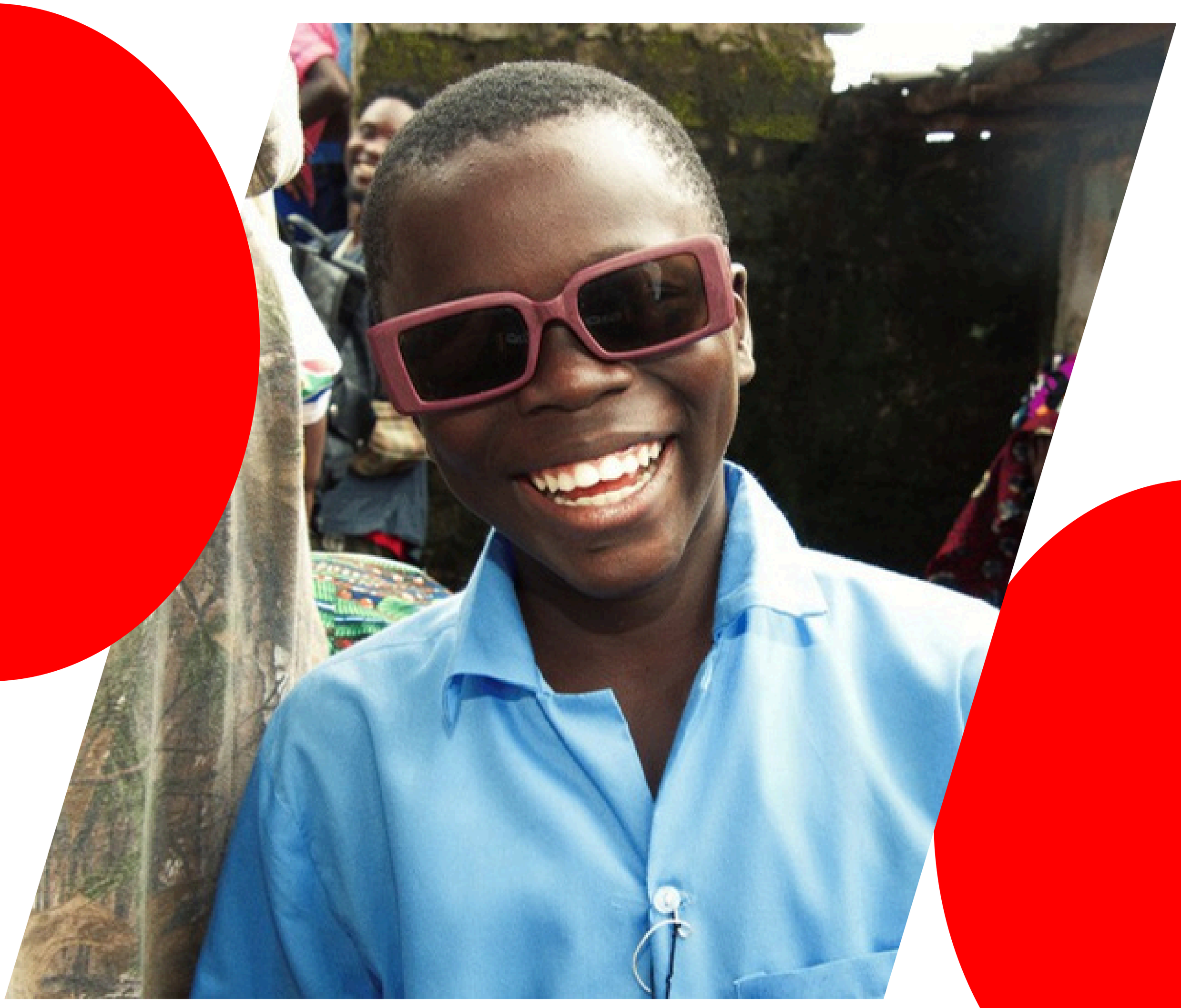
ACTIONAID SIERRA LEONE'S

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 007



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FOREWORD

Dear Readers,

Every story in this edition is a reminder that meaningful change begins with people. Across Sierra Leone, we continue to witness individuals and communities taking bold steps to challenge inequality, claim their rights, and create opportunities for a better future.

In these pages, you will meet young people developing skills and confidence to pursue their ambitions, women and girls strengthening their voices and leadership, communities advancing climate action, and partners working together to expand opportunities for those most often left behind. These achievements are not isolated successes; they are examples of what becomes possible when communities lead their own development and are supported to realize their full potential.

At ActionAid Sierra Leone, we remain committed to building a society where every person can live with dignity, where women and girls can thrive free from discrimination, and where young people are empowered to shape the future they want to see. The progress highlighted in this newsletter reflects the determination of the communities we work with and the strength of the partnerships that continue to drive lasting impact.

As we celebrate these milestones, we also recognize that our work is far from finished. The challenges facing our communities require continued collaboration, innovation, and collective action. Together, we must continue creating spaces where every voice matters and every individual has the opportunity to contribute to sustainable and inclusive development. I extend my sincere appreciation to our partners, supporters, staff, volunteers, and community members whose dedication makes this work possible. Your commitment continues to inspire hope and transform lives across the country.

I invite you to explore the stories in this edition and reflect on the impact we are creating together.

Best Wishes,
Foday Bassie Swaray

Executive Director
ActionAid Sierra Leone

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YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Kadiatu Koroma Turned Skills into an Opportunity

After completing her WASSCE examinations, Kadiatu Koroma found herself facing a reality familiar to many young people in Sierra Leone. With no immediate employment opportunities and limited practical skills to generate an income, she spent much of her time uncertain about what the future held. Determined to find a pathway forward, she applied for a skills development programme under the Youth Action for Good Governance and Self-Reliance (YAGGS) Project, funded by the European Union and implemented by ActionAid Sierra Leone. Kadiatu was among 75 young people selected from Tonkolili District to participate in the programme. The initiative began with a three-week incubation period that provided participants with coaching, mentorship, life skills development, and career guidance. Following the incubation process, participants were given the opportunity to choose a vocational skill area aligned with their interests and aspirations. Kadiatu selected hairdressing. She was placed at Timeless Beauty Salon for her apprenticeship. There, she began learning practical skills including hair braiding with and without extensions, wig installation, and other professional salon techniques that she had never been exposed to before. However, her journey was not without challenges. At the start of the apprenticeship, the salon proprietor doubted her abilities and was hesitant to allow her to take part in in certain activities that would help her develop her skills. Rather than becoming discouraged, Kadiatu remained committed to learning. Through persistence, hard work, and a willingness to improve, she gradually earned the trust of her supervisors and gained hands-on experience in the trade Today, she is not only progressing in her apprenticeship but has also started securing small side jobs, allowing her to earn an income while continuing her training. Looking ahead, Kadiatu hopes to establish her own hairdressing business after graduating from the programme.



Kadiatu Koroma

Building Employability Skills for Young Graduates

Recognizing the challenges many graduates face when transitioning from education to employment, the YAGGS Project conducted employability and job-readiness training for university graduates in Tonkolili and Moyamba districts. The sessions focused on practical skills such as CV writing, job-search strategies, career planning, professional communication and interview preparation. Participants were given opportunities to engage in mock interviews and receive personalized feedback on how to improve their presentation and competitiveness in the job market. The training also helped participants understand employer expectations and identify pathways for career growth and professional development. Many graduates noted that while academic qualifications are important, they often lack exposure to the practical skills needed to secure employment. By addressing this gap, the training strengthened participants' confidence and increased their readiness to pursue opportunities in both the public and private sectors. The initiative reflects ActionAid Sierra Leone's broader commitment to empowering young people with the tools and knowledge required to improve their livelihoods and contribute meaningfully to national development.





International Youth Day and Youth Grants

ActionAid Sierra Leone joined the Ministry of Youth Affairs and other stakeholders in Lungi, Port Loko District, to celebrate International Youth Day and recognize the important role young people play in shaping the country's future. A key highlight of the event was the symbolic presentation of small grants to three Chiefdom Youth Councils representing fifteen councils supported through the YAGGS Project. These grants are intended to strengthen youth-led initiatives and encourage entrepreneurship, innovation and community development. The supported ventures span agriculture, livestock rearing, fish preservation, small business development and digital solutions, providing young people with opportunities to generate income while contributing to local economic growth. Participants also engaged in discussions on leadership, civic participation and the contribution of youth to national development. The event demonstrated the project's commitment to empowerivelopment but also through practical resources that allow them to implement their ideas. By investing in youth-driven solutions, ActionAid Sierra Leone and its partners are helping build a generation of young people who are confident, productive and actively engaged in creating positive change within their communities.





National Youth Conference on Governance

ActionAid Sierra Leone, in partnership with the Centre for Coordination of Youth Activities (CCYA), convened a National Youth Conference on Shared Learning and Policy Influencing under the YAGGS Project. The conference brought together approximately 150 young people from different districts, including young women and persons with disabilities, alongside government representatives and civil society actors. The gathering provided a platform for participan governance challenges, share lessons from their communities and identify opportunities for greater youth participation in decision-making processes. Through panel discussions, group work and stakeholder engagements, participants explored ways of strengthening accountability, transparency and inclusive governance. The conference also emphasized the importance of evidence-based advocacy and collective action in influencing policies that affect young people. By creating space for dialogue between youth and decision-makers, the event reinforced the role of young people as key actors in governance and development. The conference concluded with recommendations aimed at increasing youth representation, improving civic engagement and ensuring that the voices of marginalized groups are reflected in national and local development processes.



CHILD SPONSORSHIP

ActionAid Sierra Leone Hands Over New School Facilities

More than 1,300 learners will benefit from a newly completed school structure handed over to the National Islamic Mission School in Up Town Bar, East End Freetown. The facility includes three classrooms, toilet facilities and a computer room, creating a more conducive learning environment for 758 primary pupils and 615 secondary students. What makes the achievement particularly remarkable is the leadership demonstrated by community members themselves. Women participating in a Village Savings and Loan Association mobilized local resources, engaged a contractor and developed a Bill of Quantities to guide the construction process. AASL complemented these efforts by providing selected materials and supporting contractor fees through its partnership with Women in Crisis. The handover ceremony highlighted the importance of community ownership and collective action in achieving sustainable development outcomes.



Speaking during the event, the Head of Programme and Policy emphasized that quality education goes beyond infrastructure and requires trained teachers, adequate learning materials and continued stakeholder support. Representatives from the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, community leaders and school authorities pledged to protect and maintain the facility. The successful completion of the project demonstrates that when communities take the lead in identifying and addressing their needs, development initiatives become more sustainable and impactful.

Expansion of Sponsorship Programming in Salenga Chiefdom

ActionAid Sierra Leone continues to expand opportunities for children and communities through its sponsorship programme with the extension of activities into Salenga Chiefdom in Bo District. As part of the expansion process, community stakeholders and animators received training on sponsorship standards, child protection principles and programme implementation requirements. The orientation equipped participants with the knowledge and skills needed to support the effective rollout of sponsorship activities and ensure accountability at community level. The expansion will facilitate the collection of profiles for 750 children across three communities, creating opportunities for greater support and engagement with families. Beyond sponsorship administration, the programme aims to strengthen community structures and enhance access to services that contribute to children's wellbeing and development. Stakeholders welcomed the initiative and expressed optimism about its potential to create positive and lasting change for vulnerable children. The training also provided an opportunity for participants to discuss their roles and responsibilities and to reaffirm their commitment to safeguarding children. Through continued collaboration with communities, the sponsorship programme seeks to improve outcomes for children while strengthening local ownership and participation.



A New Beginning for Rokanu's Learners

More than 340 children in Rokanu and surrounding communities now have access to a safer and more conducive learning environment following the handover of a newly constructed three-classroom primary school building and office space in Masungbala Chiefdom. The facility was delivered by ActionAid Sierra Leone through its implementing partner, Network for Rural Development (NRD-SL) as part of the ongoing efforts to expand access to quality education for children in rural communities.The official handover ceremony brought together education stakeholders, local council officials, civil society organizations, partner NGOs, and community leaders, reflecting a shared commitment to improving educational opportunities and ensuring that every child has the chance to learn and thrive. Speaking during the event, ActionAid Sierra Leone's Head of Programme and Policy emphasized that quality education extends beyond physical infrastructure.



While the new school building represents a significant investment in the future of Rokanu's children, the long-term success of the initiative depends on the active involvement of parents, community members, and local authorities in supporting children's education and maintaining the facility for future generations. For the school community, the new building marks the end of years of challenges. Head Teacher Madam Isata Sesay expressed gratitude to ActionAid Sierra Leone and NRD-SL for their continued engagement and support. She recalled the difficulties pupils previously faced while learning in a dilapidated and unsafe structure, noting that the dream of a secure and modern learning space has now become a reality.





GENDER JUSTICE & INCLUSION

Men Amplifying the Change to End Child Marriage

ActionAid Sierra Leone continues to engage men and boys as allies in the fight against child marriage through the UNFPA-supported Global Programme to End Child Marriage. As part of this effort, male mentors from Pujehun and Kambia districts participated in a training programme focused on gender-transformative approaches, positive masculinity and child protection.



The training challenged harmful gender norms and encouraged participants to critically examine the roles men and boys can play in promoting gender equality and protecting girls' rights. Through interactive discussions and practical exercises, participants explored ways to support girls' education, prevent child marriage and create safer environments for young people. At the end of the training, mentors developed community action plans designed to raise awareness and mobilize local support for ending child marriage. Participants committed to engaging families, traditional leaders and community groups in conversations that promote the wellbeing and future aspirations of girls. The initiative highlights the importance of involving all members of society in efforts to address child marriage. By empowering male champions to become advocates for change, ActionAid Sierra Leone is helping create communities where girls can remain in school, pursue their ambitions and realize their full potential.

Bridging Generations for Inclusive Change

Across 50 communities in Kambia, Port Loko, Moyamba, Bonthe and Western Area Rural, ActionAid Sierra Leone is facilitating Intergenerational Dialogues that bring together diverse groups of community stakeholders, including chiefs, headmen, Mammy Queens, chairladies, youth leaders, women and girls, traditional and religious leaders, persons with disabilities, parents and community elders.



Supported by UN Women and the Embassy of Iceland, these dialogues are creating safe spaces for meaningful conversations across generations. Participants are sharing experiences, reflecting on community realities and examining the beliefs, traditions and social norms that continue to shape the lives of women and girls. Through open discussion and mutual learning, community members are exploring how harmful practices and unequal power relations can be addressed to create more equitable and inclusive societies. The dialogues also provide an opportunity for different generations to learn from one another, strengthen mutual understanding and build consensus around practical actions that promote gender equality and social inclusion. By encouraging the active participation of women, young people and marginalized groups, the initiative is helping to foster stronger community engagement and more inclusive local governance. As communities continue these conversations, they are laying the foundation for lasting change driven not by a single generation, but through collective action and shared responsibility. Because sustainable transformation happens when people come together to challenge harmful norms, embrace inclusion and ensure that every voice is heard, valued and acted upon.



Out-of-School Girls Gain Sewing and Menstrual Hygiene Skills

Sixteen out-of-school adolescent girls in Kambia District have completed six days of hands-on training in reusable menstrual pad making and basic sewing under the UNFPA-supported Global Programme to End Child Marriage (GPECM). Using fabric, needles, and thread, the girls learned how to measure, cut, stitch, and assemble reusable menstrual pads from start to finish. For many participants, it was their first experience using sewing tools, but by the end of the training each girl had successfully produced her own reusable pads. The training equipped the girls with practical skills that can support better menstrual hygiene management while also providing knowledge that could be used to generate income in the future. Beyond learning a new technique, participants gained confidence through creating something with their own hands and seeing the progress they made over the six days. By the close of the training, the girls left not only with completed products but also with new skills, greater self-confidence, and a stronger sense of independence. The initiative forms part of ongoing efforts to empower adolescent girls with opportunities that support their wellbeing, dignity, and future development.





Distribution of Start-Up Kits

Following the completion of skills training, start-up kits were distributed across eight communities to help girls continue practicing and applying the skills they had acquired. The distribution was conducted in the presence of community stakeholders, reinforcing transparency, shared responsibility, and community ownership of the support provided. Each community received a kit comprising a sewing machine, cotton materials, scissors, fasteners, needles, thread, chalk, tape measures, and reusable menstrual pad-making supplies. By providing these essential resources, the initiative ensured that participants could continue building on their training and translating newly acquired skills into practical and productive activities within their communities. This approach not only strengthens technical capacity but also creates a supportive environment where girls can gain confidence through regular practice and learning. More than a distribution exercise, the activity marked an important step in moving from training to action. By coupling skills development with access to equipment and community-based support, the initiative is helping girls strengthen their competencies, increase their self-reliance, and explore opportunities for future income generation while contributing positively to their communities.

Girls Build Skills Through GLRA 3 Project

Thirty girl advocates participating in the Girl-Led Research and Action (GLRA 3) Project enhanced their practical skills through a handcraft training initiative organized during the school holiday period. The activity was designed to complement the girls' advocacy work while providing them with opportunities to develop skills that can support future economic independence. During the training, participants learned various handcraft techniques and explored ways these skills could contribute to income generation and self-reliance. Beyond practical learning, the initiative also provided a platform for participants to reflect on findings from their community research and discuss actions to address issues affecting girls and young women. The training forms part of ActionAid Sierra Leone's broader commitment to empowering girls with both leadership and livelihood skills. By combining advocacy with practical capacity building, the GLRA 3 project seeks to strengthen participants' confidence and ability to influence change in their communities. The girls expressed enthusiasm about applying their new skills and continuing their advocacy efforts. Their participation demonstrates the importance of creating opportunities that support both personal development and active citizenship among young women.





CLIMATE JUSTICE

Growing Climate Champions

With support from the Irish Aid Project, ActionAid Sierra Leone is leading tree-planting activities in 20 schools across chiefdoms in Tonkolili District, promoting climate change awareness and environmental stewardship among students and their communities. The initiative is helping to create greener and healthier learning environments while empowering young people with knowledge about the importance of protecting natural resources. By combining practical action with climate education, students are learning how trees contribute to combating climate change, improving biodiversity, and building more resilient communities. Through this effort, schools are not only becoming greener spaces but also nurturing a new generation of climate champions committed to creating a sustainable future.



Climate Walk Calls for Urgent Action

As part of the Global Week of Climate Action, ActionAid Sierra Leone, Global Platform Sierra Leone, and partner organizations joined forces in Makeni for a Climate Walk aimed at amplifying calls for climate justice and greater accountability in addressing the climate crisis. Held under the theme “Shift the Power, Fund the Future, Not the Crisis!”, the walk brought together community members, young people, civil society actors, and local leaders to advocate for equitable climate action that prioritizes people and the planet. Participants called for increased investment in resilient communities, the protection of human rights, and meaningful support for those most affected by climate change. The event was graced by the Mayor of Makeni City, who highlighted the growing impact of climate change on local communities and stressed the need for climate resources to reach those who need them most. He noted that while climate financing exists, stronger accountability mechanisms are needed to ensure support reaches the communities in need. Speaking during the event, Haja Mariama Bangura of Global Platform Sierra Leone emphasized the urgent need for collective action, pointing to the significant loss of lives, livelihoods, and property resulting from climate-related disasters. She encouraged citizens to actively engage leaders on climate commitments and progress toward achieving sustainable development goals. More than a symbolic march, the Climate Walk served as a platform to reinforce the demand for urgent and inclusive climate action.





PARTNERSHIP FOR IMPACT

Partnership with Orange Foundation for Digital Inclusion

ActionAid Sierra Leone and Orange Sierra Leone Foundation have entered into a partnership to implement a Digital Skills Training Programme for Persons with Disabilities, marking an important step toward greater inclusion in the digital age. The 12-month initiative will provide structured digital skills training to 150 persons with disabilities, equipping participants with knowledge and practical competencies that can improve access to education, employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. The programme seeks to address digital exclusion while promoting independence and economic empowerment. As technology continues to influence every aspect of modern life, access to digital skills has become increasingly important. Through this partnership, participants will have opportunities to strengthen their confidence and better navigate digital platforms that can expand personal and professional opportunities. The collaboration reflects the shared commitment of both organizations to advancing inclusion and ensuring that no one is left behind in the rapidly evolving digital economy. By investing in digital literacy and accessibility, the initiative will help create pathways to greater participation and improved livelihoods for persons with disabilities.



Photo Credit: Orange Foundation

Launch of Gender-Responsive Local Governance Initiative

ActionAid Sierra Leone joined UN Women and implementing partners GADNet, FAWE and WAADO to officially launch the Empowering Communities Through Gender-Responsive Local Governance initiative, funded by the Embassy of Iceland. The programme aims to strengthen inclusive governance systems and increase the participation of women, girls, young people and persons with disabilities in local decision-making processes. Through advocacy, capacity building and community engagement, the initiative seeks to ensure that governance structures become more responsive to the diverse needs of citizens. During the launch, stakeholders emphasized the importance of inclusive leadership and the need to address barriers that prevent marginalized groups from participating fully in governance processes. The programme will work closely with local councils, community leaders and civil society organizations to promote accountability and inclusive development. The partnership demonstrates a shared commitment to creating communities where all voices are heard and valued. By supporting more inclusive governance systems, the initiative aims to contribute to equitable development outcomes and stronger democratic participation at local level.





ActionAid Sierra Leone Receives SLANGO Excelence Award

ActionAid Sierra Leone was honoured to receive an Excellence Award from the Sierra Leone Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (SLANGO) in recognition of its unwavering commitment, exceptional service, and inspiring leadership in advancing good governance. This award reflects the collective efforts of our staff, partners, and, most importantly, the right holders and communities with whom we work every day to promote inclusive, participatory, and accountable governance across Sierra Leone. We proudly dedicate this recognition to the people of Sierra Leone, whose resilience, voices, and actions continue to drive positive change. The award reaffirms our belief that meaningful transformation is possible when people are empowered to shape the decisions that affect their lives. We extend our sincere appreciation to SLANGO for this honour and for recognizing the importance of citizen-led development and democratic governance.





Support to SLAJ and IMC Media Awards

ActionAid Sierra Leone reaffirmed its commitment to media development and social justice by sponsoring the Journalist of the Year category at the SLAJ and IMC Media Awards. The award was presented to Madam Kabia Yeanor of Radio Democracy 98.1 FM in recognition of excellence in journalism. The organization's support reflects its belief in the important role that media practitioners play in promoting accountability, transparency and informed public discourse. Independent and professional journalism remains a critical component of democratic governance and citizen engagement. In addition to sponsoring the Journalist of the Year award, ActionAid Sierra Leone announced plans to introduce and support a new category, Best Social Justice Reporter, in future editions of the awards. The category is expected to encourage reporting that highlights issues affecting marginalized communities and advances public understanding of social justice concerns. Through partnerships with media institutions and journalists, ActionAid Sierra Leone continues to support efforts that promote access to information, amplify citizen voices and contribute to positive social change.



STRONGER SYSTEMS

Programme Review and Budget Planning Meeting

ActionAid Sierra Leone and its local implementing partners convened in Bo City for the Annual Programme Review and Budget Planning Meeting under the theme, “Building an Integrated Programme that is Innovative and Sustainable.” The gathering provided an opportunity for programme teams and partners to reflect on achievements, assess challenges and collectively shape priorities for the coming year. Throughout the meeting, participants reviewed progress across thematic areas, examined lessons learned from project implementation and discussed opportunities to strengthen programme impact. Particular attention was given to sustainability, innovation and collaboration, with partners sharing experiences and good practices from their respective operational areas. Budget discussions formed a key part of the meeting, ensuring that future activities remain aligned with both organizational priorities and community needs. Participants explored ways to maximize available resources while maintaining high-quality programming and accountability. The meeting reinforced ActionAid Sierra Leone’s commitment to building an integrated approach to development that connects different programme areas and promotes lasting change. By bringing partners together to reflect, learn and plan collectively, the organization continues to strengthen coordination and improve the effectiveness of its interventions across the country.



Participatory Review and Reflection Process

ActionAid Sierra Leone successfully conducted its annual Participatory Review and Reflection Process (PRRP) across its operational areas in Moyamba, Kono, Bombali, Kambia and Bo districts. The exercise brought together community members, local authorities, government institutions, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to assess progress made under various programmes and projects during the year. The PRRP serves as an important accountability and learning mechanism, providing communities with a platform to share their experiences, reflect on achievements and identify challenges affecting programme implementation. Through community-led presentations, discussions and engagements with duty bearers, participants highlighted key successes while also proposing solutions to issues requiring further attention. The process also created opportunities for direct dialogue between rights holders and decision-makers, strengthening collaboration and promoting transparency. Community representatives presented action plans and development priorities, while local authorities reaffirmed their commitment to supporting initiatives that improve livelihoods and access to essential services. Beyond measuring results, the PRRP helped ActionAid Sierra Leone gather valuable lessons that will inform future programming.









Annual General Meeting 2026

ActionAid Sierra Leone convened its 2026 Annual General Meeting in Koidu City, bringing together General Assembly members to review organizational performance and strengthen governance systems. The meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on achievements recorded during the year, review audited financial statements and discuss strategic priorities for the future. Members also participated in key governance processes, including appointments and leadership decisions aimed at strengthening the organization's oversight and accountability structures. Discussions highlighted the importance of maintaining transparency, promoting effective leadership and ensuring that resources are managed responsibly to maximize impact for communities. Participants reaffirmed their commitment to ActionAid's mission of advancing social justice, gender equality and human rights. The AGM continues to serve as one of the organization's most important governance platforms, ensuring that members remain actively engaged in shaping the strategic direction of ActionAid Sierra Leone while safeguarding the values and principles that guide its work.





Induction of New Board and General Assembly Members

Following the Annual General Meeting, newly appointed Board of Directors and General Assembly members participated in an induction programme designed to strengthen their understanding of governance and leadership responsibilities. The orientation introduced members to ActionAid Sierra Leone's governance framework, strategic priorities, policies and operational structures. Sessions focused on accountability, oversight, risk management and the respective roles of governance bodies in supporting the organization's mission and objectives. The programme also provided an opportunity for members to interact with senior management and gain a deeper appreciation of the organization's work across thematic areas. Discussions explored emerging opportunities and challenges while reinforcing the importance of effective leadership in achieving sustainable impact. By investing in capacity building for governance structures, ActionAid Sierra Leone continues to strengthen institutional effectiveness and ensure that leaders are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to guide the organization successfully.

MEDIA MENTIONS!

ACTIONAID TRAINS 60 YOUTHS IN PEACE BUILDING AHEAD OF 2028 ELECTIONS



By Abu H. Kargbo | Makeni City

ActionAid Global Platform Sierra Leone has trained 60 young people in peace education, peacebuilding, digital literacy and accountability as part of efforts to prevent disinformation and promote peaceful elections in 2028.

The training, held at the Pastoral Centre in Makeni, brought together journalists, students, bloggers and activists under the project titled "Empowering Young People for Democratic Stability Through Youth-Led Civic Action to Prevent Disinformation and Promote Peaceful Elections in 2028." The initiative is supported by the IGNITE Fund.

Facilitated by Yayah Kargbo and Edna Amie Ngegba, the training focused on strengthening participants' capacity to identify, verify and counter misinformation while promoting civic responsibility, accountability and peaceful coexistence in their communities.

One of the facilitators, Yayah Kargbo, commended ActionAid Global Platform for investing in young people through the initiative, describing the intervention as timely in strengthening peace and democratic stability in Sierra Leone.

He urged participants to translate the knowledge acquired into practical action, particularly as the country continues to consolidate peace following its eleven-year civil war.

"Rights come with responsibilities, and educating communities about this should now become your mission as civic champions," he emphasised.

Haja Mariama Bangoura, Coordinator of ActionAid Global Platform Sierra Leone in Bombali, said the training was designed to prepare young people to participate meaningfully and responsibly in the 2028 electoral process.

She encouraged participants to use their influence positively in promoting national development rather than actions that could undermine peace and stability.

"We should strive to be tools for national development instead of destruction," she stated.

Bangoura further urged the participants to serve as role models and peace ambassadors by promoting accurate information, discouraging the spread of misinformation and fostering peaceful coexistence within their respective communities.

Robinda Aminata Mansaray, a final-year Social Work student at the University of Makeni, described the training as impactful and called for more initiatives aimed at educating young people about their civic responsibilities.

She observed that previous interventions had largely emphasised young people's rights, stressing the need to complement such efforts with education on their corresponding responsibilities.

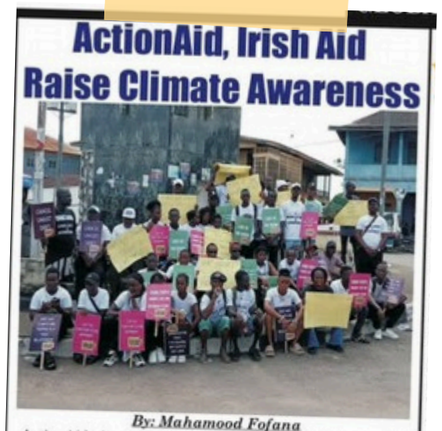
"Let's verify before we share, as spreading fake news can lead to chaos that affects both the sender and the entire nation," she cautioned.

The initiative comes against the backdrop of concerns raised in the 2024 Tripartite Committee Report, which identified the proliferation of misinformation on social media as a significant contributing factor to tensions surrounding the 2023 multi-tier elections in Sierra Leone.

By equipping young people with practical knowledge of peacebuilding, digital literacy and accountability, ActionAid Global Platform seeks to strengthen youth-led civic engagement and encourage responsible information sharing ahead of the 2028 elections.



ActionAid, Irish Aid Raise Climate Awareness



By: Mahamood Fofana

ActionAid, in partnership with Irish Aid, has marked International Climate Action Day with an awareness walk in Magburaka, Tonkolili District, calling for greater public action to address climate injustice and protect the environment.

The walk, held on Saturday, October 24, 2026, started at Magburaka Park and ended at the town's Clock Tower, highlighting rising temperatures and environmental challenges affecting communities in the district.

Speaking during the event, Albert Kargbo, Project Officer for Climate Change in Tonkolili District, said the initiative was intended to raise awareness of climate injustice and its impact on local communities.

Kargbo expressed concern over the increasing heat experienced in the area, emphasising the need for stronger environmental protection measures and greater public understanding of climate change and its consequences.

He also highlighted concerns surrounding illegal mining activities in and around Magburaka, warning that irresponsible mining practices can contribute to land degradation, vegetation loss and other forms of environmental damage.

According to him, failure to address these challenges could have far-reaching consequences for communities and future generations, making collective action essential to protecting the environment.

Adamsay Finnoh, one of the participants, also raised concerns about rising temperatures and their effects on residents. She stressed the importance of environmental protection and called for increased attention to the challenges communities face as temperatures continue to rise.

The awareness walk forms part of broader efforts to mobilise citizens and encourage community participation in climate action. It also highlighted the importance of collaboration among residents, local authorities, civil society organisations and other stakeholders in addressing environmental degradation.

As communities in Tonkolili District continue to confront environmental concerns, the event served as a call for greater responsibility in the use of natural resources and the adoption of sustainable practices.

The organisers hope the initiative will encourage residents to take practical steps towards protecting their environment, while promoting collective efforts to build resilient and sustainable communities for present and future generations.

ACTIONAID SL REVIEWS COMMUNITY IMPACT IN KONO



By Probhya J. Alpha - KONO

ActionAid Sierra Leone has held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Kono District to review the impact of its programmes, strengthen accountability and make strategic decisions on future interventions.

The meeting provided an opportunity for members to assess programmes implemented by ActionAid Sierra Leone and its local partners in beneficiary communities, while engaging directly with the people affected by the organisation's interventions.

Speaking to this medium, ActionAid Sierra Leone Board Chairperson, Pamela Augunade, said the AGM enabled members to gain first-hand knowledge of the impact of the organisation's programmes by interacting directly with rights-holder communities.

According to Augunade, the engagement allowed AGM members to compare beneficiaries' experiences with reports submitted by ActionAid staff, providing a clearer understanding of the progress made and the challenges facing communities.

She disclosed that discussions in Bandafeyie community revealed that some children aged between 15 and 17 were familiar with local training terminology and practices because they accompanied their parents to mining sites in search of a livelihood.

However, Augunade noted that children who had benefited from ActionAid's educational support were sharing testimonies about how the interventions had positively affected their lives. She said their experiences were consistent with reports from staff on the impact of the organisation's programmes.

To sustain the gains made through its interventions, Augunade revealed that ActionAid Sierra Leone had developed a four-year plan that was currently under review. She said the plan was intended to ensure that available funding was managed effectively and directed towards priority needs.

She added that concerns raised during engagements with rights-holder communities would be considered and discussed further, with efforts being expedited to address some of the issues identified.

Augunade assured community members that ActionAid Sierra Leone would continue discussions on possible support and sustainability plans, noting that beneficiaries had reported positive changes resulting from the organisation's interventions.

Meanwhile, ActionAid Sierra Leone Executive Director, Foday Bastie Swaray, explained that the organisation's constitution requires the AGM to be held annually, as it is the organisation's highest decision-making body.

Swaray said the meeting provided a platform to review and approve the annual report, assess interventions implemented over the previous 12 months, make strategic decisions and establish priorities for the year ahead.

He further explained that the AGM forms part of Action Aid's accountability mechanisms by allowing Assembly members to interact directly with rights-holder communities and hear about their experiences and challenges rather than relying solely on organizational reports.

According to Swaray, feedback from community members helps inform decisions by the Board and Assembly, particularly those relating to future programmes, plans and budgets.

CCYA National Youth Conference Addresses Local Governance Challenges in Sierra Leone

By George Elliot-Sam

The Bluton School Hall on Charles Street recently witnessed a dynamic gathering of young leaders, civil society organizations, stakeholders, and government representatives at the two-day National Youth Conference. This pivotal event, centered on shared learning and policy influencing, aimed to overcome local governance challenges, anchored by the project titled "Youth Action for Good Governance and Self-Reliance," implemented across Moyamba, Tonkolili, and Western Area Rural Districts. Organized by the Center for Coordination of Youth Activities in partnership with Action Aid Sierra Leone and funded by the European Union, the conference served as a crucial platform for dialogue among the nation's youth. Participants engaged in discussions on a wide array of issues impacting young people, from education and employment to civic engagement and governance.

Throughout the event, various representatives delivered compelling statements that highlighted the urgent challenges faced by youth in Sierra Leone.



They emphasized the necessity of fostering an environment where young people can actively participate in governance and contribute to meaningful policy changes.

"This conference is a vital step in ensuring that the voices of our youth are not only heard but are influential in shaping the policies that govern their lives," stated a representative from the Center for Coordination of Youth Activities.

As the program reached its climax, participants signed a communique expressing their collective commitments to address the identified challenges.

Additionally, a National Youth Position Paper was tabled, outlining strategies for policy influencing that aim to enhance local governance and address the obstacles faced by youth in the country. The conference not only provided an opportunity for knowledge sharing but also paved the way for a united youth front advocating for change. Participants left inspired and equipped with the tools to become proactive agents of good governance in their communities.

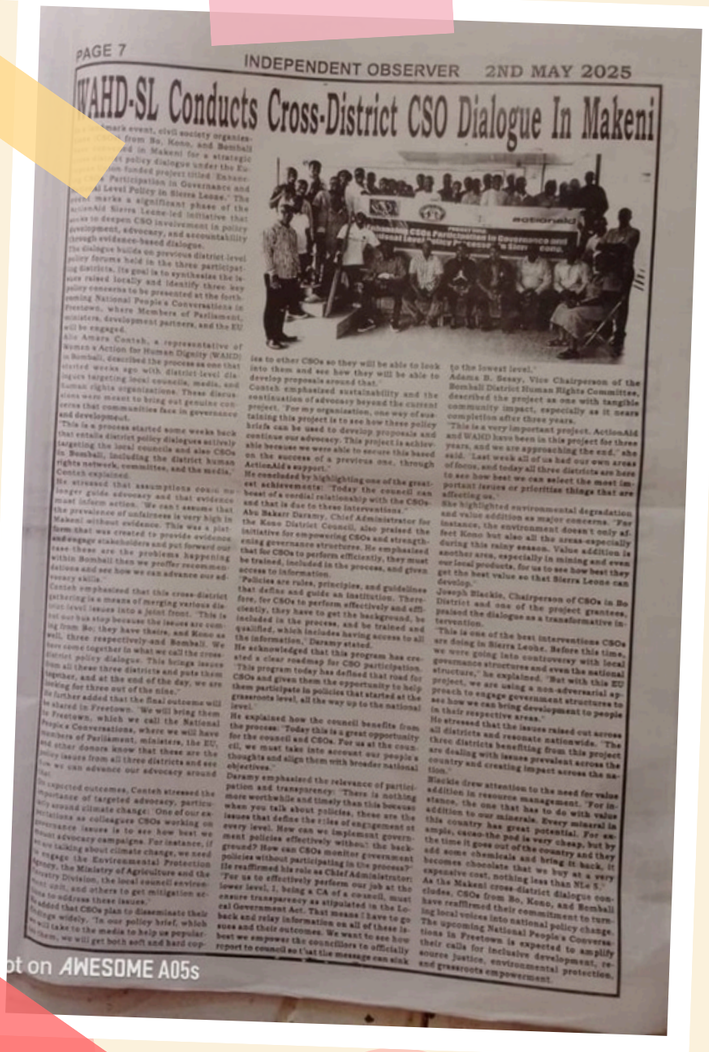
With the successful conclusion of the conference, the stakeholders reaffirmed their dedication to fostering youth engagement in governance processes and addressing the local governance challenges in Sierra Leone, ensuring a brighter future for the nation's young population.



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