



THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE

HRCSL Statement on the Day of the African Child 2025

Theme: “Planning and Budgeting for Children’s Rights: Progress Since 2010”

Monday 16th June, 2025

1. The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) joins the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), National Human Rights Institutions, civil society organisations, children, and partners across the continent in commemorating the Day of the African Child 16th June 2025.
2. This year’s theme provides an important opportunity to reflect on how national planning and public financing have contributed to the realisation of children’s rights since 2010, and to renew our collective commitment to prioritising children in national development agendas.
3. HRCSL believes that meaningful progress for children will only be possible when planning and budgeting are inclusive, transparent, and anchored in the best interests of the child. In this regard, we call on all relevant stakeholders to:
 - Increase and safeguard budget allocations for child-focused programmes – especially in education, health, protection, and social services, as required under **Article 11 (Right to Education)** and **Article 14 (Right to Health and Health Services)** of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC).
 - Ensure that budget processes are participatory and responsive to the voices and needs of children, including children with disabilities and those from marginalised communities, in line with **Article 4 (Best Interests of the Child)** and **Article 12 (Right to Participation)** of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.
 - Promote transparency and accountability by strengthening monitoring systems, including civil society and child-led structures in budget tracking and evaluation, consistent with **Article 1 (Obligation of States Parties)** and **Article 22 (Role of the State in Armed Conflict)** which calls for protection and support mechanisms for children.



4. HRCSL emphasise the important role of the private sector in advancing children's rights. Businesses must go beyond compliance and contribute meaningfully by:
 - Aligning corporate practices with child rights principles,
 - Supporting initiatives that improve child and family wellbeing, and
 - Promoting ethical investment and inclusive development.
5. Children with disabilities continue to face multiple barriers. We urge the Government and development partners to adopt disability-inclusive budgeting, invest in accessible infrastructure and services, and actively involve children with disabilities in decision-making—an obligation reinforced under **Article 13 (Children with Disabilities)**.
6. On this important occasion, HRCSL reaffirms its commitment to promoting and protecting the rights of all children in Sierra Leone. We call on Government, civil society, the private sector, and development partners to work in solidarity to ensure that children are not only considered in national plans and budgets, but are prioritised. The future of our nation depends on how we invest in and empower our children today.

Signed:

Chairperson

Patricia Narsu Ndanema (Mrs.)

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