



Monday–Friday,
3rd–7th March 2025

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UN PBF Women's Land for Peace project launched.

During the week, UN Resident Coordinator Seraphine Wakana thanked the UN Peacebuilding Fund for remaining steadfast in support towards gender equality and women empowerment in Sierra Leone.

She did so at the launch of the project on "Women's Land for Peace", focusing on Women Leading Transformative Pathways to Peace Through Natural Resources Management.

Speaking at the event held at the Family Kingdom in Freetown, she said that in the current context of the shrinking global funding landscape, the UN is keen to see the impact of the project in the communities in the target districts, in addition to the inspiring stories of change by the women.



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She reiterated the UN's commitment to working with the government, partners, civil society, the community, and the women of Sierra Leone to advance the women's, peace, and security agenda as guided by the Sierra Leone Third Generation National Action Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council 1325 and related instruments.

The key implementing partners for the 24-month-long project include Green Scenery, Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD), Women's Network for Environmental Sustainability (WoNES), 50/50 Group of Sierra Leone, Barefoot Women Solar Engineer Association of Sierra Leone and IDT Labs.

It will be implemented by the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, the National Land Commission, Local and Municipal councils, the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion ICPNC, -Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).



UN Salone Cooperation Framework to address women & girls challenges.

The new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which the UN Country Team in Sierra Leone started implementing in January this year until 2030, will be used as a roadmap to address the challenges faced by women and girls and other development priorities in Sierra Leone.



It was the message of the UN Resident Coordinator Seraphine Wakana at this year's International Women's Day celebration held in Freetown under the theme "For All Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment."

She said that with the new document, which complements the national priorities in the Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024-2030), the UN in Sierra Leone is committed to addressing these challenges through various initiatives.

She noted specific programs aimed at economic empowerment, including the ChangeMakers program launched by UN Women, which focuses on gender equality and youth empowerment.

Additionally, the GOLA-REAP (Resilience, Empowerment, Access, and Peacebuilding) project, which was launched recently for Sierra Leone and Liberia, aims to enhance sustainable livelihoods and economic resilience in border communities.

The RC said these efforts are further strengthened through partnerships with local organisations. She emphasised that as the UN turns 80 this year, its commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment remains firm, even stronger than before. She called on all to stand up for women's rights and an equal world for all women and girls.

To accelerate progress on SDG 5, Madam Wakana emphasised the need for an all-hands-on-deck approach, including the Government, Civil society, private and public sectors, development partners, and the community. She also reaffirmed the organisation's commitment to creating a society where every woman and girl can enjoy their rights, live free from violence and discrimination, and have equal opportunities to thrive.

UNDP RR discusses unlocking Sierra Leone's tourism potential with Egyptian Envoy.

This week, UNDP Sierra Leone was honored to host H.E. Rasha Soliman, Egyptian Ambassador to Sierra Leone, for a productive meeting with Resident Representative, Fredrick Ampiah and senior management, marking a key milestone in advancing South-South Cooperation, focusing on shared priorities.



They explored ways to boost tourism through improved ferry transportation and hospitality services, leveraging Egypt's renowned expertise to unlock Sierra Leone's tourism potential.

Discussions also explored potential capacity-building initiatives to strengthen Sierra Leone's Foreign Service, empower persons with disabilities, and support women parliamentarians in leadership and governance.

Additionally, both parties examined broader development cooperation opportunities to drive economic growth and social inclusion.





UN Network on Migration & MoPED develop National Plan for Global Compact.

The Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, in collaboration with the UN Network on Migration and supported by IOM Sierra Leone, held a national consultative session in Freetown recently, aiming to develop a National Implementation Plan for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) and establish a National Coordination Mechanism for Migration in Sierra Leone.



Representatives from various sectors discussed enhancing inter-ministerial coordination and policy implementation. Supported by funding from the European Union, the session focused on maximizing migration benefits while addressing its challenges.

The outcomes will guide a sustainable GCM National Implementation Plan, aligning closely with Sierra Leone's national development priorities.

WFP celebrates African Day of School Feeding in Karene District.



The 10th African Day of School Feeding was celebrated at Khulafai Rashideen Primary School in Sierra Leone's Karene District, organized by the World Food Programme (WFP).



The event, attended by the German Ambassador, Iceland's Head of Mission, Sierra Leone's Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and other partners, highlighted the importance of school feeding programme in promoting education, nutrition, and agricultural development.

With the theme: *"A Decade of Nourishment: Celebrating the Past, Securing a Just Future."*, the celebration showcased the success of the Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) model, which connects school meals to local farming.

Khulafai Rashideen, one of 384 schools benefiting from the programme, demonstrated how locally sourced, Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSP) and fresh vegetables provide nutritious meals for students while supporting smallholder farmers. A key highlight was the unveiling of an improved kitchen with fuel-efficient stoves and storage facilities, enhancing meal preparation safety and sustainability.

The event emphasised stakeholder collaboration, with government officials and international partners reaffirming their commitment to supporting school feeding programme. These initiatives align with the African Union's goals of improving food security, reducing poverty, and fostering economic growth.

The celebration served as a call to action for continued investment in school feeding as a pathway to resilient, inclusive societies, showcasing the transformative power of community, government, and partner collaboration.

The event also served as a key milestone in evaluating the progress made over the past decade in implementing school feeding programmes across the continent and reaffirming commitments to sustaining and scaling up these initiatives.



UNFPA discusses 2025 priorities with Ministry of Health senior leadership.

UNFPA recently held a consultative meeting with the senior leadership of the Ministry of Health in Freetown to discuss priorities for 2025 and ensure alignment with the Ministry's vision for the health sector.



The consultation emphasised the strengthening of policy, legal, and financing frameworks to ensure improvements in RMNCAH outcomes.

Key priorities included enhancing family planning services through supply chain management and demand generation, improving maternal health outcomes through SRH Service Integration youth and adolescent responsive SRH services, midwifery services, prevention and management of obstetric fistula, and Maternal & Perinatal Death Surveillance & Response (MPDSR), and Digital Health & Innovation.

ILO, stakeholders review sustainability plan for SMEs & Agricultural Value Chain actors.

ILO, through its Opportunity Salone programme during the period in review, engaged Business development service providers, technical programme Advisory Committee members, SMEs, and entrepreneurship TOTs to review the sustainability plan for the long-term delivery of business development services to SMEs and agricultural value chain actors across the country.



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This plan, once implemented, will significantly improve the business environment for SMEs, enhance their competitiveness, and foster economic growth.

This review meeting, which was held in Makeni, allows all stakeholders involved in the project to make contributions that will guide the implementation processes of this plan.



Speaking at the Wusum Hotel in Makeni, the Chief Technical Advisory of the Opportunity Salone Programme, Tonderai Manoto, admonished participants to own the process and make salient contributions.

The plan's outcomes, which will determine the fate of SME businesses in terms of business development services, carry significant weight. This is done with funds provided by the European Union jobs and growth funds.

Opportunity Salone programme scales up palm oil production in Kenema district.

The ILO has engaged with various stakeholders to scale up palm oil production in Kenema District. This initiative aims to promote decent employment for Sierra Leoneans, funded by the European Union in Sierra Leone.



Augustine Moiwa Sheriff's oil palm plantation in Bombioma village, Kenema District, has benefited from several technical training sessions covering financial record-keeping, SYIB, and more. This capacity building will help the business run smoothly, keeping proper records to track progress and deficiencies.

With a second tranche payment of \$20,000, the project has facilitated the purchase of locally made palm oil processing machines. These machines will reduce the risks and health hazards associated with traditional palm oil processing, enabling faster processing to meet market demands and increase supplies.

Augustine, the CEO of the business, expressed gratitude to the ILO for providing a platform to structure their business, which has employed 10 to 15 young people in his village.

He added that these machines would be rented out to other processors, creating an additional source of income to support others in the business.

The EU delegation, Ministry of Labour, Naycom, SMEDA, Local Content, and the Chamber of Commerce were all in attendance as part of the program's technical advisory committee.



ILO collaborates with UN Women & Africell to celebrate International Women's Day.



With funds provided by the European Union, ILO during the period in review joined UN Women and Africell SL in a panel discussion with the theme: *Accelerating Gender Equality in the workplace and beyond.*

This was an initiative driven from the programme support to women-led SME businesses in Bo, Kenema, Bombali and Port Loko.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2025

#IWD2025
#ForAllWomenAndGirls

Ahead of IWD, UN Women & Gender Ministry kick-start high-level policy dialogue.

UN Women in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs and partners on Thursday 6th March 2025 kicked-started a two-day High Level Policy Dialogue Forum at the Miatta Conference Centre in Freetown with the theme. *"Beijing +30: Progress, Challenges and Way Forward."*



The event brought together top government officials, development partners, civil society organizations, school pupils and the media.

The event featured panel discussions on women and poverty, women and the economy, education and training, women in power and decision making, human rights of women, institutional mechanisms, women and health, violence against women, the girl child, women and armed conflict, women and the media, and women and the environment paving the way to address the Beijing +30 challenges and advance gender equality.

Representing the Head of Office, Setcheme Jeromine Mongbo, the Programme Specialist, Baindu Massaquoi said, "In order to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), all hands need to contribute including Government, civil society, the private sector as well as development partners." Emphasizing that, UN Women remain committed to championing and advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women.

In her Keynote Address, Hon. Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs, Dr. Isata Mahoi highlighted that, thirty years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration, Sierra Leone has made significant strides in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. "Our progress is anchored in both international commitments and national.



Govt and Partners discuss HIV Stigma on 'Zero Discrimination Day'.

In a concerted effort to combat stigma and its detrimental effects on the uptake of HIV and TB services, UNAIDS partnered during the week with the National AIDS Secretariat (NAS), the Ministry of Health (MOH), the Network of Persons Living with HIV (NETHIPS), and other partners to celebrate the role of communities in ending stigma to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.



These initiatives included radio and TV programs on three stations to highlight the challenges related to stigma, its impact on service uptake, and the role of communities. The Attorney General and Minister for Justice of Sierra Leone was the Guest of Honour, and the Human Rights Commission chaired the event.

A day-long dialogue session with 65 participants, including senior government officials and key stakeholders, was also held to identify barriers and interventions for improving service uptake. The event took place on March 3, 2024, at Sierra Palms Resort in Freetown.

Participants included communities, UN agencies, parliamentarians, government officers, HIV implementing partners KP-CSOs, social marketers and civil society umbrella organizations.

The meeting agreed to develop an operational plan to implement the recommendations of Stigma Index 2.0 and lead on the sustainability of the HIV response, especially community-led responses.

This advocacy initiative is a significant step towards enhancing service uptake and contributing to epidemic control by addressing stigma and discrimination within the community.



National Strategy: WHO collaborates with others.

Sierra Leone is taking decisive action to transform its hospital services with the development of a pioneer National Hospital Strategy.

A consultative meeting in Freetown brought together key stakeholders to address longstanding challenges.



World Health Organization



The strategy aims to overhaul the nation's 50+ secondary and tertiary hospitals by focusing on critical areas such as infrastructure upgrades, enhanced staffing, and sustainable financing.

This comprehensive plan, developed in collaboration with the WHO and other partners, seeks to create a clear roadmap for improving quality service delivery in public and private hospitals. It emphasises delivery essential health service packages aligning with the Ministry of Health's person-centered life stages framework.

By addressing gaps in quality of care and accessibility, Sierra Leone is striving to accelerate the achievement of universal health coverage and improve the overall health and well-being of its population, ultimately contributing to improved health outcomes.

The strategy underscores the nation's commitment to building a resilient and effective healthcare system for all its citizens.





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