



Monday–Friday,
17th – 21st February 2025

Impact in Action: Stories That Matter

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1st Quarter Ministerial DEPAC discusses progress of the implementation of the National Development Plan.

UN Resident Coordinator Seraphine Wakana, on Thursday last week, joined other co-chairs—Madam Kenyah Barlay, the Minister of Planning and Economic Development (MoPED), German Ambassador to Sierra Leone, Jens Kraus-Massé, and World Bank Country Manager Abdou Muwonge—to convene the First Quarter 2025 Ministerial Development Partnership Committee (DEPAC) meeting at the Foreign Affairs Academy in Freetown.

The focus of the meeting was on the status of the implementation of the Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024-2030) and Donor coordination.



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A Year of Implementation: What's Next?

Development partners and the Government reflected on the significant achievements, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. The meeting also highlighted the importance of strengthening the Sector Working Groups, aligning donor contributions with national strategies, and leveraging innovative approaches for enhanced development impact.

The UN Resident Coordinator underscored the unwavering commitment of the UN to supporting Sierra Leone's development agenda. Similarly, MoPED reiterated the Government's steadfast dedication to fostering stronger partnerships with development actors to accelerate progress towards the MTNDP.

Looking Ahead

The discussions at DEPAC set the stage for further collaborative efforts to ensure that Sierra Leone's development trajectory remains on course.



UN Country Team meets Minister of Justice to discuss justice sector reform.

Members of the UN Country Team in Sierra Leone led by Resident Coordinator Seraphine Wakana last week met with the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Alpha Sesay, at his Guma Building office in Freetown to discuss leadership from Government, coordination of the respective agencies and support to the justice sector by the UN family in Sierra Leone.



He acknowledged the contributions of the UN in providing essential resources to train legal professionals, promote legal literacy, and address systemic challenges within the justice sector. The UN Resident Coordinator reaffirmed the UN's commitment to continue working alongside the Government to ensure that the justice sector reform efforts meet international standards, particularly those related to human rights and the fair administration of justice. UNDP, UNOPS, FAO, UN Women, UNICEF and UNOPS were represented at the meeting.



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Reinforcing the rule of law and building democratic resilience in Sierra Leone was also central to the discussions in which the RC informed the AG about the commencement of implementation of the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2025-2030), structured around three pillars namely – (1) Food Systems, Natural Resource Management and Climate Change, (2) Human Capital, Essential Services and Employment, and 3) Governance and Economic Transformation.

These, she emphasised, cut across the justice sector. The AG expressed his gratitude for the UN's continued support of justice sector reforms, emphasising his commitment to further enhancing the partnership between the Government and the UN to ensure the effective delivery of justice services.

FAO, Ministry of Agriculture & Agrifood systems stakeholders committed to achieve Feed Salone.



On Thursday, 20 February 2025, representatives from key ministries, agencies, the private agrifood sector, and financing and development partners gathered in Freetown to discuss how the Feed Salone game changer can be achieved by 2028.



The meeting was productive, with participants agreeing to pursue specific objectives and announcing clear results, including expanding rice sector investments, boosting egg production, increasing land for onion cultivation and enhancing cassava production and processing opportunities.



There are also plans to encourage increased production and raise the quality of Sierra Leone's cashew output to take advantage of opportunities in international markets.

The Feed Salone Strategy is a beacon of hope, aiming to boost food security and inclusive economic growth in Sierra Leone through strategic investments. Pillar 3, in particular, focuses on enhancing the aggregation, processing, and marketing of agrifood products to increase competitiveness – domestically and on international markets – as well as to improve food security to drive the transformation of the agrifood sector in Sierra Leone.

The development of an Implementation Plan for the Operationalization of the Feed Salone Strategy Pillar 3, as part of the European Union's Sustainable Agrifood Systems Intelligence Initiative (SASI), further underscores the potential of this strategy.

WHO supports Ministry of Health to validate National AMR Surveillance Strategy.

The World Health Organization (WHO) supported the Ministry of Health and the National Public Health Agency in Sierra Leone to review and validate the **National Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Surveillance Strategy for Sierra Leone (2025-2029)** through the Fleming Fund Grant.



World Health Organization



This strategy focuses on gathering and reporting quality clinical and microbiological data through multisectoral, well-integrated, and feasible systems, emphasizing country ownership to ensure sustainability. Given the limited resources for microbiological testing and surveillance in Sierra Leone, the approach will be based on national priorities and feasibility, starting with a few surveillance sites and gradually expanding.

Sierra Leone has not established and implemented a surveillance system for antimicrobial resistance (AMR) since the development of the first AMR surveillance strategic plan in 2021 due to a lack of infrastructure and resources.

The review process involved stakeholder consensus, with over 70 participants from the One Health sectors participating in drafting workshops in Makeni and validation in Freetown. The process included a review of published and grey literature on AMR infections, laboratory performance assessments, activity reports, and other national and international guidelines.

However, with the support of the Fleming Fund Grant, at least three laboratories have now been equipped to support this initiative. This created an urgent need to review the strategic plan to provide a roadmap for successful implementation.

UN Women and CCG train over 50 Women's Groups and CSOs on the GEWE Act and the Customary Land Rights Act.



UN Women, in partnership with the Campaign for Good Governance (CGG) through the Enhancing Women's Protection, Empowerment and Rights in Sierra Leone (ENPOWER Salone) project funded by the Government of Ireland, last Wednesday ended a two-day training of trainers for over 50 Women's Groups and Civil Society Organisations on the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act 2022 (GEWE Act) and the Customary Land Rights Act 2022 in Freetown.



The aim was to capacitate women's groups and CSOs on how to roll out training on the GEWE Act 2022 and Customary Land right Act 2022.

Community women's and partners' knowledge of key women's empowerment provisions in the GEWE Act and the Customary Act 2022 are enhanced using the developed manuals.

Community and women's groups and partners are capacitated on how to roll out training on the GEWE Act 2022 and Customary Land right Act 2022.



UN Women & Ngoila Women train 50 Village Savings and Loans Association Groups in Bombali and Karene Districts.

With the support of the Government of Ireland through the Enhancing Women's Protection, Empowerment and Rights in Sierra Leone (ENPOWER Salone) project,

UN Women in partnership with Ngoila Women in Agriculture Cooperative Society last week on Tuesday 18th and Wednesday 19th February, 2025 trained 50 Village Savings and Loans Association Groups in Bombali and Karene District.



The training focused on helping groups improve their financial management skills and generate local income, while also providing their members access to low-interest loans.

ILO collaborates to launch the Faculty of Business and Entrepreneurship, and Extramural Studies at EBK University.

The ILO has collaborated with the Ernest Bai Koroma University, which has its headquarters in Magburaka, to launch the Faculty of Business and Entrepreneurship and Extramural Studies.



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This significant milestone, done under the theme “Fostering Business and Entrepreneurial Education in Tertiary Higher Learning Institutions for Economic Growth in Sierra Leone”, marks a significant step in advancing entrepreneurial educational opportunities and fostering innovation in Sierra Leone’s academic and business sectors.

The new Faculty, made possible through funds provided by the European Union, will see EBK- UST offer short entrepreneurship courses to the community. This initiative holds the potential to significantly advance the formalisation of enterprises and enable them to contribute to economic development in the country, bringing hope and optimism to the community.



ILO hands over 24.8 KM feeder roads to 10 Bombali communities to reduce post-harvest losses.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) recently completed a 24.8 km feeder road rehabilitation in 10 communities in Bombali district as part of the Opportunity Salone program.



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This initiative aims to reduce post-harvest losses due to poor road conditions and improve access to farmers' markets, promoting rural economic activities.

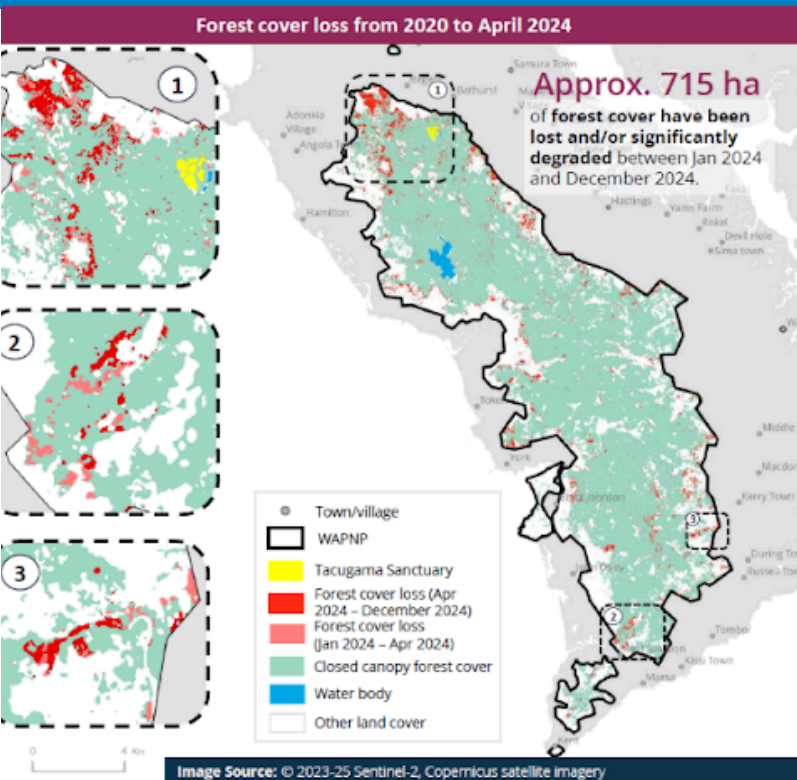
Community members expressed gratitude and urged the EU and partners to address other needs, especially for health centers and schools. District Chairman John M.B. Sesay thanked the ILO for its continued support in connecting communities for economic benefits, funded by the European Union.



WFP launches latest report on rampant deforestation in the Western Area Peninsular National Park.



The World Food Programme (WFP), funded by the European Union, released a report in February 2025 highlighting severe deforestation in Sierra Leone's Western Area Peninsular National Park (WAPNP).



Using satellite imagery, the study revealed that 715 hectares of forest were lost or degraded in 2024 alone, totalling 5,600 hectares (one-third of the park's forest cover) since monitoring began. The WFP's 'Asset Impact Monitoring (AIMS)' service, which employs remote sensing and GIS technology, facilitated the analysis, validated by government and UN teams on the ground.

Deforestation is driven by land grabbers clearing trees for housing, illegal quarries, and fires, with 220 fire hotspots detected in 2024. These activities threaten endangered species like the critically endangered western chimpanzee and Freetown's primary water source, the Guma Valley Dam, which supplies 90 percent of the capital's population. Deforestation increases sedimentation in the reservoir, raising water treatment costs and risks of mudslides or dam failure.

Despite being a protected area since 2012 and a candidate for UNESCO World Heritage status, illegal activities like construction, quarrying, and even marijuana farming persist. Joint inspections uncovered widespread violations, prompting calls for urgent action.

WFP's Yvonne Forsen emphasised the need for collaboration with the government to prevent the park's destruction and protect its ecological and water security significance.



UNFPA partners with Government to launch Strategy for the Reduction of Adolescent Pregnancy & Ending Child Marriage.

UNFPA and UNICEF joined the Chief Minister, Dr. David Sengeh, various Government Ministries, the Embassy of Ireland, and young people for the launch of the National Strategy for the Reduction of Adolescent Pregnancy & Ending Child Marriage on February 20, 2025.



This multi-sectoral strategy builds on the progress made through the previous two national strategies (2013-2023), which contributed to a decline in adolescent pregnancy from 30% in 2013 to 21% in 2019. With a renewed commitment, the strategy aims to reduce adolescent pregnancy to 10% further and eliminate child marriage by 2030, in alignment with the country's national development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals.



UNFPA collaborates with the Health Ministry to validate the Nursing and Midwifery Strategy.

The Ministry of Health and Sanitation, in collaboration with UNFPA, convened a two-day meeting to validate the Nursing and Midwifery Strategy, a potential game-changer in strengthening maternal and newborn health in Sierra Leone.



The strategy aims to create an enabling environment for nursing and midwifery services, support the country's progress toward universal health coverage, end preventable maternal and newborn deaths, and improve overall health outcomes.





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