



UNITED NATIONS
SIERRA LEONE



UN AGENCIES WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS



Monday–Friday,
4th–8th August 2025

Impact in Action: Stories That Matter

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Welcome to the **UN Agencies Weekly Highlights** – your trusted source for dynamic updates, impactful stories, and transformative work shaping Sierra Leone and beyond. Dive into powerful narratives of resilience, partnerships driving sustainable development, and the vibrant faces behind the initiatives. Stay informed, inspired, and ready to act. This is where stories meet solutions – because together, we can drive the change the world needs.

Table of Contents



01

WHO

Sierra Leone launches WHO-backed genomic surveillance training.

Teachers empowered to strengthen mpox response in hotspot communities.

02

UNICEF

UNICEF trains 120 master educators to boost pre-primary teaching.

Sierra Leone celebrates World Breastfeeding Week with 54% exclusive rate.

03

UNDP

Inter-Religious Council receives UNDP support to expand community outreach.

Coming Tomorrow! Volume 2 of our **International Youth Day** feature goes live on our website—spotlighting inspiring stories of youth action and impact. **Don't miss it!**



Sierra Leone launches WHO-backed genomic surveillance training.

Sierra Leone has commenced a two-week capacity-building workshop on DNA sequencing and bioinformatics, aimed at strengthening national preparedness for multi-pathogen threats.



World Health Organization



The training, which began on 4 August and runs through 15 August 2025, is supported by the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the National Public Health Agency (NPHA), and the Central Public Health Reference Laboratory (CPHRL).

The workshop focuses on building sustainable national capacity in genomic surveillance, with a strong emphasis on mentorship, leadership development, and practical application.

While recent efforts have centered around Mpox, the training is designed to equip local scientists and public health experts with the tools needed to detect and monitor a wide range of infectious diseases.

This initiative forms part of WHO's ongoing support to enhance Sierra Leone's health security systems, enabling early detection, rapid response, and informed decision-making in the face of emerging and re-emerging health threats.



Teachers empowered to strengthen mpox response in hotspot communities.

Over 100 primary and secondary schoolteachers from Mpox hotspot communities in Freetown were engaged in batches during a three-day training to strengthen infection prevention and control (IPC) efforts in schools and surrounding communities. The initiative was supported by the World Health Organization (WHO) and coordinated by the IPC pillar in collaboration with the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) and Surveillance pillars.



World Health Organization



The engagement recognised the critical role teachers play beyond the classroom during outbreaks. Through interactive sessions, teachers were equipped with accurate information on Mpox transmission, prevention, and their responsibility in response efforts. The training focused on promoting hygiene practices, encouraging early symptom reporting, and addressing stigma and misinformation through inclusive and open communication.

Teachers also contributed to discussions on school preparedness plans and the importance of coordinating with health authorities for timely reporting of suspected cases. The batch-based approach ensured active participation and tailored engagement, reinforcing the vital role of educators in safeguarding school environments and supporting community-level Mpox response.



UNICEF trains 120 Master Educators to boost pre-primary teaching.

As part of efforts to strengthen early childhood education in Sierra Leone, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) and the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE), has conducted a comprehensive Training of Master Trainers on the newly developed P0 (pre-primary) teaching and learning materials. This initiative has been implemented under the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) programme.

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The training is a critical step in equipping 120 Master Trainers with the knowledge and tools necessary to cascade training to all pre-primary teachers across the country. By building capacity at the national level, this programme seeks to improve the quality of teaching in early childhood education and strengthen foundational learning outcomes for children aged 3–5 years.

The training addresses key issues such as the lack of standardized early learning materials, limited teacher capacity in the pre-primary sector, and the need to promote inclusive and play-based learning approaches from the earliest years.

Participants include 120 Master Trainers, international and national education nt of early childhood educators, this initiative highlights UNICEF's commitment to strengthening the education system and ensuring every child in Sierra Leone has a strong start in life. consultants, representatives from MBSSE, MTHE, and UNICEF. The training has been delivered in three cohorts, each with 40 participants over a six-day period:

By investing in the professional development of early childhood educators, this initiative highlights UNICEF's commitment to strengthening the education system and ensuring every child in Sierra Leone has a strong start in life.



Sierra Leone celebrates World Breastfeeding Week with 54% exclusive rate.

This week, Unicef joined the global community in commemorating World Breastfeeding Week 2025 under the theme “Prioritise Breastfeeding: Create Sustainable Support Systems.”

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The event was a powerful reminder of our shared responsibility to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding as a cornerstone of maternal and child health.

Sierra Leone's progress, having already reached WHO's 2025 target of 50% exclusive breastfeeding, is proof of the efforts of health workers, the government, communities, and partners.

As highlighted during the event, achieving the global 2030 target of 75% exclusive breastfeeding will require continued investment in sustainable systems that empower mothers, at home, in health centres, and in workplaces.



Inter-Religious Council receives UNDP support to expand community outreach.

This week, UNDP, through the Office of the Chief Minister, handed over a vehicle to the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL) to strengthen their nationwide peacebuilding, governance, and advocacy work. The handover followed a request for UNDP to provide a vehicle that would help IRCSL reach more communities and carry out their important activities more effectively.



UNDP Resident Representative Fredrick Ampiah emphasised that this support reflects recognition of IRCSL's long-standing role in fostering dialogue, promoting unity, and working for the common good across Sierra Leone. He noted that the vehicle will help them expand their reach, strengthen engagement with communities, and continue their service to the nation.

The IRCSL welcomed the donation, highlighting their active engagement with Government and partners on youth and women's empowerment, national cohesion, prevention of child marriage and teenage pregnancy, safe motherhood and reproductive health, climate change advocacy, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, electoral process reforms, and the promotion of religious tolerance.

They added that, given their national reach and the voluntary nature of their members' contributions, support of this kind offers a significant return on investment. They also expressed gratitude for the Chief Minister's swift and spontaneous action in responding to their request, describing it as remarkable.



This support is part of UNDP's ongoing commitment to strengthening local capacities for peacebuilding and ensuring that no voice is left unheard.



Get in Touch with the UN Media.



The "**Get in Touch with the Media.**" section serves as a direct line for journalists and media professionals to connect with the UN communications and media team. Whether you're seeking in-depth information, or high-quality visuals to enhance your stories, our team is here to assist. For inquiries or media requests, reach out to our dedicated communications staff at the UN.

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