

Sierra Leone Policy
Conference 2025
New Brookfields Hotel,
Freetown
December 8 - 10 2025



SIERRA LEONE POLICY CONFERENCE 2025

OPTIONS FOR RAISING SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT FINANCING



STATEMENT OF THANKS

We sincerely thank **all participants, partners, and stakeholders** for your valued attendance and active participation in the **Sierra Leone Policy Conference 2025**.

Your **engagement, insights, and shared commitment** have reinforced our collective resolve to mobilize **sustainable financing, accelerate economic transformation, and deliver inclusive development outcomes** for the people of Sierra Leone.

We are especially grateful to our **development partners, private sector leaders, policymakers, civil society, academia, and the diaspora** for the **high-level dialogue, bold ideas**, and strategic partnerships forged throughout the conference. As we move decisively from **dialogue to action**, the **Government of Sierra Leone** reaffirms its firm commitment to translating these outcomes into **concrete policy reforms, innovative financing solutions, and measurable national impact**, in full alignment with, the **Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP), under the Five Big Game Changers**.

Once again, **thank you for standing with Sierra Leone in shaping a stronger, more resilient, and prosperous future**.



Dr. David Moinina Sengeh
Chief Minister
Office of the Chief Minister



Ms. Kenyeh Barlay
Minister
Ministry of Planning and Economic
Development

DEVELOPMENT FINANCING LANDSCAPE

Mobilizing financing is critical to Sierra Leone's development and economic transformation, but the country faces significant fiscal constraints due to declining donor support, low domestic revenue, **and global economic shocks**. Public finance dominates the financing landscape, with tax and non-tax revenues accounting for about **70% of domestic revenue and 8% of GDP**, well below regional benchmarks, **forcing heavy reliance on debt financing**.

While **public debt is considered sustainable, high domestic borrowing costs, rising debt servicing, and persistent budget deficits** continue to **strain fiscal space and limit private sector participation**. **Financial inclusion has improved through mobile money**, yet **access to formal credit, insurance, and capital markets remains low**, constraining **private investment and economic growth**. At the same time, **traditional development assistance is declining** due to **global geopolitical and economic shifts**.

To achieve the **Five Big Game Changers**, Sierra Leone must **intensify domestic revenue mobilization, strengthen public financial management, diversify financing sources, and adopt innovative, private sector-driven financing instruments and partnerships**.



OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the Conference is to mobilize creative solutions and cutting-edge policy options to assist the country to mobilize sustainable development financing, with a particular focus on innovative and sustainable sources of financing to achieve inclusive development goals.

The specific objectives of the conference include:

- **Knowledge Sharing:** Facilitate dialogue on modern trends and best practices in development financing, including innovative financial instruments, blended finance, and impact investing. It will also promote conversations among researchers, development practitioners, and policymakers to align goals and initiatives.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Identify policy gaps and advocate for supportive regulatory frameworks to promote sustainable and inclusive development financing and strengthening domestic revenue mobilization.
- **Capacity Building:** Provide practical insights and training opportunities for government and other officials working in development finance on integrating technology and sustainability.
- **Networking Platform:** Foster collaborations between diverse stakeholders to develop new partnerships and initiatives for development financing and for continued study and analysis.
- **Enhancing Research on Economic and Policy Issues:** To inform and guide decision-making processes in development finance and other areas.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The following outcomes are expected:

- **A multi-stakeholder commitment and action plan** in support of national efforts for domestic revenue mobilization.
- **Partnerships and collaboration** for scaling financing flows through **innovative financing, domestic revenue mobilization, and enhanced fiscal efficiency.**
- Increased **awareness of opportunities** for raising sustainable financing for Sierra Leone, targeting public and private sector, domestic and international sources.
- **Enhanced coordination among the Government, partners, and the private sector** in meeting Sierra Leone's development and financing targets.

AGENDA

DAY 1: 8 DECEMBER 2025

TIME	ACTIVITY/SESSION	RESPONSIBLE
08.00 – 09.00	Registration and Tea	
	Prayers	
09:30 - 10.15	Opening Ceremony	
	<p>Welcome Address</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hon Ms Kenyeh Barlay, Minister of Planning and Economic Development • Mr Fredrick Ampiah, Representative, UNDP Sierra Leone <p>Statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Samuel Bonzu, President, Economics Association of Sierra Leone • Mr Chukwu Emeka Chikezie, Country Director, International Growth Centre • Ms Seraphine Wakana, United Nations Resident Coordinator – • Mr Sheku Ahmed Fantamadi Bangura, Minister of Finance 	<p>Mr Ambrose James, Development Secretary</p>

10.15 – 10.30	Objectives and outline of the Programme	Mr Alhaji Abu Komeh, Ministry of Finance
10.30 – 12.00	<p>Session 1 – Sierra Leone’s outlook for sustainable financing</p> <p>The session will set a foundation for the Conference, providing context on Sierra Leone’s state of development financing, needs and strategies for resources mobilization, reflecting on the declining development aid, and implications for achieving the national development objectives. It will also draw insights from the recent FfD4, to proffer global and regional trends and perspectives on sustainable development financing, analyzing emergent themes and priorities for Sierra Leone’s development, and outline the expectations from the Conference.</p>	
	<p>Presentation: Sierra Leone Post-Seville Outlook, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development</p> <p>Reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Alimamy Bangura, Chief Economist, Ministry of Finance • Mr Moortaza Jiwanji, Advisor, UNDP Africa Sustainable Finance Hub • Mr Abdu Muwonge, Country Manager, World Bank Sierra Leone 	<p>Moderator:</p> <p>Hon Chernor Bah, Minister of Information and Civic Education</p>

AGENDA

DAY 1: 8 DECEMBER 2025

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Stefan Dercon, University of Oxford (International Growth Centre (IGC)) • Mr Boima S. Kamara, Secretary General, West Africa Monetary Agency (WAMA) 	
12.00 – 12.30	Official Opening and Keynote Address by Chief Minister, Dr David Moinina Sengeh	
12.30 - 12.45	Official photographs	
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch	
14.00 – 15.30	<p>Session 2. Strengthening domestic revenue mobilization and public financial management for sustainable development</p> <p><i>Tax revenue is the primary source of financing for government expenditure. Closing financing gaps in Sierra Leone should consider strategies for intensifying domestic revenue mobilization, plugging leakages and improving system efficiencies. The session will consider the ongoing efforts and capacities for revenue generation, explore public policy and strength of the public sector to ensure financial sustainability and resilience. It will also explore available options and technologies for mobilizing tax and non-tax revenue at the national and local levels. It will reflect on some of the strategies for building efficiency and plugging leakages in public financial management through public investment portfolio.</i></p>	

	<p>Presentations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting Sierra Leone's efforts for Revenue Resilience, Mr Saugata Mitra, Policy Economist, International Growth Centre 2. Determinants of Tax Revenue in Sierra Leone: An Empirical Approach to Strengthening Fiscal Space, Ibrahim Massaquoi, Researcher 3. Tax exemptions in Sierra Leone, Abu Bakarr Kamara, Budget Advocacy Network <p>Discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Mathew Dingie, Finance Secretary • Ms Jeneba Bangura, Commissioner General, National Revenue Authority • Mr Rashid Conteh, President, Exporters and Importers Association • Mr John D. Cooper, Director, Policy and Research, Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources 	<p>Moderator: Mr Wilborne Showers</p>
End of Day 1		

AGENDA

DAY 2: 9 DECEMBER 2025

TIME	ACTIVITY/SESSION	RESPONSIBLE
08.00 – 09.00	Arrival and Registration	
09.00 - 09.15	Opening session	Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
09.15 - 11.00	<p>Session 3. Designing systems and tools for local revenue mobilization, compliance and enforcement</p> <p><i>Local governments play a pivotal role in delivering essential services and driving development at the grassroots level, yet they often face significant challenges in raising and managing revenues effectively. The session will discuss the relationship between sustainable financing and local development. The session seeks to identify the constraints for poor revenue performance, review interventions and financing strategies that will stimulate compliance and enforcement for effective revenue mobilization.</i></p>	

	<p>Presentations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Frugal enforcement, social acceptability and tax compliance: Evidence from a field experience in Kenema, Dr. Niccolo Merrigi, Oxford University/International Growth Centre Heavy burden of tax enforcement: Evidence from Uganda, Dr. David Henning, Oxford University/International Growth Centre (IGC) Tax, Technology and transformation: From Revenue Reform to Innovative Financing for Sustainable Development Goals. Sumanta Bhattacharya, Researcher <p>Discussants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Adams Kargbo, Director, Fiscal Decentralization, Ministry of Finance Mr. Sorieba Dafea, Director, Moni-me Mr Sahr Yambasu, Chief Administrator, Kenema City Council Ms Christina Jalloh, Assistant Commissioner, National Revenue Authority 	Moderator: Mr Allieu Sesay
11.00 – 11.30	Health Break	
11.30 – 13.00	<p>Session 4. Financial inclusion practices and innovations for private sector investment and sustainable development: Global practices and local experiences</p> <p><i>Access to finance remains a significant barrier for many individuals, small businesses, and marginalized groups, limiting their ability to participate in and benefit from economic growth. The session will discuss the challenges and opportunities of financial inclusion, especially for women, youth, rural populations, and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). It highlights the role of digital financial services, microfinance, and other innovative instruments in fostering inclusive growth and as a catalyst for financing flows.</i></p>	



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DAY 2: 9 DECEMBER 2025

	<p>Presentations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Credit access and agriculture productivity. Saffa Massaquoi, Researcher Promoting access to financing and financial inclusion for private sector participation. Nse Ndohaya, Researcher <p>Discussants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Momoh Sesay, Director, Financial Inclusion, Bank of Sierra Leone Mr Mohammed Jalloh, Finance Expert, SEND Sierra Leone Mr Gabriel Eshiague, Director, LAPO Microfinance Bank Ms Naasu Fofanah, Green Women's Bank Ms Marie Bob Kandeh, Market Women Association Dr Firuz Shukurov, Country Manager, UNCDF 	<p>Moderator: Chuku Emeka-Chikezie, CD IGC</p>
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch	
14.00 - 16.00	<p>Session 5. Financing Innovations and alternative instruments: Opportunities and Constraints for Sierra Leone</p> <p><i>Financing innovations present alternative avenues for mobilizing sustainable financing resources to match Sierra Leone's financing and development needs. This session will explore the emerging opportunities, discuss practical examples of how the innovative instruments may be leveraged to support sustainable development, strengthen public debt management, and stimulate inclusive economic growth. The session will explore opportunities and best practices aligned to the Sierra Leone development context and analyze relevant options.</i></p>	

	<p>Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beyond Aid: Green financing and domestic revenue mobilization for climate action and poverty eradication. Mohamed Turay, Researcher Debt Structure and inflation: Dynamics in Sierra Leone, Evidence, Channels and Policy Challenges. Gonzales Fernando, Researcher <p>Discussants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Sellu McCarthy, Climate Finance, Ministry of Finance Dr Sia Foday - Iscandari, Invest Salone Mr Thomas Boima, Director, Financial Markets, Bank of Sierra Leone Mr Mathew Sandy, Director, Public Debt, Ministry of Finance Mr Kevin Petrini, Deputy Representative, UNDP Sierra Leone 	<p>Moderator: Mr Michael Saffa, World Bank</p>
16.00 - 16.30	Health Break	
16.30 - 18.00	<p>Session 6. Bridging financing and development goals through fiscal efficiency and accountability</p> <p><i>This session examines how strengthening fiscal efficiency and accountability can ease financing pressures and bridge the gap between financing and development outcomes. It will explore practical strategies for aligning resource allocation with national priorities, improving transparency, and ensuring that resources deliver measurable impact. The panel will discuss policy, institutional frameworks, and innovative approaches to enhance trust and effectiveness in public finance.</i></p>	

AGENDA

DAY 2: 9 DECEMBER 2025

	<p>Presentation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Financing the bridge: a policy and investment strategy to close Sierra Leone’s rural urban welfare gap. Foday Daboh, Researcher Sustainable financing for health care: a fiscal analysis for health care financing. Joseph Kamara, Researcher <p>Discussants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr James Ambrose, Development Secretary, Ministry of Planning Economic Development Hon. Ibrahim Tawa Conteh, Deputy Speaker, House of Parliament Mr Rudolph Schwenk, Representative, UNICEF Sierra Leone Mr Abdul Aziz, Auditor General, Audit Service Sierra Leone Dr Michael Amara, Director, Ministry of Health Dr James Edwin, Director, National Monitoring and Evaluation Agency 	<p>Moderator: Mr Foday Bassie Swaray, Action Aid</p>
18.00	End of Day 2	

AGENDA

DAY 3: 10 DECEMBER 2025

TIME	ACTIVITY/SESSION	RESPONSIBLE
08.00 – 09.00	Arrival and Registration	
09.00 – 09.30	Opening Session	MOPED/EASL/UN
09.30 – 11.30	<p>Session 7 – Unlocking private capital for sustainable development: Pathways to investment readiness and ecosystem development</p> <p><i>Private sector capital is a strategic imperative to diversify financing sources and increase investment for sustainable development, foster economic growth and jobs creation to diversify financing sources and expand the investment. The session will address key factors for creating a supportive business environment, encouraging private sector innovation and investment in sustainable development. It will consider the role played by sovereign rating for improved credit profile, unlocking financing opportunities and reducing the cost of capital, and provide practical examples from peer countries.</i></p>	



AGENDA

DAY 3: 10 DECEMBER 2025

	<p>Presentations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From Idle Pools to Inclusive Prosperity: Unlocking Sierra Leone's Insurance and Pension Funds for Startup and SME Investment, Tafadzwa Williams, Researcher 2. Role of sovereign ratings in building investor confidence and unlocking resource flows. Kelvin Dalrymple, UNDP, Sovereign Ratings Concilium <p>Discussants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Morlai Bangura, Director, Governor's Office, Bank of Sierra Leone Mr Mohammed Samoura, President, Association of Commercial Banks Mr Fuaad M Daboh, Director General, National Social Security and Insurance Trust Mr Arthur Yaskey, Director General, Sierra Leone Insurance Commission Dr Edward Sandy, Executive Director, National Investment Board 	<p>Moderator: Mrs Binta Akibo-Betts</p>
12.00 - 13.30	Lunch	

14.00 – 16.00	<p>Roundtable. Consolidating the Post-Seville Agenda and Priorities for financing Sierra Leone's development</p> <p><i>This is the high-level roundtable targeting stakeholders in government, development partners, private sector and civil society. The session aims to synthesize the main messages, lessons, and priorities that have emerged from the conference sessions and formulate a shared action agenda for mobilizing and managing financing resources to support Sierra Leone's national development objectives. It will identify concrete commitments and next steps for implementing the post-Seville agenda, including alignment with the UN@80 initiative and other global and regional frameworks and foster partnership and collective responsibility among all stakeholders to ensure sustainable and inclusive development financing.</i></p>	
	<p>Conference Key Takeaways: Policy Recommendations and Reflections</p> <p>Co-chairs: (Development Partners Coordination Group):</p> <p>Ms Kenyeh Barlay, Hon Minister, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development Ambassador Dr. Pascal Richter, Ambassador, German Embassy Ms Seraphine Wakana, UN Resident Coordinator Mr Abdu Muwonge, Country Manager, World Bank</p>	<p>Moderator: Mr Moortaza Jiwaji, UNDP</p>
16.00 – 16.30	<p>Official Closing</p> <p>Vote of Thanks: Hon Deputy Minister (MOPED) – Rev. Dr Jonathan Titus-Williams</p>	
	<p>Closing Statement: Chief Minister, Dr David M. Sengeh</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">END</p>		

