

April - June 2025

World Vision

EVERY HEART Newsletter

In this **THIRD QUARTER** edition are stories of transformation and personal testimonies of change.

Happy Reading!

World Vision International Sierra Leone

MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR



SAGANE THIAW - NATIONAL DIRECTOR

Dear Partners, Colleagues, and Friends,

As we reflect on the achievements and milestones of the past quarter, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the collective efforts that continue to transform the lives of children and communities across Sierra Leone. This edition of our newsletter captures the essence of our shared commitment to creating lasting change through strategic innovation, advocacy, and unwavering dedication to the most vulnerable.

The successful completion of our Strategy Refresh marks a pivotal moment in our journey toward 2030. By realigning our priorities and strengthening our focus on child well-being, we are better equipped to address emerging challenges and opportunities. This renewed roadmap will guide our programmatic interventions, partnerships, and resource mobilisation, ensuring that every child in Sierra Leone is cared for, protected, and empowered to thrive.

Our advocacy efforts remain central to systemic change. The ongoing debates on the Child Rights Bill 2025 and the powerful voices of children during the Day of the African Child remind us of the urgent need to protect children's rights and increase their involvement in decisions that impact their futures. Similarly, our environmental leadership shown through the Guma Valley tree-planting campaign illustrates how community-led actions can secure vital resources like clean water for future generations.

This quarter also celebrated stories of personal transformation. From Mattu's journey from silence to confidence in the Reading Club to Sabbah's evolution as a transformational school leader, these narratives underscore the ripple effect of investing in education and empowerment. Meanwhile, our health initiatives, from PrEP reporting improvements to nutrition support for MDR-TB patients and malaria prevention for pregnant women, highlight the life-saving impact of data-driven, collaborative interventions.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our staff, partners, and the communities we serve. On International Labour Day, we honoured their resilience and compassion, which drive our mission every day. Looking ahead, I am inspired by the partnerships we have strengthened from the Moroccan delegation to the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone – and by our collective determination to end child hunger, malnutrition, and violence.

Thank you for standing with us. Together, we are not just imagining a brighter future for Sierra Leone's children; we are creating it, one story, one policy, and one life at a time.

With gratitude,

Sagane Thiaw

National Director

World Vision International Sierra Leone

World Vision Sierra Leone Completes Strategy Refresh to Deepen Focus on Most Vulnerable Children.



World Vision International Sierra Leone has successfully concluded a week-long Strategy Refresh held from June 16th to 20th at Family Kingdom Resort in Freetown. The event marked a critical milestone in shaping the organisation's new operational plan that will guide its work from 2026 to 2030.

The Strategy Refresh brought together leadership, technical specialists, and support staff from across the organisation to review progress, assess emerging priorities, and strengthen the alignment

of efforts toward child well-being. Through a series of technical workshops, cross-team collaboration sessions, and strategic reflections, participants worked to define a clear path forward in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable children in Sierra Leone.

Henri Richard Coly, Advisor III-R for Sponsorship Operations, served as the lead facilitator throughout the training. His guidance helped frame the sessions around shared learning, accountability, and innovation, encouraging teams to connect programmatic priorities with the organisation's overarching vision for impact.

"This strategy refresh has allowed us to pause, reflect, and reposition ourselves for greater impact," said Sagane Thaiw, National Director of World Vision Sierra Leone. "As we look ahead to 2030, we are renewing our focus on what matters most, ensuring every child is cared for, protected, and allowed to thrive."

The new strategy is expected to serve as a roadmap for strategic programmatic interventions, partnerships, and resource mobilisation in the coming years.

The event concluded with a renewed sense of purpose and unity, as staff recommitted themselves to World Vision's mission of transforming the lives of children, especially the most vulnerable, through community-driven, sustainable development.



Second Parliamentary Sitting on the Child Rights Bill 2025

On 13th May 2025, Parliament held its second sitting on the Child Rights Bill 2025, led by the Ministry of Social Welfare. The bill aims to replace the 2007 Act with a stronger legal framework that aligns with international child rights standards and addresses harmful traditional practices like FGM and secret societies.

While many MPs welcomed the bill, some female parliamentarians opposed its references to traditional practices, especially FGM, arguing they should be removed. This resistance led to the postponement of the next sitting to allow for further consultation and strategy.

In response, the Minister convened an emergency meeting with civil society organizations and the Children's Forum Network to rally support. Stakeholders recommended high-level advocacy with the President, grassroots engagement, media campaigns, and a revised position paper to address concerns.

The bill represents a vital opportunity to protect Sierra Leone's children. However, its success now depends on collective advocacy, inclusive dialogue, and political will.



Day of the African Child (DAC)- Joining Forces Alliance



On June 16, 2025, Sierra Leone joined the rest of the continent to commemorate the Day of the African Child (DAC) under the theme "Planning and Budgeting for Children's Rights: Progress Since 2010." The event, held in Freetown and led by the Joining Forces Coalition in partnership with the Children's Forum Network (CFN) and Kids Parliament, brought together over 500 children and key government stakeholders.

The week-long child-led activities included consultations, a panel discussion, and the release of a position paper urging the government to increase investment in child protection, health, education, and inclusive services—especially for children with disabilities. During the panel discussion on June 13, children engaged directly with representatives from the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, the National Children's Commission, and the Child Rights Coalition. Panelists highlighted key milestones, including the Sexual Offences Act, the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, and the pending Child Rights Bill 2024. Children used the platform to advocate for the bill's speedy passage and to push for greater accountability in budgeting for child-focused services. The DAC 2025 celebration not only honoured the legacy of the 1976 Soweto Uprising but also served as a powerful platform for children to influence national planning, demand tangible policy action, and reinforce their right to meaningful participation in decisions affecting their lives.



World Vision International Sierra Leone staff joined Forces with Partners in a meaningful Demonstration of Environmental Stewardship



On Saturday, 7th June 2025, World Vision International Sierra Leone staff joined forces with partners in a meaningful demonstration of environmental stewardship: a 6-mile hike and tree-planting campaign through the lush yet vulnerable forest of the Guma Valley catchment area.

Organized under the leadership of the Liberals Foundation and supported by World Vision International Sierra Leone, the Freetown City Council, Guma Valley Water Company, the Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation, and the Freetown Tree Town campaign, the initiative successfully planted 1,000 trees—each representing a symbol of hope and resilience for the people of Freetown.

Established in 1967, the Guma Valley Dam serves as the primary water source for the city. However, its sustainability is at risk. Unregulated construction, deforestation, and human encroachment are steadily reducing the forest cover that nourishes and protects this critical water source. As forest cover declines, so does the dam's capacity to meet the water needs of a growing urban population.



During the event, leaders including the The National Director World Vision International Sierra Leone, The Managing Director of Guma Valley Water Company, the Mayor of Freetown, and the Minister of Water Resources and Sanitation all united to issue a call to action: to protect the Guma Valley forest, restore its green cover, and secure Freetown's water future.

"This is more than just planting trees," said Mr. Sagane Thiew, National Director of World Vision International Sierra Leone, one of the speakers at the event. "It's about restoring a fragile ecosystem and ensuring access to clean water for thousands of families. We are proud to collaborate with our partners and the Liberals Foundation to take meaningful action against environmental degradation."

World Vision's involvement in this initiative is part of its broader commitment to safeguarding natural resources, supporting sustainable water systems, and empowering communities, especially the youth, to take leadership roles in caring for our environment. Together with strong partnerships and community-led action, we can reverse the current trends and build a greener, healthier, A and water-secure future for every child and family in Sierra Leone.



ENOUGH

END CHILD HUNGER & MALNUTRITION

World Vision Sierra Leone Congratulates First Lady on OAFLAD Presidency



World Vision Sierra Leone has formally congratulated First Lady Dr. Fatima Maada Bio on her election as President of the Organization of African First Ladies for Development (OAFLAD). The organization praised her continued leadership and advocacy for women and children, noting that her appointment reflects her strong commitment to gender equality and child protection across Africa.

World Vision reaffirmed its support and willingness to collaborate with the Office of the First Lady and OAFLAD to advance shared goals for the well-being of the most vulnerable.

Signing of MOU and Implementing Agreement with Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone (EFSL)

Vision International Sierra Leone (WVISL) successfully signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and an Implementing Agreement with the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone (EFSL) to collaborate on the Faith Integration Grant Project. This MOU is to strength the integration of faith and development of the sustained wellbeing of the most vulnerable children in their families and communities to be implemented in Falaba, Koinadugu, Bombali, Bonthe, Pujehun, Kono Districts and Freetown. The Project timeframe is for two months (May-June 2025)

This strategic partnership is designed to enhance the integration of faith-based approaches into community development initiatives, with the aim of fostering spiritual nurture alongside social transformation. The agreement outlines the shared vision, roles, and responsibilities of both organizations, emphasizing collaboration in areas such as advocacy, community outreach, capacity building of faith leaders, and promoting positive child well-being outcomes through faith-based messaging and support systems. The MOU signifies a deepened commitment to leveraging faith partnerships as a powerful avenue for holistic development.

Partnership Meeting with Representatives from the Moroccan Delegation

World Vision International (WVI) participated in a partnership meeting alongside representatives from the Moroccan delegation, the Government of Sierra Leone, children, and other key stakeholders. The meeting provided a dynamic platform to discuss strategies for ending violence against children and to explore opportunities for future collaboration.

During the session, World Vision presented ongoing efforts and impactful initiatives focused on strengthening child protection systems, especially in vulnerable communities. A highlight was the presentation of activities led by the Joining Forces Alliance, which demonstrated how collaboration among the six largest child-focused agencies is enhancing national advocacy, cross-sectoral coordination, and community-based interventions to safeguard children's rights.

The exchange of insights, best practices, and shared priorities highlighted a strong collective commitment to protect children from all forms of violence and to drive meaningful, lasting change.

From Silence to Confidence: Mattu's Journey Through the Reading Club



In the remote Yengessa community of Bonthe mainland district, many children face significant barriers to literacy, limited access to reading materials, and a lack of parental support at home often stifle their learning journeys. For 10-year-old Mattu, a Class 3 pupil at the Bonthe Mainland District Education Committee Primary School (BMDEC), Yengessa. Struggling with reading fluency and low classroom performance, Mattu became increasingly withdrawn and disengaged. Her voice, once filled with potential, was silenced by self-doubt. That changed the day a community Reading Club facilitator reached out to her and invited her to join the community Reading Club, a learning environment intentionally created to be safe, bring literacy to the doorsteps of community children, supportive, and fun for all children.

At first, Mattu's participation was poor, as she remained hesitant throughout day's session. She attended her first session in silence, unsure of her place among her peers. Recognizing her potential, the facilitator paired her with a reading buddy and introduced her to storybooks filled with colorful illustrations and relatable characters. With every hesitant word spoken, she was met not with criticism but with cheers and encouragement.

"The first time Mattu read aloud, everyone

clapped. She looked so proud. That was her moment," recalls Solomon, the Reading Club Facilitator.

As weeks passed, Mattu began to find her voice. Her reading confidence grew, and by the middle of the academic year, she was no longer the quiet girl at the back of the class. She actively participated in reading club sessions and even began reading stories aloud to her peers. Her transformation extended beyond the club; her classroom performance improved, and her teacher noted a significant boost in her academic engagement.

Mattu is just one of many success stories. Today, over 317 children (124 boys and 193 girls) are actively participating in our community-based reading clubs. Their improved literacy skills and enthusiasm for learning are a testament to the power of community-led education support. Through encouragement, inclusion, and the simple joy of reading, children like Mattu are reclaiming their confidence and charting new paths toward a brighter future.



Sabbah's Story of Change from traditional teaching to transformational leadership

"My name is Sabbah, who serves as the Head Teacher of Sister Reintegration and Development (SRD) Primary School in Mattru Jong. Before now, despite being a trained and qualified teacher, my approach to teaching was purely based on the traditional methods (teacher-centred). My lessons lacked engagement, and my supervisory style was nothing good to about, as it was often described as harsh and rigid, discouraging both pupils and my teachers. This greatly affected the performance of pupils in public exams, and a decline in school enrolment.

Everything began to change when Sabbah joined World Vision's Unlock Literacy 4 Quality Education program. Through the initiative, she received comprehensive training in learner-centred methodologies, inclusive classroom practices, development of localized learning materials, and the use of print-rich environments to support literacy.

"These trainings revolutionized my approach to education," Sabbah shares. "Classroom participation increased, peer learning

flourished, and pupils became more confident and engaged in their studies. Most importantly, our academic performance improved dramatically."

The impact is evident. In the last academic year, 17 pupils (7 boys and 10 girls) sat for the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) and all passed, marking a 100% success rate. This milestone restored community confidence in the school and led to a significant rise in enrolment from 180 (79 boys and 101 girls) to 230 pupils (104 boys and 126 girls).

"Thanks to the skills I've gained, I now mentor and coach my junior staff, promoting a culture of continuous learning and shared success," Sabbah adds.

Sabbah's journey is a powerful reminder that when educators are equipped and empowered, the ripple effect reaches far beyond the classroom, transforming lives, schools, and entire communities. Thank you, World Vision, for investing in quality education and supporting leaders like Sabbah in unlocking the potential of every child.



Getting the Numbers Right: Strengthening PrEP Reporting for Key Populations in Sierra Leone.

In the fight against HIV, data accuracy is critical, especially for Key Populations (KPs) such as Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), Female Sex Workers (FSW), and People Who Inject Drugs (PWID). For these groups, access to Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) can mean the difference between staying HIV-negative and acquiring the virus. However, effective delivery and monitoring of PrEP services rely heavily on reliable data.

Under the Global Fund's GC7 grant, World Vision International Sierra Leone (WVISL) and its Sub-Recipient, Project HOPE, support Drop-In centres (DICs) in five districts to deliver PrEP and other HIV services to KPs. Early in the grant implementation, quarterly data validation exercises revealed widespread inconsistencies—DICs were either not reporting, over-reporting or under-reporting PrEP data.

"Some centres recorded every refill as a new PrEP initiation," noted a WVISL MEAL team member. "This contradicted Global Fund guidelines, which require each client to be counted only once per six-month period. At the same time, some newly initiated or restarted clients were missed entirely,

especially where PEPFAR's guidance—counting each new or re-initiation—was not properly understood by the DIC service providers."

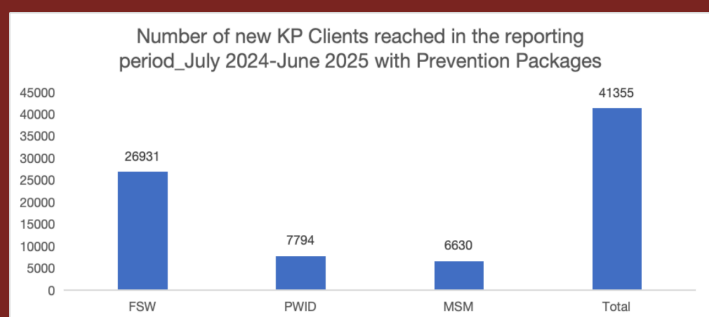
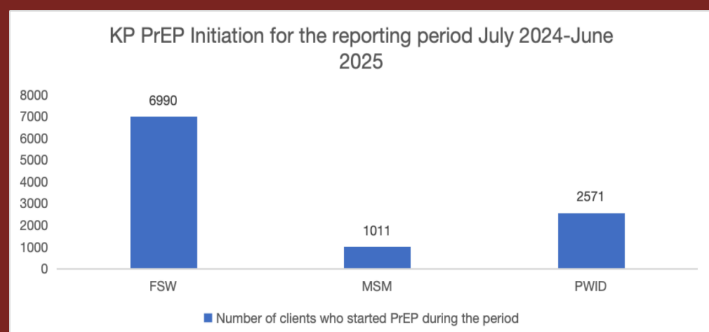
These inconsistencies distorted program performance and affected decision-making. The root cause: confusion over indicator definitions, especially the one requiring the number of MSM, FSW, and PWID who received any PrEP product at least once during the reporting period, regardless of visit frequency, but counted only once per semester.

In response, the WVISL and Project HOPE MEAL teams jointly developed and implemented a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) across all supported sites. The SOP clarified indicator definitions, standardized data collection tools, and introduced quality assurance measures, including peer reviews and data verification procedures. PrEP counsellors also received focused coaching and mentorship to enhance their understanding and application of accurate reporting practices.

"Before the SOP, we didn't know refills should only be counted once per period," shared a counsellor from the Kakua Hospice DIC in Bo. "Now we report with confidence, knowing our data reflects the real work we do."

Subsequent validation exercises confirmed strong alignment between source documents, reporting tools, and national DHIS2 entries. Double-counting was eliminated, staff confidence improved, and data quality became a reliable foundation for planning and reporting.

This technical correction had a broad impact, ensuring more accurate PrEP coverage estimates, better commodity planning, and greater accountability in national reporting to the Global Fund. In a context where every data point informs life-saving actions, WVISL's leadership demonstrates that quality data is not just a technical requirement but a cornerstone of effective HIV programming.



Feeding Recovery: Supporting MDR-TB Patients Through Nutrition

In Sierra Leone, treating multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) goes beyond medicine—it also means fighting malnutrition. Over 66% of MDR-TB patients are underweight, a condition that weakens their immunity and reduces treatment effectiveness.

To address this, World Vision International Sierra Leone (WVISL), with the National TB and Leprosy Control Programme, launched a targeted nutrition support initiative at three hospitals: Lakka, Makeni, and Kono.

In June 2025, 11 out of 32 admitted patients were underweight. With WVISL-funded food rations and close monitoring, eight patients gained weight and reached a healthier BMI before discharge.

“This intervention helped patients begin their recovery from a place of strength,” shared a Lakka staff member.

By integrating nutrition into MDR-TB care, the project not only improved immediate outcomes but also gave patients a stronger foundation to complete their treatment. In the fight against TB, no one should have to battle on an empty stomach.



Turning the Tide: Community Outreach Boosts Malaria Prevention for Pregnant Women in Sierra Leone



On April 25, Sierra Leone joined the rest of the world to commemorate World Malaria Day 2025 under the theme “Malaria Ends with Us.” This year, World Vision International Sierra Leone (WVISL), in collaboration with CRS, NMCP, DHMTs, and CAAM members, shifted the usual speeches and marches to a focused five-day community outreach aimed at increasing uptake of intermittent preventive treatment of malaria in pregnancy (IPTp-SP).

The outreach targeted five districts—Kenema, Bonthe, Tonkolili, Kambia, and Western Area Rural—where data had shown low coverage, particularly for second and third doses. Teams listed 6,294 pregnant women who had defaulted on their SP doses. Of these, 4,424 were successfully tracked and received refills;

2,156 received their second dose, and 2,268 received their third dose.

The results were striking. In Bonthe, 2,331 pregnant women received SP during the campaign, up from 383 in the first quarter of 2025. Kenema rose from 471 to 1,172; Tonkolili from 553 to 1,176; Kambia from 319 to 936; and Western Area Rural from 383 to 745. Overall, 6,288 women received SP during the five-day outreach compared to just 2,109 in the entire previous quarter.

This strong community effort highlights the power of collaboration in driving real change. By reaching women in their communities, the initiative helped close critical gaps in malaria prevention and set a strong foundation for continued uptake of IPTp-SP across Sierra Leone.



International Labour Day

This Labour Day, we take a moment to honour the remarkable women and men of the World Vision team across in Sierra Leone and West Africa. Their tireless efforts—rooted in compassion, resilience, and an unshakable commitment—are making a lasting difference in the lives of vulnerable children and families.

Whether working in remote communities, responding to emergencies, or supporting long-term development, our staff continue to go above and beyond to ensure every child has the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive.

As we reflect on this special day, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our teams whose work inspires hope and drives transformation across the region.



For more information and updates, visit our [website](#) and follow us on our social media handles

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