

Annual Report 2024

ChildFund
Sierra Leone

www.childfund.org



ChildFund
Sierra Leone

OUR VISION

A world in which children realize their rights and achieve their potential.



In 2024, over,
2,511,039
children and their family members participated in a range of child-focused development programs supported by ChildFund.

OUR MISSION

HELP deprived, excluded and vulnerable children have the capacity to improve their lives and the opportunity to become young adults, parents and leaders who bring lasting and positive change in their communities.

PROMOTE societies whose individuals and institutions participate in valuing, protecting and advancing the worth and rights of children.

ENRICH supporters' lives through their support of our cause.

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Abbreviations

ASRHR	Adolescents Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
CAMEL	Comprehensive Approach to Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
CAPE	Community Action for Protection and Education
CO	Country Office
CBCPM	Community-Based Child Protection Mechanism
CHWs	Community Health Workers
CP	Child Protection
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DAC	Day of the African Child
DFCs	Designated Fund Certificates
CRA	Child Rights Act
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
DHMT	District Health Management Team
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EPW	Education for Protection and Wellbeing
FY	Fiscal Year
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
IPC	Infection, Prevention and Controls
IYC	Infants and young children
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
LLINs	Long Lasting Insecticide-Treated Nets
LP	Local Partner
MBSSE	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
NCC	National Commission for Children
NSP	Non-Sponsorship Program
PEF	Partnership Effectiveness Fund
PHUs	Peripheral Health Units
P&G	Procter and Gamble
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
JOFA	Joining Forces Alliance

Country Director's Note



Dear Reader,

In our previous report, I shared hopes of 2024 being phenomenal. I am excited to present ChildFund Sierra Leone's Annual Report highlighting our efforts and achievements from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

This year has been marked by significant milestones, with thriving community projects and strengthened global, regional, and national collaborations, all seamlessly integrated into the fabric of our global strategy – Growing Connections.

We reached an estimated 2, 511,039 children and their families with a variety of child-focused development programs. What an incredible accomplishment!

In 2024, we significantly expanded our resource acquisition portfolio by launching major grant-funded projects. Among the highlights is the Cassava Value Chain Strengthening for Improved Food Security and Sustained Income project, funded by The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). This €1 million initiative is being implemented across 30 communities in Koinadugu, Falaba, and Bombali districts over a 42-month period (May 2024 to October 2027).

We are excited to share that the European Union is co-funding a groundbreaking 4-year Sierra Leone Agro-Tech Development Support project in partnership with Tradin Organic. The project's initial phase, spanning 2 years and valued at €215,628, will be executed by ChildFund in 3 districts—Kailahun, Kenema, and Kono. Its aim is to sustain and expand agroforestry through effective financial management and Village Savings and Loan Associations at the community level. The project was officially launched in April 2024.

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Proud as we are of these achievements, our excitement grows as we look forward to securing new grants, allowing us to extend our support to even more children living in poverty across the country.

We took a moment to reflect on our journey—celebrating our successes, acknowledging our challenges, and evaluating our strengths and weaknesses.

This reflection came through a review of our 5-year country strategic plan, driven by a dedicated team united in ambition and passion. As our plan envisions, by 2026, 12.5 million (2.5+ each year) of Sierra Leone's most vulnerable children will see significant improvements in their well-being.

We demonstrated robust financial performance, delivering exceptional value for money and boosting our brand's visibility.

Our team's unwavering dedication has driven a remarkable organizational transformation, enabling us to operate more efficiently even in challenging circumstances.

Despite these achievements, we faced significant challenges and sorrowful moments. We lost one of our dedicated Local Partner staff working with Ndomakeh Federation–Moses Turay, whose role in the Community Action for Combating Child Labor project implemented in Kailahun Kenema and Kono and funded by Tradin Organic and the Dutch Government was very impressive. Our heartfelt condolences to Turay's family. He will always be valued and remembered as he rests in eternal peace.

We were also shocked by the demise of my predecessor, James Pimundu (of blessed memory). Pumundu was Country Director for the Sierra Leone office for almost 5 years. Our hearts and prayers also go to his family.

Looking ahead to 2025, and inspired by our Africa Region leadership, we are making Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Climate Action flagship programs.

Additionally, we are concentrating on several key global priorities: enhancing impact; redefining localization, increasing grants fundraising, and establishing a Fit-for-Purpose structure to ensure the success of country offices. Our country office is strategically positioned to deliver on these initiatives.

By the end of June 2024, ChildFund's sponsorship program supported **16,470 children,** with **11,993 (72.81%)** of them directly sponsored. We welcomed **2,357 new sponsors** from the U.S. and Germany, driving a 3.6% sponsorship growth for FY24

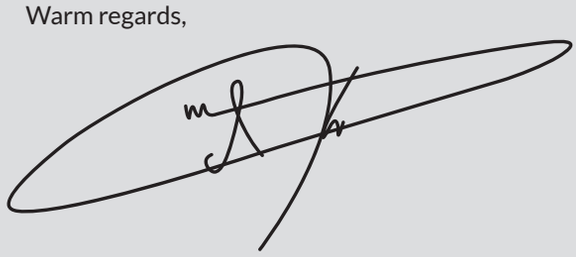
Thank You to All Our Amazing Supporters!

We want to give a huge shoutout to all the amazing people who make our mission possible! From the incredible ChildFund Africa Regional Office and ChildFund International to our dedicated senior management team, staff, and partners—you all rock!

A special thanks to our awesome sponsors, stakeholders, Advisory Board, and government agencies for their unwavering support.

Together, we're making a real difference in the lives of children and families.

Warm regards,



VICTOR KAMARA

About ChildFund: Our Global Impact

ChildFund International is a child-focused development organization that works throughout Asia, Africa and the Americas to connect children with the people, resources and institutions they need to grow up healthy, educated, skilled and safe — safe at home, at school, in the community and online.

Our programs address the underlying conditions that prevent any child or youth from achieving their full potential.

We place a special emphasis on child protection throughout our approach because violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect can reverse developmental gains in an instant.

ChildFund is uniquely positioned to make a meaningful difference everywhere we work, with:

85+
Years of Service

23
Program Countries

21.1 million
Lives Changed

160+
Local Partner Organizations



About ChildFund in Sierra Leone

39 years working in Sierra Leone, since 1985.

Currently reaching over **2,511,039 children and their families,** through various child-focused development programs.

Working with **348+** communities in **12** districts.

Working with **3 Core Partners** in Bombali, Kailahun, Koinadugu and Falaba districts.

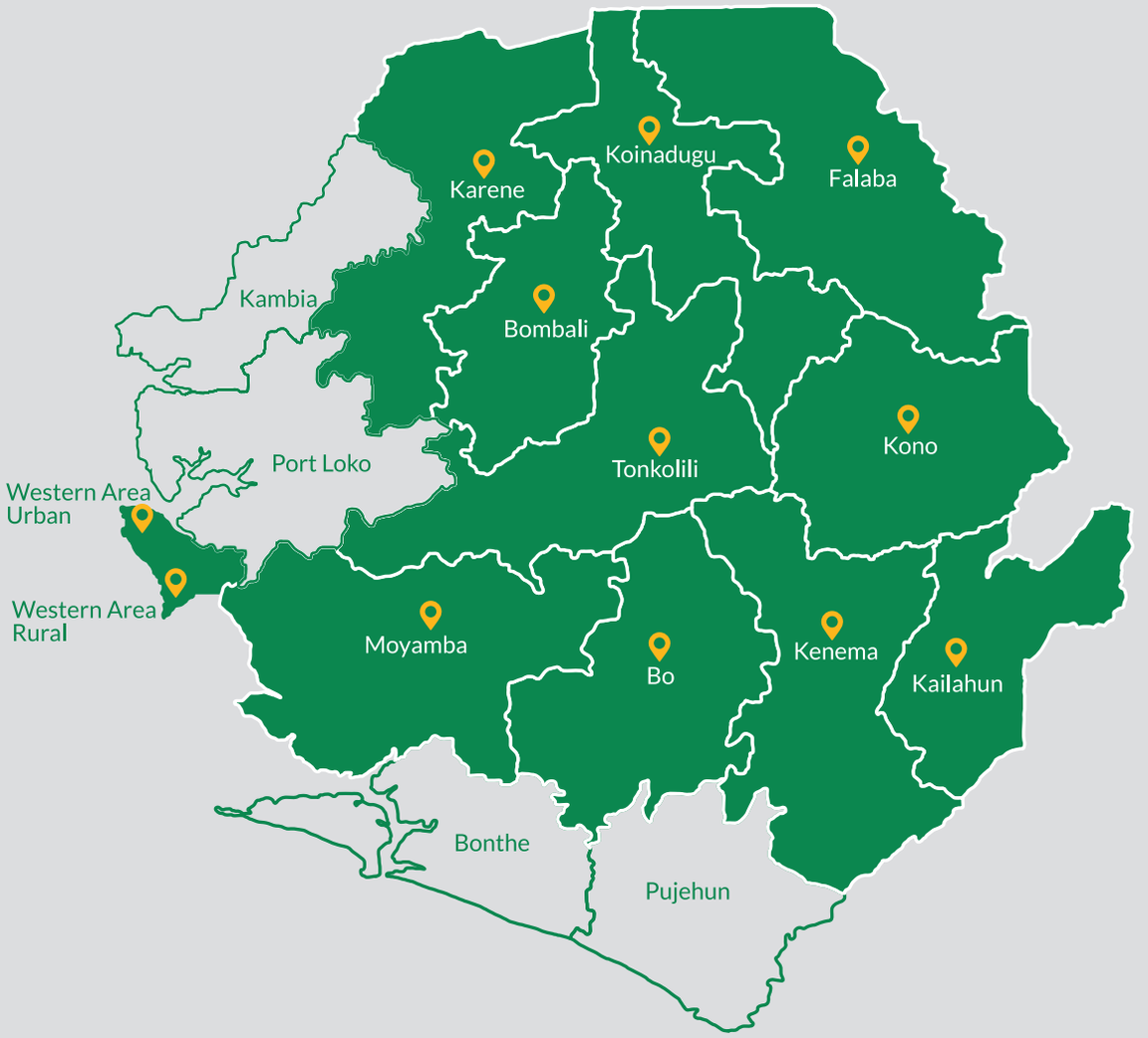
Program Priorities

- Child Protection
- Early Childhood Development
- Health and Nutrition
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- Food Security
- Household Economic Strengthening
- Emergency Response
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Climate Action
- Education
- Youth Development
- Advocacy

To promote children's optimal development at every age, we tailor our interventions to meet their unique needs as they grow from infants to young adults. ChildFund focuses on three life stages.

LIFE STAGE 1	LIFE STAGE 2	LIFE STAGE 3
Healthy and Secure Infants (0 to 5 years)	**Educated and Confident Children (6 to 14 years)**	**Skilled and Involved Youth (15 to 24 years)**

Areas of Operation



District	Grants/Programs
Bombali and Karene Districts	• Child Sponsorship Programming • Non-Sponsorship Program (NSP) bednets distribution • Cassava Value Chain Strengthening for Improved Food Security and Sustained Income project • Procter and Gamble (P&G): Children's Safe Drinking Water Project • Education for Protection and Well-being Program Model after this
Kailahun District	• Child Sponsorship Programming • Procter and Gamble (P&G): Children's Safe Drinking Water Project • Agro-Tech Development Support project • Education for Protection and Well-being Program Model
Koinadugu and Falaba Dustricts	• Child Sponsorship Programming • Cassava Value Chain Strengthening for Improved Food Security and Sustained Income project • Education for Protection and Well-being Program Model • Procter and Gamble (P&G): Children's Safe Drinking Water Project

District	Grants/Programs
Moyamba District	• Procter and Gamble (P&G): Children's Safe Drinking Water Project
Bo District	• Procter and Gamble (P&G): Children's Safe Drinking Water Project
Tonkolili District	• Procter and Gamble (P&G): Children's Safe Drinking Water Project
Kono District	• Procter and Gamble (P&G): Children's Safe Drinking Water Project • Agro-Tech Development Support project
Kenema District	• Agro-Tech Development Support project
Western Area Rural	• Increasing Access to Senior Secondary Education for 3,300 Out-of-school Girls Project
Western Area Urban	• Increasing Access to Senior Secondary Education for 3,300 Out-of-school Girls Project

Core Partners

- Bombali and Karene Districts - **Munafa-M'Patie Federation**
- Kailahun District - **N'Domakeh Federation**
- Koinadugu and Falaba Districts - **Daindemben Federation**

FY24 Key Achievements

USD 1.6 Million worth of medical and pharmaceutical supplies donated to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation.

USD 53,311 worth of multidisciplinary texts donated to the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE).

21,638 Long-lasting Insecticide treated bed nets distributed to children and their families to protect them from malaria.

16,470 children enrolled in our sponsorship program.

2,357 new sponsors from the U.S. and Germany gained in FY24.

2 livelihood grant -funded projects worth **€ 1, 215,628** awarded to ChildFund Sierra Leone.

2,822,100 Procter and Gamble purifier of water sachets distributed to 8,400 households.

2,421 fruit trees planted as part of our climate action.

840 students in 4 secondary schools are now using 4 modern classroom blocks with office spaces, ramps, railing and stores.

806 children in ChildFund-supported ECDs transitioned to primary school.

1,090 sets of furniture provided to help children get comfortable seating accommodation.

410 lactating mothers trained on breastfeeding and preparation of nutritious weaning diets.

317 children supported to access child-friendly healthcare services.

240 out-of-school girls re-enrolled into 6 secondary schools in the Western Area.

52 radio sessions on child-led advocacy conducted in Falaba and Koinadugu districts, reaching a total of 71,000 people, to create awareness of child protection issues.

260 caregivers trained on diarrhea management.

180 ruminants provided to families to help alleviate economic burdens on families.

146 savings groups supported in various communities.

Early Childhood Development



Our approach to solving developmental issues / problems starts from where we all started–childhood!

Our ECD program is an all-inclusive approach to ensure children are healthy and secure. Our interventions focus on children having access to nutritious diets, equipping parents and caregivers with essential skills and resources, and promoting high-quality early learning environments.

We also focus on creating safe and protective home and community settings where children's rights are upheld, preparing them for a successful transition to primary school.

410 lactating mothers trained on breastfeeding and preparation of nutritious weaning diets.

75 ECD facilitators trained on Nurturing Care and Early Stimulation.

260 primary caregivers trained on Diarrhea management and provision of Startup Kits.

3 classroom block ECD centers constructed in Segbwema, Kailahun District.

806 children in childFund-supported ECDs transitioned to primary.

1 ECD center constructed in Kailahun District.

2 ECDs and 1 Child-Friendly Space serving 200 children equipped with outdoor play materials.

Nurturing Young Minds through Pre-Primary Education

Foundational learning nurtures young minds, allowing children to flourish. Throughout our programs, we have ensured that children (under 5) do not only get access to pre-primary education, but also transition to primary education.



Total children (407 girls and 399 boys) in ChildFund-supported ECD facilities transitioned to primary school

806

From One Generation to the Next: ChildFund's Lifelong Impact on Saffiatu and Her Son

Meet Ansumana, a bright 6-year-old from Kailahun District, who just took a big step in his education by graduating from a ChildFund-supported ECD Center. His journey, however, is part of a much larger story—one that began with his mother, Saffiatu.

Saffiatu grew up in a small village where opportunities were few, and education seemed like a distant dream. That all changed when she became a sponsored child through ChildFund. With their support, Saffiatu was able to attend school and eventually pursue higher education. Today, she is a proud university finalist, with her tuition still fully covered by ChildFund.

Her son Ansumana followed in her footsteps, being a participant of ChildFund's interventions. At the ECD pre-school built by ChildFund in Segbwema, Kailahun District, he received books, bags, and other essential learning materials. This foundation has paved the way for his bright future as he steps into primary school. Saffiatu is deeply grateful for the life-changing support



ChildFund has provided, not just for her but also for her son. With hope in her heart, she watches Ansumana begin this new chapter, believing that, like her, he will thrive. His dreams are already big—Ansumana aspires to one day become a bank manager, ready to shape his own future and uplift his community.

> Nothing can erase this great memory I have of ChildFund. Their impact on me and my child is unforgettable. I would like to give back to my community after my course.'
>
> Saffiatu

Ensuring Access to Nutritious Diets for Children

To promote the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of children under the age of five, working with our local partners, we trained 410 lactating mothers on breastfeeding and preparing weaning diets for babies.

These mothers now have improved knowledge, attitudes, and practices in using locally available and grown resources to support their children's healthy growth. As a result, malnutrition among children under five has decreased, and the mothers are better equipped to prepare nutritious weaning diets.

The training emphasized that the quality of care children receive outside the home—such as in daycare centers, preschools, and community settings—is just as vital as the nurturing care they receive at home.

Facilitators learned about various aspects of nurturing care, including the importance of responsive caregiving, early learning, health and nutrition, and ensuring a safe environment. Mariama Marah from Senekedugu used to frequent the health facility with her sickly baby due to malnutrition. After the training on preparing a nutritious weaning diet, she transformed her child's health. Now, her baby is thriving.

Nurturing Care for Holistic Child Development

Nurturing care is essential for a child's growth and future success. Over the years, ChildFund and its partners have established 14 ECD centers, each staffed with ECD and Child Support Services (CSS) facilitators who help foster children's development.

We trained 75 facilitators (36 women and 39 men), equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to support children's physical, emotional, cognitive and social growth.

> Thank you for teaching me how to create a healthy diet for my child. My baby is strong and happy, and our frequent visits to the health facility are a thing of the past!
>
> Mariama

Education



ChildFund's education program aims to enhance educational opportunities for children, especially those living in poor communities.
It strives to broaden access to quality education, improve learning environments, bolster school infrastructure, protect children while learning, provide children with the requisite learning materials, increase access to secondary education for out-of-school girls.

USD 53,311 worth of multidisciplinary texts (English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Business and Economics, Medicine, and Health), donated to schools through the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE).

840 students in 4 secondary schools are now using 4 modern 3 classroom blocks with office spaces, ramps, railing, and stores to ensure quality learning.

670 sets of furniture provided to help children get comfortable seating

4 ECD centers were constructed and equipped, where teenage mothers drop their kids before going to school.

6 schools in the Western Area have integrated key programs into their curricula, including Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), the Education for Protection and Well-being Model, the National Radical Inclusion Policy, and the Teachers Code of Conduct.

608 students went through 68 sessions of Social Emotional Learning.

137 secondary school teachers trained on government policies to promote child protection, sexual education and inclusion in school.

4 ECD centers were set up at Services, Sengbe Pieh, Waterloo and Congress secondary schools where 23 children of adolescent mothers attend ECD when their mothers are at school.

2 three-classroom blocks at the Services Secondary school and Fourah Bay College Junior Secondary school, bringing to total 4 school blocks.

6 Child Rights Clubs set up in 6 six schools in the Western Area that are undertaking violence prevention campaigns.

Community structures are campaigning to ensure girls re-enrolled in school stay and complete their education.

Stakeholders are enacting local laws/ordinances to ensure children are protected in their communities across the Western Area.

25 teachers trained in the Western Area on Infection Prevention and Control (IPC).

10 groups in schools participated in Aflatoun training on social and financial education and received learning materials.

Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls



In April 2023, Sierra Leone's parliament passed the Basic and Senior Secondary Education Act, 2023, which integrates key aspects of the landmark 2021 National Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools. This policy acknowledges the systematic exclusion of pregnant girls, young mothers, and other marginalized groups from education.

Until 2020, the government had banned pregnant girls from attending school. Sierra Leone, which has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancies globally, sees the highest incidence among girls from impoverished backgrounds.

To help put this act and policy into action, together with our donor and implementing partners, we carved an ambitious goal of re-enrolling 3,300 out-of-school girls through our Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

The USD 1.5 million investment has begun yielding fruits. It has not only seen the re-enrolment of 240 girls since its inception, but it has also seen the construction of 4 schools (3-clasroom block each), including seating accomodation and WASH facilities, and has further demonstrated how various structures such as male action groups, teachers, and other child protection structures can collaborate to ensure that parent learners as well as their babies are safe during school hours.

SUCCESS STORY

From Despair to Determination: Kadiatu's Journey Back to School

Two years ago, Kadiatu's future seemed bleak. At just 14, she had already been out of school for two years. As the youngest of nine children, she was forced to drop out of school at 12 after two of her older brothers left Sierra Leone for the Middle East in search of better opportunities.





Moving to Freetown from her rural home of Yilleh, more than 115 miles away, she hoped for a better life, but instead faced one of her worst fears: she could no longer attend school.

"I was living with my older sister in Waterloo, but she struggled to provide for me and pay my tuition," Kadiatu shares. "I had no choice but to drop out."

After two years at home, Kadiatu moved in with her uncle, who was determined to get her back in school. Fortunately, her uncle was invited to a meeting with ChildFund staff, where the KOICA-sponsored "Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls in the Western Area" project was introduced. The project, based in Waterloo, re-enrolled out-of-school girls into one of the public secondary schools, covering textbooks, uniforms, and even backpacks and shoes. Kadiatu was one of over 20 girls enrolled in the program.

"I'm so happy to be back in school, I want to thank ChildFund and KOICA for helping me," she says gratefully.

Kadiatu's return to school proved to be a success. After her first exam since re-enrolling, she placed second out of 75 students, a testament to her resilience and determination. Her hard work showed that she was a young girl brimming with potential, once at risk of losing a bright future. With aspirations to become a nurse, Kadiatu is driven by a passion to help others. In a nation with only 3 doctors per 100,000 people, her goal is a noble one.

> I want to be a nurse after school so I can help my people and my country.

Kadiatu, 14.

Ramatu Turay, the principal of FAWE Junior Secondary School, is proud of Kadiatu's performance. "She did very well, and I'm happy for her progress," she says. "I'm also grateful to ChildFund and KOICA for the support they've provided to our school and especially to the girls who have been re-enrolled."

The project, which has re-enrolled 240 girls across six schools, continues to make a difference. In addition to providing learning materials, four new classroom blocks equipped with furniture, water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities have been constructed at Sengbe Pieh, Sierra Leone Muslim Congress, Fourah Bay College and Services secondary schools. These improvements aim to address overcrowding and inadequate facilities, ensuring a brighter future for students like Kadiatu.

Kadiatu's determination to be educated is working well for her. Her performance in school is worth the investment. She has been promoted to Junior Secondary School 3 (JSS3), another level in her schooling. At JSS 3, Kadiatu will join her colleagues to take the Basic Education Certificate Examination, ushering her into senior secondary school.





Defying Gender Stereotypes: Male Tribal Chiefs Champion Girls' Education

Historically, tribal chiefs in Sierra Leone upheld cultural practices, such as FGM and child marriage, that hindered girls' education and well-being. Many girls were forced to leave school, get married early, and undergo FGM, with little regard for their rights or futures. This persisted despite legal frameworks like the Child Rights Act of 2021 and the Customary Marriage Act, which conflicted on the age of consent, leading to ongoing child rights abuses.

Sierra Leone's civil war and the Ebola outbreak worsened the situation, with many girls dropping out of school or becoming pregnant, further marginalizing them from education. In 2024, the deaths of three girls during FGM in Kambia District highlighted the continued dangers faced by young girls.

In response, the government approved the National Policy on Radical Inclusion in Schools in 2021, aimed at ensuring education for marginalized groups. Tribal chiefs like Pa Alimamy Sesay II and Mohamed Bangura have taken a stand against these harmful practices. As members of the Male Action Group (MAG), part of an initiative by ChildFund and KOICA, they have successfully re-enrolled over 25 out-of-school girls in their community.



> What we did in our community is to establish by-laws that will force parents or guardians to send their children to schools. We place a fine of Le 500 ($ 22) on any parent that refuses to send their child to school.
>
> Chief Mohamed Bangura.

Their leadership has been crucial in convincing parents to prioritize their daughters' education and enforce penalties for non-compliance.

"We faced so many challenges during the first year of the project like reluctance from some parents in re-enrolling their girls to school. Using our authority as tribal heads, we were able to convince them," says Chief Pa Alimamy. ''Some of the parents and guardians frowned at re-enrolling the adolescent mothers but accepted after we invited them to several meetings.''

Millicent, now 16, is happy to be back in school after the project provided her secondary school with teaching and learning materials and care for her baby while she is in school. "I'm so grateful that Chief (Pa Alimamy) was able to identify me for this project because I really needed it. "I was quite unhappy when I left school because I felt that my dream of becoming a nurse would not be achieved if I were a dropout," says Millicent.

"What we did at our community is to establish by-laws that will force parents or guardians to send their children to schools," says Chief Mohamed Bangura. "We place a fine of Le 500 ($ 22) on any parent that refuses to send their child to school," he adds.

This initiative re-enrolled 240 girls across six schools in Western Sierra Leone. Chiefs like Pa Alimamy and Mohamed are breaking patriarchal barriers and advocating for a future where girls can pursue their education and dreams, offering a model for other communities to follow.

SUCCESS STORY

Why Seating Matters: How Desks are Promoting Learning

Many rural schools in Sierra Leone are in dire condition, with crumbling infrastructure posing serious risks to students. One often overlooked issue is the poor seating arrangements. Much of the furniture is old and broken, as was the case at Iye's school in Kailahun District. For months, the unsafe environment affected students' health and ability to learn.

In Iye's school, furniture had deteriorated so badly that help only came after everything was vandalized. "I sat on the floor many times during lessons," Iye recalls. "I felt ashamed going home with dirty uniforms, and washing them every day took time away from my studies." With her family unable to afford another uniform, this daily burden added to her challenges.

Iye's experience isn't unique. Her friend, Baindu, also struggled. "We were unhappy with the condition of our school, but we had no choice but to adapt," she says. When ChildFund intervened, everything changed. The school was transformed, creating a clean and safe environment for learning.

Headteacher Senesie Momoh was well aware of the students' plight but had no means to address it. "Our school was falling apart," Momoh explains. "We had to teach in dusty classrooms, with too few desks. Four to five students would share one desk, and many stood or sat on the floor. It was unbearable."

In Sierra Leone, school hours are long, with students expected to cover multiple subjects a day. Without proper desks and chairs, students like Iye often found themselves heading home during lunch and not returning. "My back would ache from sitting on the floor for hours," Iye says. "Where we sit matters—it affects how well we learn." For Iye, her new desk is more than just a piece of furniture. It represents hope, dreams, and the ability to focus on her studies. She aspires to become a lawyer and fight for justice in her community, especially for women and girls.

"After ChildFund's intervention, our school is a completely different place," says Iye's headteacher. "The classrooms are paved, the building has been repaired, and we've been provided with furniture, books, and teaching materials."

For Iye, the new seating has made all the difference. "I can't describe how happy I am with these new desks and chairs. I no longer have backaches, and I'm ready for my exams in May 2024." ChildFund, along with its local partner, has been working in Kailahun since 2005, supporting education, health, sanitation, and child protection.

Iye recently scored 275 on her exams, allowing her to advance to junior high school. "I'm so happy I made it," she says. Transitioning to secondary school is a journey filled with challenges, but for girls like Iye, it represents the potential for a brighter future.

In FY24, ChildFund provided 1,090 sets of chairs and desks to schools nationwide, improving the overall learning environment for children.



Education for Protection and Well-being



Child protection is a key focus at ChildFund, woven into all our initiatives. Our Education for Protection and Well-being (EPW) Program Model exemplifies this commitment by integrating child protection with education.

The EPW program is designed to improve protection, well-being and learning outcomes for children aged 6 to 12 years. When ChildFund addressed education issues, it recognized that accessibility, numeracy, and literacy were significant challenges for young learners.

Recently, we expanded our approach to include Social Emotional Learning (SEL), which is a precursor to learning outcomes. EPW engages students, caregivers, and teachers in activities that promote social-emotional learning (SEL), crucial for positive educational experiences. By emphasizing foundational education and SEL, we aim to create a safer, more nurturing environment that supports both academic achievement and personal development.

Initially piloted in Koinadugu District, the EPW model has proven successful. In FY24, ChildFund expanded the model to more grades within pilot schools and extended its reach to 3 additional districts—Falaba, Bombali and Kailahun.

Teachers and Caregivers Share Transformative Experiences During a Qualitative Evaluation

We conducted a qualitative evaluation among teachers and caregivers who participated in the EPW pilot in two schools to understand their experience, what they learned and have been practicing, and any changes they have noticed in their homes and schools since starting the program.

Key Results of the Evaluation

Themes emerged according to the social-ecological model at the community-, school-, family-, and child-levels.

- The community-level theme that emerged was social cohesion, with many participants reporting greater cohesion at home and in the community, greater parent engagement in their child's education and stronger relationships with their child's teacher and viewing the needs of children as a community responsibility.
- The school-level theme that emerged was teachers creating more conducive learning environments through teacher social-emotional learning skills, classroom management, and positive teacher practices.
- The family-level theme that emerged was improved parenting practices, which include reduced harsh discipline, positive parenting skills, and parent emotion regulation. The child-level theme that emerged was improved child-wellbeing reported by caregivers and teachers. Teachers and caregivers reported improvements in child engagement in education, improved relationships with children, and reduced child problem behavior.
- Many caregivers and teachers reported they themselves, their students, children, and families have benefited from participating in the EPW program. We found high levels of participant engagement despite high levels of adversity and competing priorities for participants. Most caregivers and teachers wanted the program to continue and availed to more students and communities.

Child Protection



Every child has the right to grow up in a safe environment, free from violence and neglect. ChildFund's child protection programs focus on ensuring the safety and well-being of children by promoting protective parenting, educating communities on recognizing and reporting violence, and challenging harmful cultural norms.

140 community members trained to safeguard children and champion community protection.

16 communities supported to implement Community Action Plans for the protection and well-being of children .

50 community representatives trained on Child Protection and SGBV Response in Binkolo.

50 community leaders trained on advocating for the institution of strong community bylaws on child protection and women's empowerment.

50 teachers trained on child protection and referral protocols.

> We provided protection for the 16,470 children in our sponsorship program, working with community-based child protection mechanisms, developing action plans to address child protection issues and using advocacy as a tool to hold multi-sectors and lawmakers accountable.

Enhancing Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms

One of the best ways to keep children safe from abuse, exploitation, and violence is by building the skills and abilities of local communities, children themselves and their families.

Through our Community-Based Child Protection (CBCP) Mapping, we carefully study the situation and use research methods that involve the community to find out what risks children face and what child protection services are already available in areas with few resources. Community members then use the results of this mapping to develop action plans to address these safety concerns. These plans lay out specific steps the community needs to take to protect their children and ensure their well-being.

Supporting action plans to address child protection issues

ChildFund supported 9 communities for the continued implementation of existing Community Action Plans for the protection and well-being of children. Communities are using these action plans to address child protection issues such as: child marriage, Online Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children (OSEAC), teenage pregnancy, Female Genital Cutting (FGC), among others.

Communities trained to Safeguard Children

Community-Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPCs) at the local level play a crucial role in safeguarding children from abuse and advocating for effective child protection policies and programs.

To enhance their effectiveness, we trained 100 participants (20 from each community) across 5 communities.

This training aimed to equip CBCPC members with the skills and knowledge needed to advocate for child protection, strengthen their capacity, and mobilize community support for children's rights and well-being.

The training resulted in several key outcomes to enhance child protection efforts such as: improving advocacy skills, strengthening community engagements, enhancing knowledge on child rights, among others.

50 Local Leaders Trained in Child Protection and SGBV Response in Binkolo

Munafa-M'Patie Federation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, hosted a one-day training in Binkolo, Safroko Limba Chiefdom, for 50 local service providers, including chiefs, teachers, and health workers. The training focused on child protection and Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) referral pathways and protocols. Participants gained critical skills to address child protection and SGBV issues, with discussions also covering the Sexual Offences Act and the role of chiefs in handling sexual penetration cases.

Sierra Leone Acts to Ban Child Marriage



We wrapped up FY 24 with the incredible news that lawmakers in Sierra Leone have outlawed child marriage.

Our collective efforts with like-minded organizations have borne fruit, and we are elated, as ending child marriage has been a cornerstone of our advocacy work. Yet, we remain vigilant.

Our dedication to eradicating child marriage is unwavering, and we will persist in addressing other crucial protection issues such as Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) and climate change advocacy.

Looking ahead, we will work with existing community structures in popularizing the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2024 across our areas of operation.

Uniting for Children: ChildFund and Global Partners Launch Joining Forces Alliance

ChildFund, alongside World Vision, Plan International, Save the Children International, and SOS Children's Villages International, proudly launched the Joining Forces (JF) Alliance Sierra Leone Chapter. This powerful coalition of five leading organizations is dedicated to forging a collective path to advocate for and champion children's issues and rights across the nation.

Despite their diverse approaches to combating violence and abuse against children, these organizations have agreed to unify their messaging on critical child protection issues. Together, they will tackle concerns such as child marriage, the effects of climate change on girls, female genital cutting (FGC), and more.

Sagane Thiaw, Country Director of World Vision Sierra Leone and Chair of the newly launched alliance, remarked, "This is a significant step towards accelerating positive change for children. We will leverage existing frameworks, structures, and our collective expertise to amplify the voices of children in decision-making processes that will shape their futures."



Global advocacy events commemorated-including Day of the African Child, International Women's Day, International Day of the Girl, among others creating the platform for over 1000 children to participate and make their voice heard on issues affecting their well-being.

1 Child Advocate and her chaperone sponsored to participate in the Inaugural Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi, Kenya, and COP28 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

4 like-minded organizations (ChildFund, Plan International, Save the Children and World Vision) launched the Joining Forces Alliance in Sierra Leone

Climate Action



Philipa Cride-Dole, President of the Children's Forum Network and ChildFund's Climate Action Ambassador planting a tree on World Environment Day.

Advocating for climate issues is ineffective without taking action to protect the environment and its inhabitants.

To turn our words into deeds, we initiated a series of climate actions across the country, drawing strength from it being one of our Africa Region's flagship programs alongside Early Childhood Development.

2,421 fruit trees planted for a greener tomorrow as part of our climate action.

45 communities sensitized on climate change and its effect on children and adults.

100 community members trained on environment protection and safety.

On World Environment Day (June 5), ChildFund reaffirmed its commitment to addressing climate change issues in Sierra Leone by partnering with local organizations and the government. Children from Bombali and Koinadugu districts planted 775 trees in alignment with the theme "Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience."

Senior officials from government ministries, district councils, and ChildFund attended the event, with strong involvement from the Children's Forum Network, led by its President, Philipa Cride-Dole, who also serves as ChildFund's Climate Change Ambassador. Philipa stressed the importance of addressing climate challenges through awareness, tree planting, and advocacy for environmental protection policies.

Tree planting was highlighted as a key strategy for ensuring ecosystem health, mitigating climate change, and fostering long-term resilience for Sierra Leone.

Reviving Forests and Futures: Munafa-M'Patie Federation Distributes 1,000 Fruit Trees and Raises Afforestation Awareness in Timber-Dependent Communities

In the chiefdoms of Biriwa, Safroko Limba, and Paki Masabong in Bombali District, many families rely on timber production and charcoal burning for their livelihoods, leading to deforestation, wildlife loss, soil erosion, and climate change.

To combat this, with support from ChildFund Sierra Leone, Munafa-M'Patie Federation launched community awareness campaigns on afforestation across four associations.

As part of this initiative, 1,000 fruit and ornamental trees were distributed to children, schools, and communities to restore the environment and enhance food security.

Sierra Leone Youth Leads the Charge at Inaugural Africa Climate Summit

Philipa Cride-Dole, President of the Children's Forum Network, is the first child that ChildFund Sierra Leone has sponsored to participate in the Inaugural Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi, Kenya.

Philipa joined other children from across Africa. During their deliberations in a side event, the children from across Africa reached a consensus to let Philipa present their issues to all African heads of state present at the First Africa Climate Summit.

Representing her peers, Philipa delivered a brilliant speech where she made the following recommendations for dealing with climate change issues in Africa:

- Support of children's projects on tree planting and recycling with expertise;
- Budget allocation and climate financing
- Creation of dialogue platforms for children with Heads of State;
- African leaders to ensure that policies on climate change are formulated and implemented;
- Provisions of health care, water tanks, and artificial irrigation for agriculture (crops and animals), among others.



ChildFund Climate Action Ambassador Philipa poses for a photo with Graça Machel, renowned humanitarian and former First Lady of Mozambique, along with another child, at the inaugural Africa Climate Summit in Kenya.

ChildFund Leaders and Youth Take Action to Protect the Environment



At the Children and Youth Pavilion side event organized by ChildFund Alliance, in collaboration with the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the Youth Resilience Lab, Philipa joined her peers and representatives/leaders from ChildFund Alliance and ChildFund International Africa, led by Chege Ngugi, Regional Director for Africa, Plan International, and the Climate Vulnerable Forum. They engaged in a two-hour intergenerational dialogue session on the topic "Symphony of the Future: Children's Vision of Climate Action."

In another engagement, Philipa and a group of children from Sierra Leone interacted with Sierra Leone's Chairman of the Presidential Initiative for Climate Change, Renewable Energy, and Food Security, Hon. Dr. Kandeh Kolleh Yumkella, at a side event in Dubai. She called for greater investment in youth-led climate initiatives, emphasizing the importance of empowering young people to take active roles in combating climate change.

Outcome of Participation in Climate Summits

As part of our back home action as an organization, we worked collaboratively with our partners and Climate Change Ambassador, Philipa Cride-Dole to:

- Engage the public via Africa Young Voices (AYV) and Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) Television, re-echoing the cry of children around the world, and calling on the government to implement recommendations on climate issues.
- Engage Journalists in a press conference to speak about the issue and to alert the media for setting the agenda on climate change policy.
- Conduct school-to-school sensitization on climate action and keeping school environments safe and clean.

Sustainable Livelihoods

To help create a world where children can reach their full potential, we focus on strengthening families with the skills and resources they need to achieve financial self-sufficiency. For children aged 0-5, we focus on supporting parents in generating income to provide for their families.

For children aged 6-14, we promote financial literacy and nurture entrepreneurial skills, while encouraging self-confidence.

For older youth, helping them through vocational training institutes equip them to navigate a competitive and unpredictable job market. Our programs involve the following approaches in ensuring that families have what they need to thrive:

- Agriculture and food security
- Skills training
- Business and entrepreneurship
- Cash assistance
- Savings Groups

146 savings groups supported in various communities.

180 ruminants provided to children and their families to help alleviate economic burdens on households.

165 youth trained on Agri-business enterprises development.

130 caregivers provided with farm inputs (viable seeds, and farming tools).

Learn more about the impact of ChildFund's cash transfer programs on women in Kailahun District:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3RLPDXTzmU



Meet Agnes, a mother of four from Kailahun District who received USD 75 through ChildFund's cash transfer program. With this support, Agnes started a small trade business selling assorted items including food, school materials such as books and pens, and other essential household goods. Thanks to her business, she can now meet her family's daily needs, including food, education, and healthcare.

Meet Baby Amara, The Newest Addition to a Thriving Household



> I ventured into selling recharge phone airtime in addition to my fuel and food trade. All three put together are helping me save a lot and attend to family issues. My baby does not have to worry or struggle for anything. I can afford whatever is needed for her growth and upkeep.

Aminata, a mother of four.

Sierra Leone's economy is in dire straits. Prices of basic commodities have soared to unimaginable levels, and the leone is continuously depreciating against the U.S. dollar. The country is ranked among the poorest nations in the world, with many people surviving on less than two dollars a day. While everyone feels the economic strain, those hit hardest are low-income earners and people living in extreme poverty in rural areas.

One such individual is Aminata Jaward, a mother of four living in Kailahun District. Her husband, a teacher, barely earns enough to support the family. She tried farming, but it wasn't sufficient given their heavy financial burdens. The last thing on her mind was raising another child in such a struggling economy. "I resolved not to have another child because I didn't want them to suffer," she said. "I wasn't expecting to get pregnant again, but now that my baby is here, he means the world to me."

The impact of COVID-19, coupled with the Russia and Ukraine war exacerbated the economic challenges, especially for vulnerable groups. People are still reeling from the shock of the pandemic. "Doing something to help people cope with this shock was not an option; it was a necessity to strengthen women's capacity to deal with complex issues affecting children's well-being," said Salamatu Benjua, Program Manager at Ndomakeh Federation. With funding from ChildFund, cash of 1,500 leones ($71) was distributed to several women to help them start businesses.

In 2023, she was among many women who received cash transfers from ChildFund, through its local partner, Ndomakeh Federation, to start a business. "I received support from Ndomakeh. That was the start of my journey," she said. "I was determined from that point on that my family's only way out of our struggling situation was to make the most out of what I received. Jaward invested her money in petty trade, selling rice, fish, cooking oil and other much needed commodities in her community."

"I started selling food items because people buy food more than any other commodity in my community. I was saving some money hoping that one day I would be in a position to own multiple profitable businesses. Once I had saved some money, I embarked on selling fuel because it is also in high demand from motorcycle riders."

In 2024, Jaward has set herself apart as a parallel entrepreneur. As if owning two businesses was not enough, she embarked on a third venture. ''Poverty likes a lazy person. Once you start being lazy and refusing to expand your business or think of more profitable challenges, poverty creeps in,'' she says "I ventured into selling recharge phone airtime in addition to my fuel and food trade. All three put together are helping me save a lot and attend to family issues. My baby does not have to worry or struggle for anything. I can afford whatever is needed for her growth and upkeep."

Baby Ansumana is now 5 months old (as of September 2024) and blessed to be born at a time that her mother's business has excelled, and their household's economy is thriving.
To date, Jawards business is worth over USD 1,000. This, compared to where it all started with $71.53, is a show of strength of an industrious woman determined to keep her household income steady and thriving.

Household economic strengthening initiatives are crucial in reducing families' vulnerability to poverty, promoting economic independence, and enhancing their ability to provide for their children in such challenging times.

Village Savings and Loans Associations

Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) have become a powerful tool for empowering rural poor women in many developing regions. These community-based financial models help women improve their economic standing and resilience through local, informal savings and lending systems.

VSLAs are supporting rural poor women in terms of accessing finance, being empowered economically, promoting a savings culture, building social support networks, accessing training and skills development, reducing vulnerability and promoting resilience, promoting gender equality and empowerment, among others.

In the year being reviewed, we supported 146 VSLA groups across our areas of operation with skills training.



> VSLAs are transforming the lives of rural poor women by providing them with the tools and support they need to save, invest, and improve their livelihoods, ultimately lifting them out of poverty.

SUCCESS STORY

From Struggling Single Mom to Community Business Leader: Messie's transformation

Being a single mother of four has not been easy for Messie. "I have faced countless challenges to provide for my children and support them through school," she recalls. When her children were on the brink of dropping out due to financial struggles, she joined the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) in Segbwema. Through the association's small business skills training and access to loans, Messie was able to grow her small trading business.

Starting with a modest loan, she expanded her inventory and eventually became financially independent. She no longer borrows from microcredit agents with high interest rates. Instead, she has a thriving business and is even able to offer loans to others. "People admire my success and ask how I did it," Messie shares. "The VSLA and the business training are the magic."

Today, Messie is a respected businesswoman, inspiring others in her community. She credits ChildFund/ Ndomakeh for bringing a community financial institution to their doorstep, enabling her and others to achieve financial stability.





Goats bring joy and secure livelihoods

Goats require minimal ongoing expenses and don't impose financial strain on vulnerable households, yet they provide significant economic benefits. A mature goat, priced between 80 and $ 100, can generate enough income to meet a family's essential needs. With this in mind, we distributed 160 goats to children and their families, helping to ease their financial burdens. These small ruminants also offer a vital source of protein through meat and dairy, both crucial components of a balanced diet essential for children's healthy growth and development.

> These goats are a blessing to our family. Whenever we face difficulties, my parents can sell a goat to meet our needs, like buying school supplies, covering hospital bills, or providing nutritious food. Thanks to ChildFund, I can continue my education and support my family.

Yaata, 14, Kailahun District

Health and Nutrition

Our health programs are dedicated to nurturing physical, mental, and emotional well-being, addressing essential health needs at every stage of a child's life. We strive to enhance the health practices of caregivers, especially pregnant and postpartum mothers, and engage the entire community in fostering healthier lifestyles. Our initiatives for adolescents and youth place a special emphasis on adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH).

Furthermore, we collaborate closely with the government to ensure the availability of medical and pharmaceutical supplies, tackling critical health conditions with comprehensive care and support.



USD 1.6 Million worth of medical and pharmaceutical supplies donated to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation.

21,638 Long-Lasting Insecticide Treated Nets provided to children in Bombali, Kailahun and Koinadugu districts.

317 children accessed child-friendly health care services.

155 local authorities trained on SRHRs who are now providing SRHRs related care and support in the communities.

100 ccommunity health workers/PHU staff trained to provide youth-friendly sexual reproductive health services in 5 chiefdoms.

260 mothers trained on management of diarrhea and are safely practicing home-based preparation of oral rehydration salts.

394 youth and community leaders participated in intergenerational dialogue on SRHR.

150 community health workers (CHWs) trained on hygiene promotion.

80 peer educators trained on SRHRs who engaged their peers on same.

50 pupils (25 Boys & 25 Girls) and 10 teachers (3 Females & 7 Males) trained on sanitation and hygiene management across five project schools.

10 school health clubs formed and trained on Hygiene Promotion and Environmental Sanitation.

2 health facilities, (including a birth waiting room) rehabilitated.

Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights

Our SRHR programs are designed to equip young people with the knowledge, resources, and support they need to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health.

Here's how we incorporate SRHR into our programs:

- **Education and Awareness:** We provide comprehensive SRH education in sync with the needs and developmental stages of young people. This education covers topics such as contraception, STIs, consent, and healthy relationships. The goal is to equip youth with accurate information and promote positive, responsible behaviors.

- **Access to Services:** We are dedicated to improving access to essential SRH services, including counseling, medical care, and contraceptives, particularly in underserved areas where these resources are limited or unavailable.

394 Youth and Community Leaders Unite for Dialogue

We conducted intergenerational dialogue (through workshops and peer education) sessions for 150 youths and community stakeholders in Bombali and Koinadugu Districts.

By fostering open dialogues about SRH, we strengthened the capacity of young people to advocate for their own rights and make informed choices.

Our programs create safe, supportive environments where young people can discuss their concerns and seek advice without fear of stigma or discrimination. These spaces are crucial for addressing sensitive issues and providing support.

ChildFund advocates for policies that protect and promote the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people. This includes working with governments and communities to ensure that young people's needs are recognized and addressed in policy-making.

Engaging families and communities in discussions about SRH is essential for creating supportive environments. ChildFund's programs often include training for parents and community leaders to foster a more informed and supportive community.

100 Community Health Workers Trained to Deliver Youth-Friendly Reproductive Health Services



Empowering Local Leaders: New SRHR Training Equips Authorities to Support Youth

Local authorities in Koinadugu, Falaba and Kailahun districts were found to have limited knowledge of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) due to a lack of education from health professionals. This led to difficulties in engaging young people on topics such as love, sex, and contraception.

To address this, together with our local partners, we trained 155 local authorities, including chiefs, youth leaders, and teachers, on SRHR Legal Service Response. The training covered SRHR, adolescent challenges, local solutions, and stakeholder responsibilities. Authorities are now equipped to engage adolescents and address SRHR issues in their communities, with action plans for implementation.

ChildFund Donates $1.6M in Life-Saving Medical Supplies to Combat Child and Maternal Mortality



Dr. Mustapha Kabba, CMO, MoH, (left), receiving medical and pharmaceutical supplies from Victor Kamara, Country Director, ChildFund Sierra Leone (right).

ChildFund, committed to addressing child mortality and Sierra Leone's high maternal mortality rates, donated pharmaceutical drugs worth USD 1.6 million to the Ministry of Health. The donation, received by Dr. Mustapha Kabba, Deputy Chief Medical Officer (CMO), includes high-quality items like Lactulose Oral Solution, prenatal supplements, pediatric electrolyte solutions, Band-Aids, and medical supplies.

> Dr. Kabba highlighted the benefit for children suffering from electrolyte deficiencies. This donation was made possible through ChildFund's partnership with MAP International as part of the Gifts in Kind program.

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The Battle Against Malaria with Life-Saving Bed Nets



Malaria takes more young lives in Africa than any other illness, and the children of Sierra Leone know this preventable killer all too well. The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that malaria is a leading cause of death and illness in the country, with over 2.5 million cases and more than 6,800 deaths annually. Bed nets are an essential, efficient, and cost-effective weapon in this fight, providing both immediate and long-term protection against malaria transmission and significantly improving public health.

Together with our partners, we distributed a total of 21,638 long-lasting insecticide treated nets. This helped reduce the incidences of malaria especially among children across our operational areas.

Increasing Access to Quality and Affordable Healthcare

In FY 24, we made a significant impact by helping 317 children recover from serious illnesses such as pneumonia, acute malaria, anemia, and typhoid.

These are life-threatening conditions that can severely affect children's health, energy, and ability to participate in daily activities, especially in their education.

By providing timely medical care and support, we enabled these children to regain their strength and return to school, allowing them to continue their education without further interruption. This recovery not only helped the children thrive academically but also restored hope to their families and communities, contributing to their overall well-being and long-term development.

> I want to thank ChildFund and N'domakeh for the care I received during my umbilical hernia repair. The pain before the surgery affected my school attendance, and my family couldn't afford the cost. Thanks to ChildFund's quick action and the Daru field hospital, I had successful surgery for a double hernia and fully recovered within weeks.
>
> I'm incredibly grateful for the relief and the ability to return to school and be with my friends and family pain-free. I'll always be thankful for their support and for helping children like me.

Amara, 13.

Training Caregivers on Diarrhea Management and First Aid

Rural communities often have limited access to healthcare facilities. Teaching caregivers how to use simple, affordable treatments like Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) made from salt and sugar solutions can prevent the need for costly hospital visits. We trained 260 caregivers how to treat diarrhea, thus reducing the risk of severe dehydration and death before professional help is available.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Overcoming Water Woes: Different Approaches One Outcome

Contaminated water poses serious health risks, especially for children, leading to diseases like cholera, typhoid, and diarrhea, as well as stunted growth and weakened immune systems.

In Sierra Leone, only 57% of the population has access to clean water, with rural areas at just 40%, and sanitation coverage is only 13%.

Many communities still struggle with unsafe water and open defecation, increasing contamination. To address this, ChildFund, in partnership with Procter & Gamble, is providing clean water solutions through purification sachets, and bio-sand filtration technology to improve access to safe water for children and their families.

ChildFund, through its subsidy grants and other project fundings, is also providing boreholes to communities.



2,822,100 water purification sachets distributed to 22 communities in all 7 districts.

47,320 children and their families in 8,400 households accessed safe and clean water.

2 Bio-sand water systems completed in 2 communities in Tonkolili and Bombali Districts, reaching a total of 668 households.

100 hygiene and health promoters, community volunteers, community health workers, and social workers trained on the use and importance of BSFs and water purification sachets, facilitating knowledge transfer at the community level.

14 quiz competitions and drama skits were held in schools to test children's knowledge of hygiene practices as part of the Children's Safe Drinking Water project.

8,400 households were sensitized on home-based water management.

12 monthly radio discussion programs in collaboration with local partners, significantly increased public awareness regarding water management and sanitation practices.

4 boreholes were constructed that gave over 1,000 people access to clean water.

20 community volunteers trained on the maintenance and operation of BSFs.

50 hygiene and health promoters, community volunteers, health workers, and social workers were trained on the use and importance of BioSand Filters (BSFs) and water purification sachets to promote knowledge transfer within their communities.

10 School Health Clubs trained on proper hygiene practices and received hygiene materials.

Musu's Community Celebrates 80% Drop in Cases of Diarrhoea



Since 2017, Musu's community has struggled with waterborne illnesses like diarrhea and cholera due to contaminated water sources. The poor health conditions inspired 14-year-old Musu to become a nurse to educate her community about the dangers of drinking contaminated water.

In 2017, Musu's friend died from severe diarrhea, and Musu herself fell ill and had to seek treatment in a nearby community due to a lack of local healthcare facilities.

> Since implementing the project, Musu's community has seen an 80% reduction in diarrhea cases—from 30 to as few as 6 per month.

The community's situation began to improve in 2019 when ChildFund introduced a water purification project funded by Procter & Gamble (P&G). The project aimed to provide safe drinking water to rural communities lacking sustainable potable water sources.
P&G's water purification technology, initially developed for clarifying laundry water, can transform contaminated water into safe drinking water quickly and easily.

Since implementing the project, Musu's community has seen an 80% reduction in diarrhea cases—from 30 to as few as 6 per month. By the end of 2023, over 3.6 million purification sachets had been distributed to 22 communities across seven districts, and 8,400 households, including Musu's, were trained in their use.

The project has significantly improved the health and quality of life in Musu's community, allowing residents to enjoy cleaner, safer water and reducing the prevalence of waterborne diseases.

Bio-sand Water Filtration System: An Effective Household Water Treatment Solution



Many Sierra Leoneans rely on contaminated sources for drinking water, which, along with inadequate sanitation, contributes to various health issues in the country. Very few Sierra Leoneans have access to piped water in their homes, leaving women and children to search for this essential resource outside.

The author of this piece shares this experience. Even in the capital, Freetown, many residents depend on sachet water from manufacturing companies, though its purity is often uncertain. If those in the capital face such difficulties, life is even harder for the majority of the population in underdeveloped areas. Haja, 9, shares this experience, too.

For years, her community in Tonkolili District,collected water from an open pond that was vulnerable to contamination, especially during the rainy season, when trash and even human waste would flow into it.

This was causing illnesses such as diarrhea, typhoid and other water-borne related diseases. A child never forgets the pain they endured growing up. The harsh memories of typhoid and diarrhea still linger in Haja's mind. ''

In 2023, ChildFund, working with its partner, MoPADA, introduced the bio-sand water filtration system, a new technology to Haja's community. The biosand filter (BSF) is a simple, household water treatment device that builds on traditional slow sand filters but is specifically designed for intermittent use.

A BSF consists of a concrete or plastic container filled with specially prepared sand and gravel. As water passes through the filter, it removes pathogens, iron, turbidity, and manganese through physical straining.
Haja's community recently gained access to safe and clean water through a bio-sand filtration system. This life-changing project was made possible by Procter & Gamble's (P&G) funding of the Children's Safe Drinking Water initiative, implemented by ChildFund International since 2019. Now, over 500 people in Haja's community are drinking safe, clean water.

> The water in our community was unsafe to drink, but we had no other option.
> Now, the water we drink is clean and tastes different. This is the first time I am getting water from a tap.
>
> Haja, 9.

SUCCESS STORY

Clean Water and Safe Facilities Keep Girls in School

Refreshed, satisfied, excited, and confident—these are the words 17-year-old Zainab uses to describe her feelings when she turns on the tap at her school and gets safe, clean water. Several years ago, she would not have said that. "We did not have access to safe and clean water,'' she reveals.

For many girls, the lack of proper toilets and water can be a dealbreaker, especially as they reach puberty, leading to absenteeism during menstruation. Over time, this absenteeism can accumulate, leading to lower academic performance and increased likelihood of dropping out. Schools without proper sanitation facilities often lack secure, private spaces for girls. This lack of privacy can make girls feel unsafe and reluctant to attend school. For some, the absence of gender-segregated facilities can lead to harassment or discomfort, further discouraging regular attendance.

Thanks to KOICA's funding the Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project through ChildFund Korea and ChildFund Sierra Leone, Zainab's school now has a new three-classroom block equipped with essential water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities.

With the new facilities, Zainab and her peers no longer face the challenge of water not being available, and students absent for lessons. Now we have uninterrupted access to water any day, any time, as much as we want it," Zainab shares. "Our school environment is really girl-friendly now." Recent epidemics have highlighted the importance of handwashing, but without water, good hygiene practices are impossible.

Since gaining uninterrupted water access, Zainab's handwashing habits have significantly increased. "I have gotten used to washing my hands very frequently," she says, reflecting the positive impact of this project on her daily life and well-being.

In many communities, the stigma surrounding menstruation can be exacerbated by inadequate facilities. Girls may face additional pressure and discrimination if they cannot manage their menstrual hygiene effectively, leading to increased dropout rates.

By addressing these issues and providing appropriate facilities, schools can create a more supportive and inclusive environment that encourages girls to stay in school and succeed academically. The borehole dug in Zainab's school serves over 500 students.



Youth Development

ChildFund's youth programs aim to strengthen the capacity of young people by focusing on three key areas: access to safe employment, reproductive health education, and active community participation.

Through vocational training and job readiness programs, youth gain the skills needed for sustainable employment, promoting economic independence and reducing poverty.

The programs also provide comprehensive reproductive health education, enabling youth to make informed decisions about their well-being.

Additionally, ChildFund encourages youth to take active roles in their families and communities, fostering leadership, civic engagement, and social responsibility for a brighter future.



200 youth sensitized on substance abuse.

75 youth sponsored with bursaries to pursue vocational training and are gainfully employed.

150 youth trained on post-election violence prevention.

Meet Josephine - Former School Dropout Turned Professional Plumber



Youth unemployment in Sierra Leone stands as one of the nation's most pressing issues. With over 60% of the population under 25, finding meaningful employment for young people is crucial. This dynamic demographic contends with a scarcity of job opportunities, insufficient skills training, and restricted access to financial resources.

Many young people lack the education or vocational training needed to secure jobs in today's competitive market. The saying goes, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop," and unfortunately, many dropouts and unemployed youth fall prey to societal pressures such as drug addiction, theft, and even commercial sex work.

However, Josephine, a proud mother of a beautiful daughter, was determined to change the narrative for young girls dropping out of school in her community.

"I was a dropout, neglected by society and even my own family," Josephine recalls. "Some friends and loved ones also gave up on me. But I was determined that one day, things would change for me."

In Josephine's community, when a girl drops out of school, they are often quickly married off or thrust into traditional roles, which may include bearing children or engaging in petty trade. Despite these challenges, ChildFund is contributing towards turning the tide.



> Josephine is just one of 180 young people trained in Bombali District over the past two years. Her story is a testament to what women can achieve, often surpassing even the expectations set for men.

Our youth programs are designed to unlock the potential of young individuals, equipping them to grow into resilient and resourceful members of society.

With support from ChildFund through its local partner Munafa M'Patie Federation, Josephine found a way out. She enrolled in a vocational training program funded by ChildFund and began to see a brighter future.
"I am now a valuable member of society.
I've managed to rent my own place, send my child to school, and even support my family," Josephine shares.

Female plumbers are rare in Sierra Leone, but Josephine has become a role model. "Today, I am admired by many for the work that I do," she says. "I frequently receive contracts and job offers." Josephine is just one of 180 young people trained in Bombali District over the past two years. Her story is a testament to what women can achieve, often surpassing even the expectations set for men.

Josephine's success did not stop with vocational training. Inspired to further her skills, she pursued an advanced diploma in plumbing at the Sierra Leone Opportunities Industrialization Centre (SLOIC). "I am proud to have graduated with flying colors," she says.

Now, Josephine leads the plumbing department at Wusum Hotel in Makeni, overseeing two male plumbers. "This entire journey started with one step, a step that was supported by ChildFund," Josephine reflects. "I am grateful for this opportunity."

See more about Josephine and other inspiring stories of youth who transformed their lives through vocational training funded by ChildFund and its partners.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLqxiJQPIUk

SUCCESS STORY

Promoting Higher Education

ChildFund has long worked with community volunteers to improve children's lives. Many of these volunteers, often unqualified community teachers, lack formal training and support. To enhance their capacity, the Daindemben Federation, funded by ChildFund, identified 25 youth, some of them volunteers, for higher education support. Eight of them have already been admitted to Ernest Bai Koroma University in Bombali and Port Loko Teachers College.

Similarly, in Kailahun District, 10 university-ready youth were supported with tuition to Njala University, Eastern Technical University in the South-Eastern regions, and Institute of Public Administration and Management and Fourah Bay College in the Western Area.

Fighting Substance Abuse (*Kush*)

A new wave of Zombie drugs commonly known in Sierra Leone as Kush, has become a social problem across the country. The drug, not only does it make youth and young people high, but it also impacts their health resulting in swollen feet, multiple organ failures, among others. Plus, they are involved in crimes.

To address the growing issue of substance abuse among young people, Munafa-M'Patie Federation conducted a series of sensitization sessions targeting 200 youth and community leaders across Bombali District. This initiative was a joint effort also involving the District Council, the Ministry of Youth Affairs (MOYA), and the National Commission for Children (NCC).

Child Sponsorship

At ChildFund, we believe lasting change begins with childhood. We connect children with the resources, people, and institutions they need to grow up healthy, educated, and safe.

Since 2005, our child sponsorship program in Sierra Leone has brought this vision to life, starting in Koinadugu District.

Sponsorship plays a vital role in promoting children's well-being, creating enduring connections between sponsors and communities. The generosity of sponsors helps nurture entire communities, unlocking the potential of every child and fostering meaningful bonds that enhance ChildFund's mission to support children globally.

> By the end of June 2024, ChildFund's sponsorship program supported 16,470 children, with 11,993 (72.81%) of them directly sponsored. Despite global economic challenges, we welcomed 2,357 new sponsors, primarily from the United States and Germany, resulting in a 3.6% increase in sponsorships for FY 24.













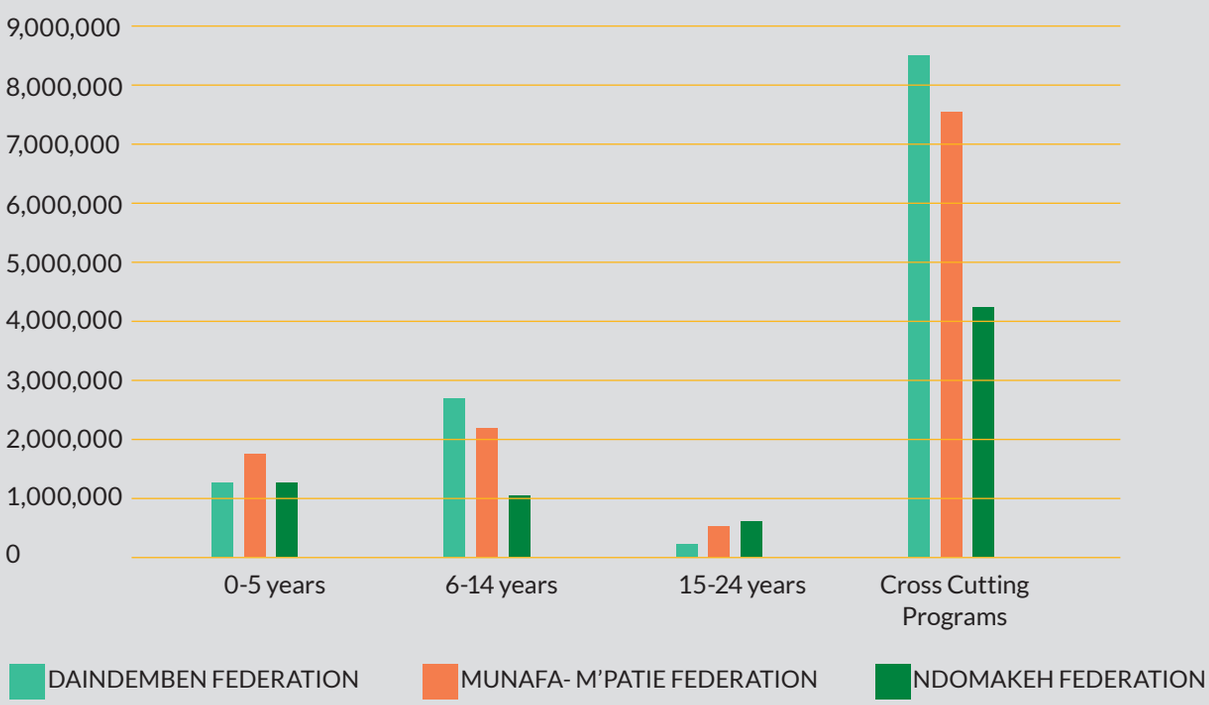
Financials

Total Income

Source of Funds	Amount (USD)
Designated Fund Certificate	192,857
Gifts-In-Kind	2,313,496
Grants	1,047,451
Non-Sponsorship Funds	588,000
Partnership Effectiveness Fund	296,530
Subsidy	1,510,224
Working Fund	225,981
TOTAL	**6,174,539**

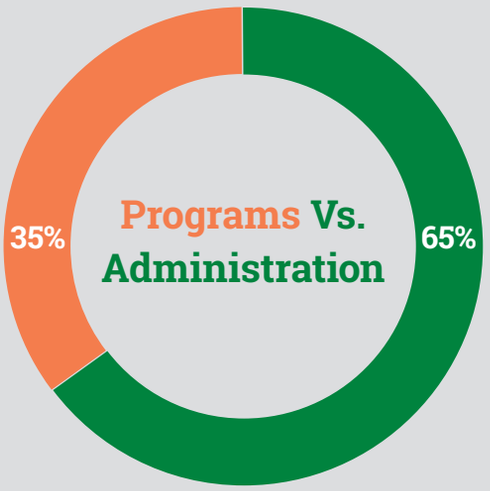
Expenditure by Life Stage (USD)

	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-24 years	Cross Cutting Programs
Daindemben Federation	53,738.82	114,862.07	76,749.05	367,705.82
Munafa-M'patie Federation	75,460.60	93,947.50	23,248.39	327,416.12
Ndomakeh Federation	54,765.65	43,373.19	25,607.92	183,348.62
Expenditure by Life Stage	183,965.07	252,182.76	125,605.36	878,470.56



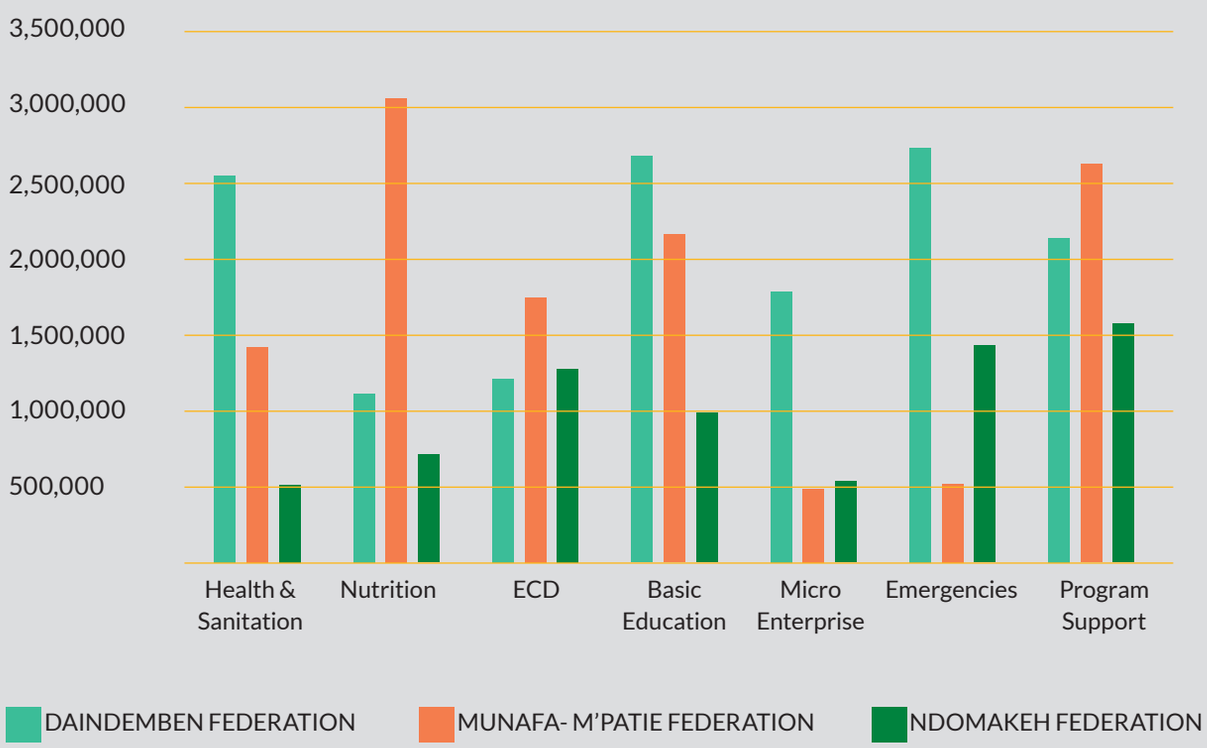
Programs and Administration Costs (by Local Partner)

	Programs	Administration
Daindemben Federation	399,051.34	214,004.42
Munafa-M'patie Federation	338,612.29	181,460.32
Ndomakeh Federation	200,177.09	106,918.29
	65%	35%



Areas of Investment

Project Name	Health & Sanitation	Nutrition	Early Childhood Development	Basic Education	Micro Enterprise	Emergencies	Program Support
Daindemben Federation	109,590	49,259	52,124	114,862	76,749	117,721	92,750
Munafa-M'patie Federation	61,547	131,615	75,461	93,948	21,634	23,016	112,853
Ndomakeh Federation	22,939	31,777	54,766	43,373	23,993	62,132	68,115



Our Development Partners

We take our responsibility to steward your gifts with the utmost care. Every dollar you donate goes directly to impactful, people-centered programs. Thank you for helping ChildFund brighten the lives of children and their families who are living in poverty.

Our sister organizations in the ChildFund Alliance frequently collaborate with us on various projects worldwide, including emergency responses as they occur. Generous individual donors, many of whom are also sponsors, provide invaluable support for these initiatives and wherever it is needed most.

All of you make the dream work.



Celebrating the People Behind our Impact

At ChildFund, we proudly shine a light on our greatest asset—our team, our people.

Our people are true heroes behind our success and the tangible impacts we create in the communities we serve.

They are the dynamic drivers of change. Our team is a vibrant tapestry of diverse ages, ethnicities, abilities, genders, and religions.

> We have embraced the Inclusion Diversity Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) framework. This rich diversity is our strength, and we are committed to ensuring that every individual feels included, respected, heard, and treated equally Because We Need Each Other.

Our Senior Management Team

Our Senior Management Team (SMT) is the driving force behind our strategic direction and leadership in Sierra Leone. They expertly navigate changes, guide our overall direction, and uphold our organizational structure. In doing so, they inspire our employees to advance our vision and mission. The SMT also fosters a culture of collaboration, innovation, adaptability, dedication, clear communication, and hard work, setting the tone for our collective success.



Victor Kamara
Country Director



Isatu Venn
Programs & Sponsorship Director



Ndeye Ba Die Diarra
Finance Director - West Africa



Madlene Ashcroft
Human Resources Manager
Sierra Leone and The Gambia



Sahr Ngaujah
Communications Manager

Our Team

1. **Ibrahim Bangura**
   Senior Accountant, Sierra Leone and The Gambia
2. **Bundu Koroma**
   Finance Officer, Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project
3. **Sydnella Rogers**
   Sustainable Livelihoods Officer
4. **Bando Marah**
   Education Advisor, Sierra Leone and The Gambia
5. **Anthonette Luseni**
   Partnership Portfolio Manager
6. **Jeremiah Sawyer**
   Project Manager, Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project
7. **Lahai Aruna**
   Child Protection and Advocacy Manager
8. **Emmanuel Victor Wilson**
   Business Development Specialist
9. **Edwina Suma**
   Human Resources and Admin. Specialist
10. **Mohamed Magbie**
    Sponsorship Specialist Lead
11. **Saffiatu Kamara**
    Sponsor Relations Officer
12. **Abdul Kamara**
    Education Specialist
13. **Santigie A.A. Kamara**
    Accountant
14. **Moses Sorba**
    Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEAL) Specialist
15. **Bashiru Koker**
    Program Officer, Children's Safe Drinking Water project
16. **Fatmata O. Swarray**
    Project Officer, Children's Safe Drinking Water project
17. **Abdul Kargbo**
    Project Officer, Children's Safe Drinking Water project
18. **Yembeh Mansaray**
    Project Coordinator, EPW Program Model
19. **Osman Kargbo**
    Logistics, Gifts-In-Kind (GIK), Fleet Officer
20. **Alhaji Yusuf Koroma**
    Finance Officer
21. **Fatmata Sesay**
    Grants Finance Officer
22. **Abdul Kamara**
    Program Officer, Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project
23. **Hawanatu Kamara**
    Program Officer, Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project
24. **Alex David Conteh**
    Construction Engineer, Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project
25. **Mohamed Conteh**
    Communications Officer, Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project
26. **Ethel Williams**
    Procurement Officer, Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project
27. **Martha Kallon**
    Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning Officer, Increasing Access to Secondary Education for Out-of-School Girls project
28. **Desmond Sesay**
    Admin. Assistant
29. **Memunatu Kamara**
    Receptionist
30. **Samuel Forbes**
    Senior Driver
31. **Josesph K. Vandy**
    Office Assistant
32. **Dauda Conteh**
    Office Assistant
33. **Fatorma Nallo**
    Office Assistant
34. **Clinton Sevalie**
    Driver
35. **Idrissa Sesay**
    Office Assistant
36. **Abdul K. Daboh**
    Driver
37. **Victor Aitkins**
    Project Coordinator Agro-Tech, Development Suport Project
38. **Michael Jah**
    Project Officer Agro-Tech, Development Support Project
39. **Mohamed Bao**
    Project Officer Agro-Tech, Development Support Project
40. **Abdul Fofanah**
    Project Officer Agro-Tech, Development Support Project
41. **Zackaria Sankoh**
    Driver



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