 71 stakeholders. It promotes deeper and shared understanding of the status, progress, challenges, and opportunities related to Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs) in land governance at village, chiefdom, district, and national levels.



16 rural communities provided solar-powered water supply



55,000+ people to benefit



**Port Loko | Moyamba |
Bonthe | Pujehun |
Kenema**

Output 1.3: Gender-responsive prevention, preparedness, early warning, and response systems mitigate the impact of environmental, climate change and other disasters, especially in coastal communities and informal settlements.

The UN through funding has facilitated the introduction of Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) approaches in 17 coastal fishing communities. This intervention builds community resilience against climate-related shocks.

To track deforestation trends, promote preparedness and generate reliable data, the UN supported the periodic forest cover monitoring of the Western Area Peninsula National Park. Reports produced have provided government authorities and the public with evidence-based insights revealing rapid deforestation within the park boundaries.

To enhance water quality testing in the communities, the UN provided water testing equipment to the EPA and supported the strengthening of data collection and early warning systems through the donation of tablets to the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA). The UN also established a National Disaster Management Tool Bank to enhance preparedness and response for environmental emergencies. Additionally, to mobilize resources for hard-to-reach communities, the UN has established village savings and loan schemes for the community disaster management committees to ensure they are adequately prepared to respond to local emergencies.



© UN Sierra Leone

The capacity of local government in Moyamba and Kambia Districts to respond to climate change has been strengthened, directly addressing the critical link between climate impacts and human mobility. Local Councils in these districts, supported by the UN through their core security and coordination committees, are now developing new policies and by-laws. This process will ensure that local government is equipped to manage climate-related migration, enhancing security and resilience for their communities.

To contribute to strengthening the Government's preparedness and response to disasters, the UN with in collaboration with the EPA conducted a Climate Vulnerability study to assess the resilience of two coastal island communities - Plantain and Yelibuya Islands in Moyamba and Kambia respectively. The study has found the two communities to be highly vulnerable to climate change challenges mainly due to erosion and loss of land, heavy winds, flooding, sea level rise, loss of property due to flooding, farmland loss, livelihood depreciation through low fish catch and migration of people from the islands. These findings will guide targeted interventions to these communities.



Trained community volunteers banking and constructing gabion at Dwarzack communities. © UN Sierra Leone

Challenges, Risks & Lessons Learned for Pillar I



Limited Accessibility

Island and riverine communities were difficult to access during the rainy season (April–September), causing delays in implementation.



Contracting Delays

Delays in the contracting and /or finalisation of project proposals and contracts.



Resource Constraints

Insufficient resources to meet the scale of food insecurity led to some projects being placed on hold.



Data Gaps

Lack of adequate climate data hindered progress in developing NDC 3.0, operationalising the carbon market, and completing national inventories for transparency reporting.



Environmental Degradation

Ongoing land grabbing, unregulated logging, and slash-and-burn activities within protected areas threatened sustainability goals.



Low Adoption of Early Warning Systems

Vulnerable communities showed limited uptake of early warning messaging, affecting preparedness and response efforts.



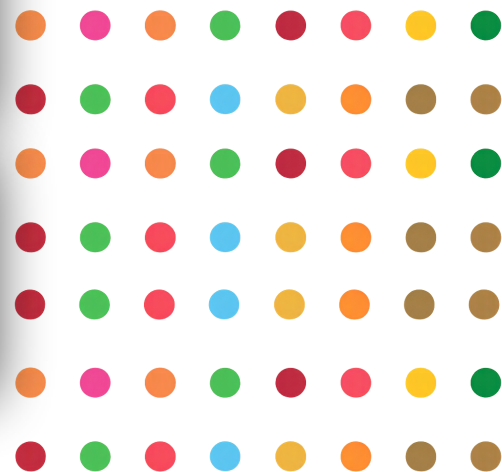
Unpredictable Weather Patterns

Seasonal climate variability reduced productivity and impacted livelihoods, particularly in agriculture-dependent areas.

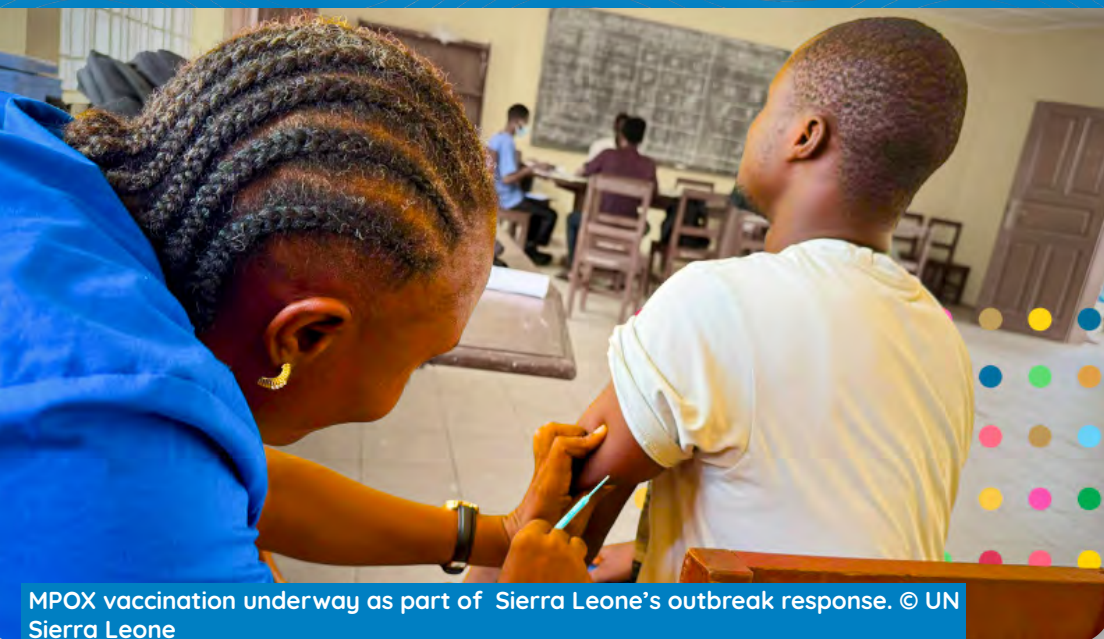
Key Results by CF Pillar (Jan-Jun 2025)



Pillar II Human Capital, Essential Services and Employment



Output 2.1: People, especially the most vulnerable groups, have increased access to, and use of, quality essential, and social protection services which are participatory, gender-responsive and inclusive, including during emergencies



MPOX vaccination underway as part of Sierra Leone's outbreak response. © UN Sierra Leone



Advancing Universal Health Coverage and Promoting Healthy Lives for All

The joint support of UN agencies to the Ministry of Health (MoH) has contributed to increased vaccine coverage for Penta3 which soared to 98 percent (above the annual target of 91 percent for UNSDCF Pillar2 in 2025) across all 16 districts with the cold chain coverage sustained above 90 percent. Health preventive systems strengthening has enabled the country to now deliver 21 antigens including the successful rollouts of malaria vaccine, HPV, Covid-19, Ebola and MPOX Vaccines.

The UN provided strong collective response to Sierra Leone's MPOX outbreak through coordination, surveillance, clinical care, infection prevention and control, vaccination, risk communication, and community engagement. The UN has supported government for mobilization for more than 200,000 doses of MPOX vaccines. Sierra Leone was among the high prevalence countries of MPOX cases (4,810 cases and 37 deaths recorded by end of June 2025). These efforts have led to vaccination of 147,991 high risk people and front-line personnel. As a result of improved clinical care access and more public awareness, there has been a recent decline in confirmed new cases from more than 150 to lower than 50 per day, between May-June 2025.~ In response to a surge in mpox cases, UN mobilized a rapid response deployment to support national capacity building and outbreak response in collaboration with the MoH. Technical support was provided through the drafting of a Point of Entry All-Hazards Plan, which was shared with the National Public Health Agency (NPHA) and a review of the national training curriculum for Point of Entry and border health.~



98% Penta3 coverage achieved
—surpassing the 91% national target.



147,991 people vaccinated with the MPOX vaccine helping cut new cases by two-thirds in one month.



90% survival rate for premature babies in 17 care units.

In addition, in response to the MPoX outbreak, UN conducted a Population Mobility Mapping (PMM) exercise at three districts (Port Loko, Kambia, and the Western Urban Area).

On Neonatal mortality, one of the most remarkable milestones of the first six months of 2025 was the drastic increase of the national average survival rate for premature newborns in 17 Special Care Baby Units (SCBUs), which reached 90 percent. This achievement was supported by improved functionality of medical equipment, which rose from 56 percent in 2024 to 70 percent in 2025, following focused maintenance efforts, ongoing procurement of power resilient equipment, supporting establishment of a biomedical unit in MoH and ongoing mentorship support to biomedical technicians.

A total of 129,006 Antenatal Care (ANC) clients received HIV testing services (HTS) and a treatment initiation rate of 51 percent among HIV positive pregnant women, through support to the implementation of the national elimination of mother-to-child transmission (eMTCT) integrated strategy.~



Fistula care programme at antenatal and postnatal clinics in Bo, Sierra Leone. © UN Sierra Leone

UN support for improving maternal health was very impactful during the period under review. Sierra Leone has experienced a drastic decline in Maternal mortality Ratio from 443 to 354 per 100,000 live births between 2020 and 2023 (UN Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group). About 99.4 percent of the childbirths occurred in the health facilities (DHIS2), benefiting from adequately skilled birth attendants, and 94 percent of mothers who gave birth received postnatal care services within 24 hours after childbirth. The UN supported capacity building of 112 health workers in various life-saving interventions such as prevention and management of postpartum hemorrhage, the leading cause of maternal mortality in the country, respectful maternity care, emergency obstetric and newborn care. Additionally, 15 health facilities across six districts were strengthened to provide maternal and newborn health services through the provision of essential equipment and training of 95 frontline health workers.

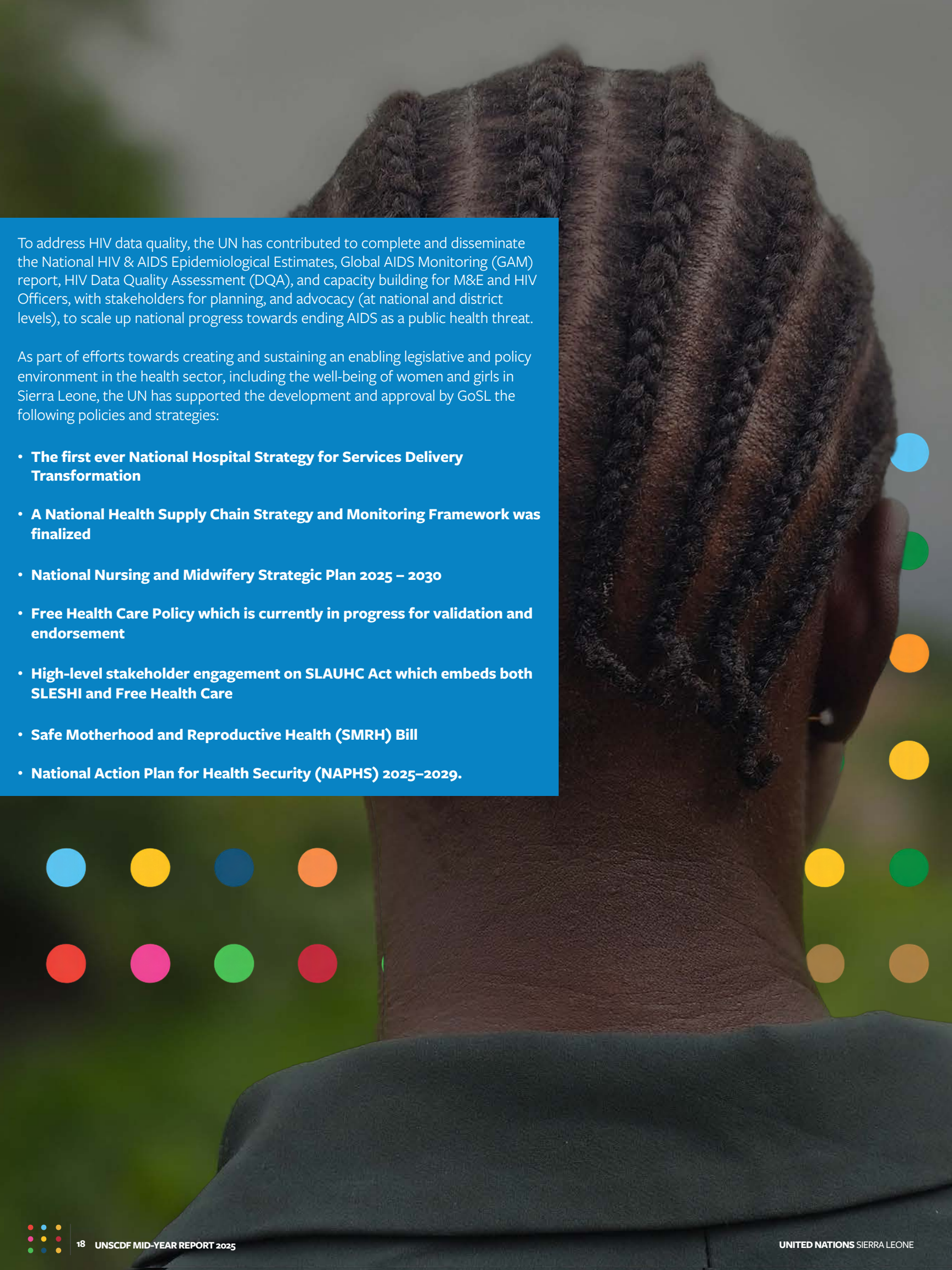
In a bid to institutionalize fistula management within the public health system, 80 community health workers were trained on obstetric fistula prevention, case identification and appropriate referral, which led to 10 fistula patients receiving successful fistula repair surgeries at the Bo Government hospital.

As part of UN's support to life saving from child malnutrition through uninterrupted availability of therapeutic supplies, a total of 28,704 malnourished children aged 6 - 24 months received treatment for Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), more than doubling the number reached in the same period in 2024 and screening coverage rose from 11 percent to 17 percent compared to 2024.

To accelerate Government of Sierra Leone's efforts toward universal access to family planning, maternal health and post-abortion care, the UN has facilitated a 20% increase in the number of FP clients assessing modern contraceptives, compared to the same period in 2024. The initiative has also reached 60 percent of health facilities on post-abortion care.

As part of its commitment to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), a major milestone has been the establishment of cervical cancer screening and treatment centers in 13 out of Sierra Leone's 16 districts, resulting in screening of 144 women at Kenema Government Hospital and targeted capacity-building initiatives for local health workers. The plan is to achieve full national coverage by the end of the year. This expansion is significantly improving access to life-saving services and reducing the burden of cervical cancer among women, particularly in underserved areas.

To improve regulatory oversight and contribute to safeguarding public health through reliable quality control practices, the UN strengthened the country's pharmaceutical quality assurance systems through the upgrade of equipment valued at \$542,000. The initiative will support the detection of substandard and falsified medicines in the country. Additionally, a feasibility Study has been conducted on the proposed New Pharma-grade Warehouse (NPW) for Ministry of Health which provides adequate storage space and equipment, meeting international standards for storage of pharmaceutical and allied products.



To address HIV data quality, the UN has contributed to complete and disseminate the National HIV & AIDS Epidemiological Estimates, Global AIDS Monitoring (GAM) report, HIV Data Quality Assessment (DQA), and capacity building for M&E and HIV Officers, with stakeholders for planning, and advocacy (at national and district levels), to scale up national progress towards ending AIDS as a public health threat.

As part of efforts towards creating and sustaining an enabling legislative and policy environment in the health sector, including the well-being of women and girls in Sierra Leone, the UN has supported the development and approval by GoSL the following policies and strategies:

- **The first ever National Hospital Strategy for Services Delivery Transformation**
- **A National Health Supply Chain Strategy and Monitoring Framework was finalized**
- **National Nursing and Midwifery Strategic Plan 2025 – 2030**
- **Free Health Care Policy which is currently in progress for validation and endorsement**
- **High-level stakeholder engagement on SLAUHC Act which embeds both SLESHI and Free Health Care**
- **Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health (SMRH) Bill**
- **National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) 2025–2029.**



Achieving Universal Access to Quality Education and Fostering Lifelong Learning and Skills



Primary Girl Students, Sierra Leone. © UN Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is one of the African countries that has achieved a high level of access to basic education (Net enrollment ratio is around 94 percent) including a very good gender parity in primary education. However, the quality of education remains low. By mid-2025, UN's technical and financial support contributed to enhanced education data ecosystem through an updated Education Management Information System (EMIS) policy, a national Foundational Learning Data Strategy, and a large-scale learning assessment strategy. Data use capacity at all levels was enhanced through training, deployment, and equipping of 220 additional School Quality Assurance Officers (SQAOs) with the necessary logistics. ~

Foundational learning has been advanced through updated P1 numeracy materials distributed to 5,520 government and government-assisted primary schools, reaching 527,982 learners (51 percent); and the development of new Teaching & Learning Materials (TLM) for Po and P2. A comprehensive life skills framework was integrated into five subjects of the senior secondary curriculum to support students' transition to adulthood.

Through the National School Feeding Programme, the UN contributed to improving access to education for school children, supporting a total of 257,262 primary and pre-primary school children (125,315 boys; 131,947 girls) with daily nutritious school meals across five targeted districts. The school meals contribute to improving learning outcomes as it enhances school enrollment, attendance and retention.

UN is contributing to improve the learning environments and to increase access to quality education in Sierra Leone, within the access to education project supported by the Government of China through the Global Development and South-South Cooperation Fund (GDF) which will provide 14,700 sets of classroom furniture to basic, secondary, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and tertiary institutions for 13 districts across the country.

A Social and Behaviors Change Communication framework was introduced to address School-Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) through a multi-sectoral, preventive school-based approach. Disaster preparedness was improved with national and school-level Disaster Risk Management (DRM) guidelines and pre-positioned emergency supplies.

A digital system was developed to support girls' reintegration into formal education after dropping out. This tool enables effective identification, tracking, and support throughout their learning journey. To ensure its success, 36 Non-Formal Education (NFE) staff were trained in system use, data management, and learner support, enhancing efforts to maintain girls' education continuity.

Through UN support 50 schools in Koinadugu and Pujehun received teaching and learning materials on child and adolescent health and life skills (CAHLS). As a result these schools will fully operationalize child and Adolescent Health and Life Skills in September 2025. A further, 40 schools in Koinadugu district have benefited from teacher training on CAHLS. One hundred and twenty (120) teachers participated in a three day in-service training to build knowledge on SRHR, gender equality and emerging issues such as drug and alcohol abuse. Furthermore, the training supported teachers to utilise new learner led pedagogical techniques. These schools will be reached with teaching and learning materials by September 2025. In order to support scale up of the curriculum a costed implementation plan has been created which provides a framework for MBSSE to ensure every primary and junior secondary school is reached with CAHLS by 2030.



220 additional School Quality Assurance Officers (SQAOs) with the necessary logistics. ~



257,262 primary and pre-primary school children benefited from National School Feeding Programme



14,700 sets of classroom furniture to basic, secondary, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET)



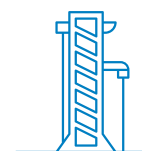
Community members gather to celebrate the declaration of four Chiefdoms as Open Defecation Free, promoting dignity, health, and well-being through improved sanitation in commemoration of World Toilet Day. © UN Sierra Leone



24 schools receiving inclusive facilities, including gender-segregated and disability-accessible toilets.



UN introducing Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction in 17 coastal fishing communities to boost climate resilience



UN supported solar-powered irrigation and 40 boreholes for 17 vegetable farms in seven districts



Fulfilling the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation for Health and Well-being

Through technical and financial support from the UN, the Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation (MoWRS) has finalized the Climate-Resilient WASH Policy. In parallel, the national strategy for Community-Based Operation and Maintenance (CLOM) of WASH facilities was successfully launched, promoting sustainability through community ownership and engagement.

The UN supported the construction of 16 solar-powered water supply systems in 16 rural communities across Port Loko, Moyamba, Bonthe, Pujehun, and Kenema Districts. Once completed, these systems are expected to provide safe water to over 55,000 people, including women and children.

In the area of sanitation and hygiene, integrated interventions focusing on ending open defecation, hygiene promotion, and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) are ongoing in 16 chiefdoms in Kambia, Port Loko, Moyamba, Bonthe, Pujehun, Kenema, and Kailahun Districts. These efforts have enabled more than 400,000 people to gain access to basic sanitation services, significantly reducing open defecation practices.

Construction of WASH facilities in schools is underway. A total of 24 schools, including nine (9) Early Childhood Development (ECDs) are receiving inclusive facilities, including gender-segregated and disability-accessible toilets. In parallel, 11 Peripheral Health Units (PHUs) are being equipped with essential WASH infrastructure, including laundry and solid waste management systems.

UN is facilitating the introduction of Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) approach in 17 coastal fishing communities. This intervention builds community resilience against climate-related shocks.

UN has supported the construction of small scale solar powered irrigation systems and drilling of 40 boreholes for 17 vegetable farms across seven districts of Moyamba, Bonthe, Pujehun, Portloko, Kambia, Koinadugu, and Western Area.



Building Inclusive and Adaptive Social Protection Systems to Break the Cycle of Poverty

In January 2025, the UN supported the Ministry of Social Welfare to push for the enactment of the country's first Social Protection Bill, establishing a comprehensive legal framework for social protection. In partnership with the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) and ActionAid, the UN rolled out the first round of cash transfers to adolescent girls and their families in Kambia District under the cash+ programme for adolescent girls, an initiative focused on preventing child marriage and teenage pregnancy. Nearly 3,000 adolescent girls will benefit from quarterly cash transfers over the course of one year, helping to meet their essential needs.

To strengthen gender-based violence risk mitigation, a Memorandum of Understanding is being developed after a thorough and inclusive stakeholder consultation. The MoU will bridge gaps in referral systems and will serve as a critical step in ensuring that social protection systems are inclusive, responsive and equipped to better respond to and refer cases of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). Also, efforts are underway to strengthen social protection for persons with disabilities through national assessments.



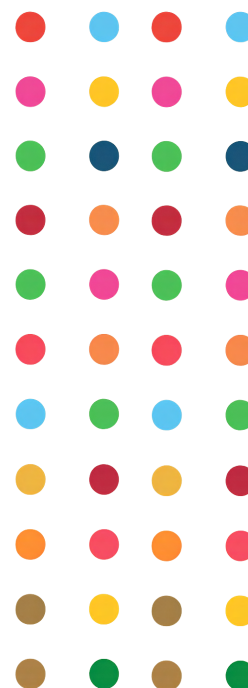
Upholding the Rights of Children and Advancing Gender Equality for All

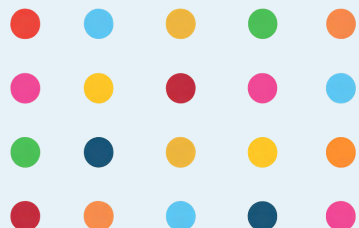
On strengthening legislative and legal frameworks around gender equality and child rights, the UN supported Parliament to approve The Professional Social Work Regulatory Act and the Child Rights Act 2025, including the Cabinet approval of the National Policy on Diversion and Alternatives to Detention for Children.

As of July 2025, a total of 13,500 girls aged 12–17, in eight (8) districts have been equipped with Life Skills, delivered by peer mentors in safe spaces. The life skills training is part of a “package” of interventions which, through the focus on safety and well-being of girls, sexual & reproductive health, communication and GBV, aims to reduce child marriage and teenage pregnancy.

With UN technical and financial support, about 389 SGBV survivors (360 Female, 29 Male) received a range of case management services including psychosocial counselling, medical examinations, legal advice and wider support for survivors via referral channels. 16 Frontline Service Providers have increased capacity on relevant SGBV frameworks and guidelines including handling disclosure, SGBV response principles, risk management, national referral protocol, child protection, safeguarding, Psychosocial Support Services and wellness for improved Survivor-Centered Service Delivery.

Further initiatives involved the strengthening of the capacity of 250 traditional leaders on the legal provisions of the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Act 2022 and Customary Land Rights Act 2022, clarifying their roles in protecting women's rights within customary systems. Community engagement efforts also raised awareness of these laws among 35,000 people (25,000 women and 10,000 men) through podcasts, radio dramas, and town hall meetings.





**250 traditional leaders trained on
GEWE Act 2022 & Customary Land
Rights Act 2022**



**Gender Action Plans reviewed
across 28 ministries**



**428 returned migrants received
psychosocial counseling &
prevention support**

To accelerate the implementation of the GEWE Act 2022, the UN supported Sierra Leone's government in reviewing Gender Action Plans across 28 ministries, ensuring alignment with national priorities and integrating SMART gender indicators and resource mapping. Civic Education Manual on the Customary Land Rights Act 2022 and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act 2022 was developed and introduced, serving as pivotal tool for community engagement and capacity of GBV stakeholders.

As of June 2025, UN has provided assistance to 50 (female) victims of trafficking of Sierra Leonean returned migrants, facilitated family tracing for nine (9) unaccompanied children and provided medical assistance to about 29 migrants. Also, in the period under review, 428 returned migrants (female 177, male 251) had gone through psycho-social counseling, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and anti-drug prevention sessions jointly provided by UN and Government.

Significant progress was made in preventing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and supporting survivors, with 185 individuals receiving comprehensive services through seven actively supported One-Stop Centers. Additionally, the "Men End FGM Movement" was launched to accelerate the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and 20 government and CSO partners were trained in community mobilization techniques to promote FGM abandonment.



UN participants at capacity-building workshop on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), aimed at strengthening the well-being of migrants and host communities in Sierra Leone.
© UN Sierra Leone

Output 2.2: People, especially women and youth, have improved labour market-driven skills and increased financial inclusion for equitable and decent employment and business development opportunities.

UN, in close collaboration with the Governments of Sierra Leone and Japan, officially inaugurated the state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence for Automotive Training at Freetown Polytechnic, marking a significant milestone in tackling youth unemployment and addressing critical skills gap within Sierra Leone's automotive sector. To date, the Automotive and Entrepreneurship Program, supported by the UN has successfully trained 149 participants (28.2 percent female) in entrepreneurship and 50 in automotive technical skills, demonstrating strong progress towards the goal of 400 graduates. In addition, 25 (7 male and 18 female) returned migrants also participated in a twenty-two-day automotive maintenance skill training at the center for excellence, Freetown Polytechnic, Kissy.

With UN support, the quality of TVET programme delivery and management is being enhanced through the enrolment of 25 TVET Managers (including principals of Government Technical Institutions, private training institutions, and ministry staff) and 30 TVET Tutors in specialized training. The training focuses on employer satisfaction and competency-based curriculum development, equipping participants to design industry-relevant, market-driven training programmes that improve the employability of TVET graduates.

With support from the UN, about 250 young women and girls were identified and enrolled in an upskilling programme delivered by the Armed Forces Technical and Education College (AFTEC). The 250 young women are being up-skilled in non-traditional and male dominated fields of Building and Construction, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Installation and Renewable Energy. Up to 127 women owned Very Small Enterprises (VSEs) in rice value chain have been identified and trained by Business Development Services provider in business management.

In a bid to support a national framework on career guidance and counselling, training materials and ToT for counsellors, the UN supported the development of a Terms of Reference (TOR) and the recruitment of a consultant for the development of the framework.

As of June 2025, with the technical and financial support of UN, about 379 young people have been supported with access to market-driven skills.

Through a four-day in-country capacity building, 15 public debt managers were equipped with practical skills in innovative financing tools such as green bonds, climate-linked instruments, and blended finance. This knowledge transfer also introduced the fundamentals of sovereign credit ratings, which are essential for accessing low-cost capital to fund social investments. In addition, UN conducted a technical assessment of the domestic tax system, supporting efforts to boost tax compliance and efficiency under the Medium-Term Revenue Strategy (MTRS).

Within the technical and financial support of the UN, a total of 271 young women has been supported to increase their skills and knowledge in using digital technologies and e-commerce for their business development.

UN has provided technical and financial support to ensure returnees have the basic skills to start and run their businesses as part of their reintegration support; a five-day Business Skill Training (BST) was provided to 246 (156 male and 90 female) returned migrants under this reporting period. This skills enhancement programmes will contribute to scaling down the vulnerability trap on these returned migrants especially women within the communities.

In Kailahun, Kenema, Bo, Bombali, Kambia, Portloko, Falaba, Kono, Moyamba, Portloko, and Koinadugu, 6,573 (3,278 F & 3,295 M), have been trained on digital and financial literacy skills. The training has enhanced their financial and business management skills.



One of 25 returnees graduates from Freetown Polytechnic's automotive training, empowered with new skills. ©I UN Sierra Leone

Output 2.3: People, especially in rural and hard-to-reach areas, have access to inclusive, gender-responsive data, digital solutions, technology, clean energy, and other infrastructure



A female-headed household receives a solar unit as part of UN-supported efforts to improve safety, productivity, and access to electricity in rural Sierra Leone. © UN Sierra Leone

Through technical and financial support from the UN, about 2,183 female headed households in selected communities across Falaba, Kambia, Moyomba, Pujehun, Bonthe, and Western Area Rural have been provided with solar solutions thereby improving their safety and connectivity enabling longer hours of production. Also, about 295 health facilities, including 96 Peripheral Health Units (PHUs) from Bonthe, Falaba, Bo, and Koinadugu, and 205 schools have been solarized providing reliable and efficient electricity and 24 hours health services. Around 320,000 people (students and patients) are benefitting from the stand-alone systems.

During the first half of 2025, UN completed the construction, installation and commissioning of a 1MW solar mini-grid in Moyamba Town. Around 500 households are connected to mini-grid electricity, an additional 2500 households are expected to be connected to electricity. It is anticipated that around 25,000 people (household, commercial, patients and public institutions) will benefit from the electricity supply. UN supported the Sierra Leone Electricity and Water Regulatory Commission (EWRC) to set up a web-based reporting platform to manage the mini-grid performance information and reports. UN has completed civil works and procurement processes for the installation of six (6) mini-grids in Bo district, targeted to be completed by September 2025.

The UN through the Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) supported development of the Sierra Leone Nursing and Midwifery Council (SLNMC) digital database platform - a web-based portal, by revamping the Council's website. This platform provides a comprehensive overview of the nursing and midwifery health workforce lifecycle, from entry into training, examination, licensing and through to practice. Digitalizing these processes and records improves accessibility and reliability, fostering increased accountability and visibility of the workforce.

As of June 2025, a total of 13 Business Support Organizations (BSOs), Tech and Innovation Hubs have been supported to improve performance and increase capacity in service delivery. A comprehensive mapping of the Sierra Leonean tech ecosystem was conducted, identifying key capacity-building priorities. In response, the capacity of 23 participants (48 percent women) from the 13 BSOs and tech hubs were strengthened.

Challenges, Risks & Lessons Learned for Pillar II



Reduced Global Aid

Global funding cuts are limiting UN support to SDG progress. UN reprioritization is needed within Pillar 2 outcomes.



Low Domestic Financing

Limited national funds weaken service delivery and HR capacity. Vulnerable populations face reduced access to essential services. Scaling innovative strategies remains a challenge.



Supply Chain Bottlenecks

Delays in key supplies affect timely service delivery.



Data Limitations

Lack of current population data hinders accountability. Evidence-based planning and coordination are constrained.



Climate & Environmental Risks

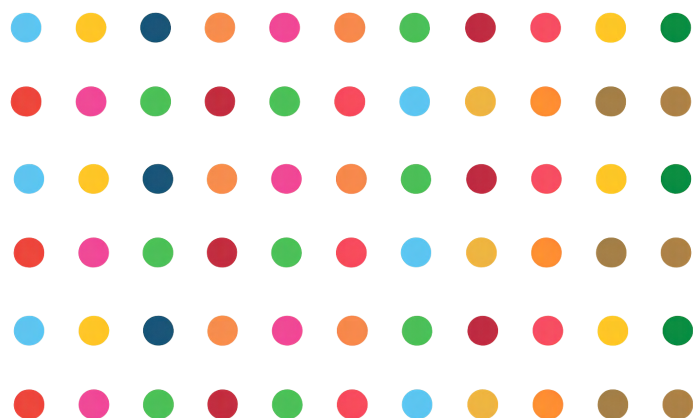
Weather unpredictability affects energy and infrastructure. Climate change threatens basic service sustainability. More investment is needed in environmental safeguarding.



Key Results by CF Pillar (Jan-Jun 2025)



Pillar III Governance & Economic Transformation



Output 3.1: People, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups in hard-to-reach communities, benefit from coordinated and effective implementation of policies and strategies enabling social cohesion and economic transformation.



1 National Export Strategy validated and aligned with AfCFTA to boost regional trade integration.



150+ stakeholders engaged through global forums and national reforms to strengthen resource mobilization and credit rating readiness.



150 Women-led CSOs trained to lead advocacy and decision-making under the WPS agenda.

With UN technical and financial assistance to the Ministry of Trade and Industry, a new National Export Strategy has been developed and validated aimed at facilitating integration in regional trade, through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) – focused strategies. In addition, for effective coordination and implementation of AfCFTA, the UN supported the National Implementation Committee through capacity building and awareness raising.

The UN supported the National Investment Board (NIB) to develop an online portal to facilitate and harmonize business registration and held public-private dialogues to align their mandate and other registration bodies in the country, leveraging the SDGs Investor Map. This is aimed at enhancing Sierra Leone's business environment and its profile as an investment destination.

The UN enhanced coordination and action for resources mobilization and facilitated implementation of the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) through providing support to Government and CSOs to participate in the recent Financing for Development Conference, held in Seville, Spain.

Regarding Sierra Leone's readiness for national credit rating assessment and public debt management, oversight and public service efficiency, the UN supported the Ministry of Finance to host a scoping mission to assess its Sovereign ratings preparedness to open opportunities for mobilizing alternative resources.

To support Sierra Leone's Adaptation Incubator/Accelerator Programmes for private businesses in the Water, Energy and Food (WEF) sector, the UN has contracted a consultant to develop policy concepts and institutional models to operationalize structures with emphasis on community resilience and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) development

To design innovative financial products and services adapted to the needs of the most vulnerable populations, the UN in collaboration with the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (SMEDA) is developing financial instruments tailored for marginalized SMEs.

UN supported the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs (MoGCA) to develop and roll out implementation of the National Action Plan on the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda thereby amplifying their voices at community level for the full and equal participation of women in all forms of peace processes both at national and community levels.

Training has been provided to 150 Women focused CSOs on the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR1325)/Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Further capacity enhancement has been achieved through empowering coalition members to amplify their collective voice, strengthen advocacy, and enhance decision-making, through a mentorship programme, capacity building, and establishment of an Information Hub.

The UN supported CSO led coalition trained 1,685 in total (1125 women 560 men, including 3 PWDs) in conflict prevention and mitigation, raising awareness about drug use and domestic violence, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and improved counselling, psychosocial support, and medical services for survivors, ensuring greater accessibility and quality of care at the community level.

The UN has supported the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Produce Monitoring Board to review the Produce Inspection Act (Cap 185) developed in 1946 aimed at improving the regulatory framework for produce in Sierra Leone. The new legislation will include a comprehensive regulatory framework to standardise agricultural practices, promote sustainability, and enhance market access for Sierra Leone's tradable produce on the global stage and will support trade, agriculture and the environment. The new legislation will be tabled in Parliament by the Ministry of Trade and Industry for the enactment process.

The UN supported 271 young women to increase their skills and knowledge in using digital technologies and e-commerce for their business development. Skills acquired include digital freelancing, e-commerce, communications and design thinking for businesses.

In support of the National Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools, the UN has supported the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education to develop a digital identification and monitoring system to support the reintegration of vulnerable girls into formal education. To date 2,500 girls have been identified for return to school in four (4) pilot districts (Kambia, Koinadugu, Moyamba and Pujehun).

The UN supported the National Secretariat for the Reduction of Adolescent Pregnancy and Child Marriage to launch the National Strategy for the Reduction of Adolescent Pregnancy and Ending Child Marriage. This strategy provides a roadmap for the implementation of a multi-sectoral coordinated response to the reduction of adolescent pregnancy and child marriage.

The UN supported the Government of Sierra Leone to undertake a comprehensive review of its National Labour Migration Policy to address Migrant Workers' rights and adapt to the evolving national, regional, and global environment. This initiative aims to build a new consensual vision and direction for the policy, aligning it with national priorities and the global agenda for Migrant Workers.



2,500 girls identified for school reintegration in 4 districts through a UN-supported digital system.

Output 3.2: National and sub-national governance institutions have improved coordination mechanisms, transparent processes, efficient resource management, and evidence-based decision making for effective, gender-responsive service delivery.

To promote Aid Effectiveness and development Coordination, the UN supported the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED) to host one high-level Development Partners Committee (DEPAC) meeting and a national review of the Global Partnerships for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC), as multistakeholder processes to driving development cooperation and dialogue to deliver sustainable development.

Through UN support, the Ministry is also coordinating the INFF mechanism to support implementation of the key recommendations in the Development Financing Assessment report to strengthen domestic resource mobilization efforts of the country.

For the Population and Housing Census, the UN (with the US Census Bureau) supported Statistics Sierra Leone (Stats SL) to conduct an independent census readiness assessment mission, which provided recommendations for the conduct of a credible population and housing census. In addition, advisory and technical committees have been established, community engagement and public awareness strategy developed, and a census cartographic mapping initiative launched.

The UN supported the strengthening of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) systems through the review and development of national CRVS strategic plan with both technical (International Development Research Centre (IDRC)-Centre for Excellence CRVS) and financial support. Two (2) national and regional stakeholder consultations for the review and development of a national CRVS strategic plan have been held so far. The new CRVS strategic plan and M&E Framework will equally enhance Identity Management Systems in Sierra Leone.

The UN has supported the Government on the Power of Data Initiative (PoD) through consultations and developed a roadmap for the launch.

The UN supported the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development to design and establish a digital data dashboard for tracking progress on the MTNDP that will enhance government accountability and evidence-based decision making.

As part of the “Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Councils” the UN supported 22 local councils in Sierra Leone to better integrate gender into governance, engaging 44 local gender actors (22 Gender Officers and 22 Gender Committee Chairs) and over 50 locals.



22 Local Councils supported to integrate gender into governance



22 Gender Officers engaged

The UN successfully engaged over 2,400 respondents, including persons with disabilities (PWDs), in a gender mapping survey across five districts in Sierra Leone. This survey aimed to assess local governance, community challenges, awareness of gender policies, and the effectiveness of local councils in implementing the GEWE Act. Additionally, 6,000 stakeholders (75% female), including civil society organizations (CSOs), Mammy Queens, PWDs, and youth, participated in discussions. Furthermore, 15,000 community members (80% female) were sensitized on gender equality laws and services, including gender-based violence (GBV) response pathways. For Child Responsive Budgeting, the UN has contributed to strengthening national capacities to improve social spending outcomes for children within the national budget process, by partnering with the Ministry of Finance to produce a Child Responsive Budgeting (CRB) Handbook, to be utilized in future budget preparation.

To align sectoral budgets with the MTNDP 2024-2030, the UN has partnered with the Ministry of Finance and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to conduct capacity-building of budget desk officers across six child-focused Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) on the use of the new Chart of Account (CoA) which seeks to ensure enhanced financial tracking and reporting on child-related expenditures.

The UN partnered with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED) to strengthen local governance and development planning in six Local Councils, Kenema District, Bo District, Bo City, Bombali District, and Makeni City Council, to prepare Local Council Development Plans. These plans are aligned with both the MTNDP and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) using District Development Coordination Committee (DDCC) platforms, incorporating the needs of marginalized groups and cross-cutting themes.

The UN strengthened capacities in measuring child poverty in collaboration with MoPED and Statistics Sierra Leone, to develop a multidimensional child poverty analysis and commissioned preparations for the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS7).

The UN contributed to transform Sierra Leone's digital learning landscape through Innovative Digital Learning by scaling up to 50 online/offline hubs under the DSTI-led Digital Learning Hub (DLH) network, deploying 20 Easy DLH-in-a-Bag kits to remote communities and outfitting 42 Giga Schools through Giga Accelerate, expanding to 500 schools with Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) funding.

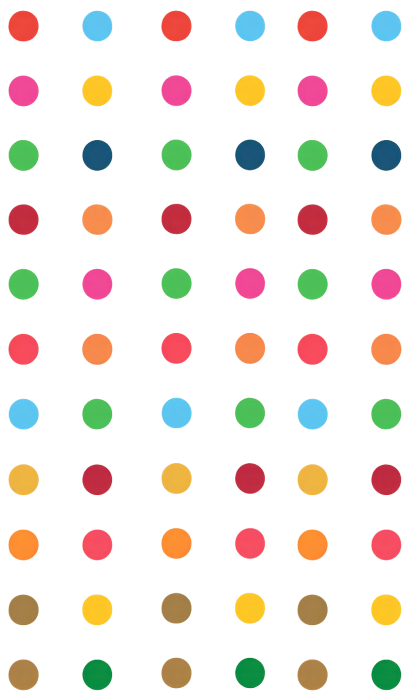
The UN in partnership with ST Foundation is bolstering technical support and leveraging the Turing Trust's refurbished laptops and community-based digital champions. Learning Passport usage has surged now offering 100 percent of the national curriculum and full access to exam papers. The UN supported six district councils to establish Local Peace Committees (LOPEC), comprising traditional leaders, religious representatives, youth advocates, security sector officials, and women leaders from the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) coalition.

UN improved coordination of the national HIV response, and ownership through the provision of strategic support to the national response efforts by re-programming of the U.S President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and Global Fund resources, resulting in uninterrupted service delivery and sustained access to essential health services. In addition, the UN facilitated the development of National HIV/AIDS sustainability roadmap and national dialogue to strengthen multi-sectoral ownership and collaboration, through a national sustainability assessment.

The UN supported nine (9) dialogue platforms of 90 persons (6 each from each institution and 18 per dialogue) between the bike riders, the Sierra Leone Police and the Sierra Leone Road Safety Authority. The aim is to improve relations, minimize conflicts/confrontation and enhance compliance with road safety regulations.



Output 3.3: Democratic institutions at all levels are strengthened to be inclusive, accountable, transparent, gender-responsive and rights compliant for enhanced rule of law, equity, and peaceful coexistence.



UN Sierra Leone supported #iVerify sessions in Bo and Kenema empower youth and women to spot and counter misinformation.
© UN Sierra Leone

In the UN’s bid to improve voter registration and results management systems in Sierra Leone, preliminary preparation for a feasibility study was concluded and Terms of reference (ToRs) for two experts – voter registration and result management were jointly finalized with Electoral Commission Sierra Leone (ECSL). In addition, a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) has been concluded to define new parameters of UN technical electoral assistance to Sierra Leone for the 2028 electoral cycle.

To support decentralization of iVerify, media monitoring and populating UN crisis dashboard, the UN provided technical and logistical support to Five (5) sets of community outreach and capacity building on media literacy, countering mis/disinformation and the iVerify fact-checking platform held with 250 participants (including students, youth, women, and attaya base members) in Makeni, Port Loko, Bo, Kenema, and Freetown. Visibility materials distributed to reinforce learning and promote continued public engagement with the iVerify platform. Since its launch in April 2023, a total of 434 stories have been fact-checked, including 69 so far in 2025.

In a bid to provide technical and advisory capacity support to Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) at national and sub-national levels for inter/intra-party dialogue processes to facilitate management of political-related conflicts, the UN developed and helped roll out an Operational Guideline developed for the Inter-Party Dialogue Committee (IPDC).

As part of the UN effort to decongest the correctional centers, Prison Court sessions were supported in 10 judicial district headquarters (Port Loko, Kambia, Makeni, Magburaka, Kabala, Bo, Kenema, Waterloo, Moyamba, Freetown).

The Prison Court Sessions and Correctional Decongestion Initiative reviewed 1,000 cases, resulting in the discharge of 66.6 percent of detainees (367 youths aged 18–35, 180 elderly aged 50 and above, 89 women and 30 PWDs) reflecting a strong emphasis on equitable and inclusive access to justice and a significant step in reducing prolonged pre-trial detention.

In support of ongoing legal reforms, the UN supported the Justice Sector Coordination Office (JSCO) to organise three capacity-sessions in Bo, Kenema, and Bombali to popularize the Criminal Procedure Act 2024. The sessions reached 83 participants (M:68, F:15), including paralegals, social workers, and civil society representatives. Beneficiaries were equipped with the tools and knowledge to deliver effective legal aid, promote due process, and ensure community members are aware of their rights.



iVerify fact-checking platform held 250 participants promoting media monitoring and UN crisis dashboard.



434 stories have been fact-checked since iVerify launch in 2023, so far, 69 in 2025.

To align Government priority policy agenda in the area of Gender equality and women's empowerment, the UN supported preliminary research into matrimonial law, specifically the Matrimonial Causes Act Cap 102, aimed at modernizing the family law and addressing issues affecting marriage, divorce, and maintenance with a gender-responsive approach.

The UN empowered 140 paralegals and community stakeholders (M:78, F:62) from Falaba, Kailahun, and Moyamba on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), property inheritance rights, and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). This initiative fostered cross-sector collaboration, improved legal literacy, and strengthened grassroots mechanisms for handling community justice issues, particularly those affecting vulnerable populations

UN strengthened strategic partnership with the Sierra Leone Female Parliamentary Caucus (SLEFPAC) through enhancing legislative capacity and gender responsive law-making for the 42 Female parliamentarians. This was geared towards enhancing their leadership and decision-making capacities to deliver their mandates and mainstream gender through critical legislation, representation, and oversight functions.

The UN conducted a study through the Institute of Governance Reform (IGR) to assess the impact of Sierra Leone's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Act 2022. The study found that women's parliamentary presence rose from 13% in 2018 to 30% in 2023, with female Members of Parliament outperforming males in attendance and commitment.

In support of Sierra Leone's efforts to enhance security service delivery and promote democratic governance, peace, and security, the UN supported the Sierra Leone Police to design a Model Police Station. This is in line with the broader support for the transition of the Sierra Leone Police Force to a Police Service aimed at a Police Service that is professional, accountable, trusted by the community and delivers quality and effectiveness of policing services.

The UN in collaboration with the GIZ-ECOWAS project (through a 3-day workshop with 31 CSOs and government security operators) supported the formation of a national CSO Coordination Platform, a strategy, workplan, roadmap and a national technical working group on Security Sector Reform and Governance (SSRG) for Sierra Leone, sharing knowledge and experience from government officials and experts from Nigeria and The Gambia.

The UN enhanced the capacity of Labour Migration Governance Stakeholders in May 2025, for government, civil society and private sector counterparts in Freetown.

Challenges, Risks & Lessons Learned for Pillar III



Delayed Partner Response

Delayed responses to project requests from implementing partners continue to hinder timely execution and coordination.



Funding Constraints under Pillar 3

Resource mobilization remains a challenge for agencies under Pillar 3 due to global funding constraints impacting programme delivery.



Access Barriers in Remote Areas

Limited access to hard-to-reach communities—caused by poor infrastructure, harsh terrain, and weather conditions—disrupts service provision, including for SGBV survivors.

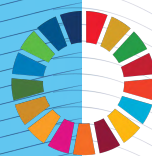


Leadership Turnover in Institutions

Lack of current population data hinders accountability. Evidence-based planning and coordination are constrained.



UN working together to deliver the **cooperation framework.**



7.1 Joint Programmes and Joint Initiatives

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2025–2030 represents the most important instrument for planning and implementing UN development activities in Sierra Leone. At the heart of this framework lies a commitment to delivering results through Joint Programmes and Joint Initiatives, which embody the spirit of “Delivering as One.”

Joint Programmes and Initiatives are not only operational tools but also strategic enablers that foster coherence, efficiency, and impact across the UN system. By aligning mandates, pooling resources, and leveraging comparative advantages, joint programmes and initiatives ensure that the UN speaks and acts with one voice in support of national priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through joint efforts, the UN in Sierra Leone have devilered on key strategic interventions in governance, human capital, climate change, etc. in partnership with key partners.

As of first half of 2025, based on the information at hand, approximatelyJoint programmes and joint initiatives with an estimated resource envelope ofare being implemented by the UN in Sierra Leone. Leveraging different funding sources and mechanisms, these joint programmes have the potential to deliver catalytic results for Sierra Leone. Below is a list of Joint Programmes and Joint Initiatives currently under implementation by UNSDCF Pillar (Table 3).



Table 3: List of Joint Programmes by CF Pillar

Name of Joint Programme	Budget	Lead Agency	Participating Agencies	Start-End date
Pillar I: Food Systems, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change				
Joint UN Nutrition programme to improve climate resilience, food and nutrition security in Sierra Leone	\$8,000,000	UNICEF	WHO, FAO, WFP	2024-2028
Pillar II: Human Capital, Essential Services and Employment				
Implementing the Sierra Leone Person-Centered Healthy Life Stage Approach in Moyamba district to accelerate progress toward universal health coverage	\$3,632,892	UNICEF & WHO	UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNWOMEN, UNDP, UNOPS, IOM, UNESCO	Jan. 2025 - 31 Dec. 2027
Spotlight Initiative (Focused districts: Falaba, Kailahun and Moyamba District)	15 million Euros	EU, UN	UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women	2025-2028
Global Programme to End Child Marriage (GPECM)	\$4,779,500 (2024 – 2027)	UNICEF	UNFPA, UNICEF	2024-2030
Pillar III: Governance and Economic Transformation				
Empowering Youth Bike Riders as Sustainable Agents of Peace in Sierra Leone project.	\$1,995,450	UNDP	UNCDF	14/12/2022-11/12/2025
Localization and Working-Together for Peace: Repositioning Women Focused CSOs for Sustainable Peace in Sierra Leone	\$989,813	UN Women	UNDP & World Vision	03/16/2023 - 03/15/2025
UN Partnership for Gender Mainstreaming in Government Ministries (UN GiM Partnership)	\$189,347	UN Women	UNDP, UNICEF	12/05/2024 - 07/31/2025
Promote the creation of an enabling environment for the conduct of peaceful election and the strengthening of social cohesion in Sierra Leone	\$3,000,000	UNDP	UNICEF	2022-2025
Youth in Politics and Peacebuilding	\$1,900,000	Catholic Relief Services		2022-2025
Positioning Women's CSOs for effective implementation of the WPS agenda	\$2,000,000	UN WOMEN	UNDP, World Vision	2022-2025
'Uman, land En Kol At' (Women's land for peace) – Women lead transformation pathways to peace through natural resource management	\$1,900,000	Christian Aid		2022-2025
GOLA-REAP – Resilience, Empowerment, Access and Peacebuilding along the Liberia and Sierra Leone border	\$ 1,717,294	IOM	WFP	2025-2027

7.2 UN Contribution to cross-cutting themes



Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment



Young boys and girls celebrating International Women's Day 2025© UN Sierra Leone

During the reporting period, the Gender Theme Group/PSEA Group enhanced national gender outcomes by providing strategic technical and financial support to the MoGCA for the successful commemoration of International Women's Day 2025. The Groups supported CSOs and MoGCA to develop a position paper that showcased measurable progress in implementing the GEWE Act 2022 and advocate to government stakeholders to integrate gender equality principles into the ongoing constitutional review process. Furthermore, the Groups facilitated impactful participation of Sierra Leone's delegation in the intergovernmental platform - Commission on the Status of Women 69. This support enabled the country to present evidence of achievements in localizing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and to demonstrate sustained progress on gender equality and women's empowerment. Sierra Leone's input into the CSW69 demonstrated concrete outcomes in policy advancement and international advocacy, reinforcing the Governments commitment to the global gender equity framework.



Youth & Migration

With support from the UN and other partners, including the World Bank, Sierra Leone's first-ever Status of Youth Report was produced and its findings presented to H.E. the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. It thoroughly benchmarks progress in youth investments, highlights the effectiveness of existing policies, identifies gaps, and outlines opportunities to harness the potential of Sierra Leone's youth to promote inclusive growth and development. The report serves as a call to action for the UN and partners to make strategic investments that integrate youth into Sierra Leone's economic and social transformation.

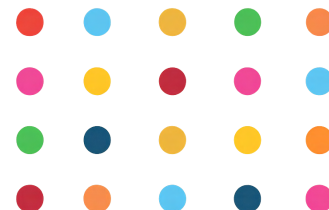
The Global Compact on Migration (GCM) National Implementation Plan and the National Coordination Mechanism on migration were validated in July 2025 by the Government of Sierra Leone, the UN Network on Migration, and key stakeholders, marking a significant milestone for Sierra Leone in strengthening migration governance and bolstering the country's global commitment as a GCM Champion.



Sierra Leone validates its National Migration Plan under the Global Compact for Migration—advancing youth empowerment, labour mobility, and sustainable growth.
© UN Sierra Leone



Operations Management Team (OMT)



The Operations Management Team (OMT) continues to play a pivotal role in streamlining operational functions and reinforcing inter-agency collaboration within the UN system in Sierra Leone, driving forward the efficiency reform agenda as outlined during the May 2025 UNCT retreat.

During the reporting period, the OMT spearheaded several key initiatives aligned with the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) 2.0. The annual BOS review reaffirmed its strategic importance in unlocking savings and increasing service synergies across UN entities. To further strengthen shared services, the team advanced onboarding for pooled internet access, initiated renewal of LTAs, and encouraged a broader uptake of High Impact Common Services. Eight out of fifteen such services are now operational, with plans to increase implementation by early 2026. Entities reported substantial cost benefits—totaling \$775,000 in 2024—and a projected \$1.3 million for 2025. Regular engagement with PMT and results groups is uncovering new areas for operational synergy and resource optimization.

In alignment with BOS 2.0 and the Common Premises strategy, agencies began transitioning to shared facilities to reduce rental costs and strengthen inter-agency coordination. With 91% of staff located in Freetown, strategies such as consolidation and hybrid work arrangements are gaining traction. A formal proposal is under consideration to secure a rent-free government building to host over 220 staff from WHO, WFP, UNFPA, and UNOPS—potentially reducing operational costs significantly.

An innovative mobility initiative was also introduced with the launch of the WFP-led UN carpooling service. This environmentally sustainable and cost-effective transportation model culminated in the signing of an inter-agency agreement between WFP and four UN entities—UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, and WHO. The initiative is expected to reduce fuel and maintenance expenses, minimize duplication, and foster closer operational alignment among participating agencies.

In parallel, UNICEF Sierra Leone led efforts to bolster financial integrity through the establishment of Long-Term Agreements with audit and verification service providers under the HACT framework. These agreements support 40 annual spot checks over a two-year term and are closely aligned with national capacity-building objectives. By ensuring transparency in fund usage and strengthening partner accountability, the initiative underscores the UN's commitment to robust risk management and fiduciary oversight.

Together, these initiatives reflect the UNCT's sustained focus on operational efficiency, cost reduction, and collective impact through strategic collaboration, shared services, and integrated planning.



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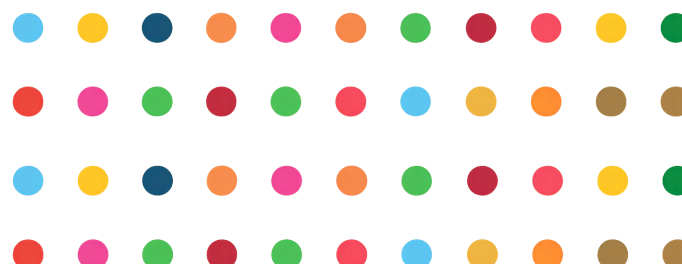


Table 4: Analysis of CF Risk Matrix and TOC

Outcome	Assumption	Validity (Valid/ partially valid/ Invalid)	Reasons	Mitigation Suggestions
OUTCOME 1: People in Sierra Leone, especially the most vulnerable, are food and nutrition secure, benefit from effective natural resource management, are resilient to the effects of climate change, and equipped to prevent and respond to disasters.	Assuming: The government have required resources and is willing to establish, implement required policy and legal reforms to support sustainable management of waste and natural resource alongside Inclusive disaster risk preparedness and early warning systems; Farmers are able to access finance and willing to adopt sustainable farming.	Partially Valid	- Resource Constraints - Inadequate Inclusive disaster risk preparedness and early warning systems	- Focus on high-impact, low-cost interventions that leverage existing government and community structures. - South-south cooperation to use what worked without necessarily incurring high cost (Some kind of knowledge sharing) - Engage the private sector more - Approach non-traditional donors and emerging economies. - Increase domestic revenue, resource mobilization - Strengthen early warning systems - Adopt climate-resilient farming
OUTCOME 2: People in Sierra Leone, particularly most vulnerable groups in rural and hard-to-reach areas, have equitable access to quality, gender-responsive essential and social protection services and decent job opportunities.	Assuming: Policies, resources, and investments are available and aligned to support quality essential services and deliver market-driven skills alongside strengthened TVET institutions; policies, resources and investments are available and aligned to support access to financial services, availability of user-friendly technology, affordable energy, and timely data; beneficiaries will embrace the behaviour changes that the policy reform will bring about.	Partially valid	- Funding constraints due to the cuts in ODA - Inadequate user-friendly technology, energy and timely data	- Explore innovative funding opportunities such as blended finance - Reduce technology gap through cooperation, especially around renewable energy - Invest in data ecosystem strengthening
OUTCOME 3: People in Sierra Leone enjoy transparent and accountable governance systems and economic transformation that guarantee peace, rights, and social cohesion, particularly among youth, women, marginalised and vulnerable groups	Assuming: Human rights, GEWE can be mainstreamed, and inclusion can be at the center of development policies and plans; peace and stability can be maintained, and communities can be better prepared for health emergencies, the economy can be transformed, diversified and stable.	Partially valid	- Communities are not fully prepared for health emergencies - The economy is not fully diversified	- Establish and strengthen surveillance systems - Diversify the economy by formalizing the informal economy and the opportunities of the blue and green economy - Leverage on the AfCFTA opportunities

Second Half of 2025

While remarkable progress has been made in the first half of 2025, emphasis will be needed in the following areas in the second half of the year:



Strengthening resource mobilization efforts



Improving the implementation of joint programmes for greater impact



Enhancing coordinating among UN agencies



Ensuring operationalization of CF thematic groups



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