Review of the Sierra Leone National Youth Policy

Client

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Integrated Projects Administration Unit/Youth Employment Support Project
In Collaboration with the Ministry of Youth Employment and Sports and National Youth Commission and the World Bank

FIRST DRAFT

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>BECE</td>
<td>Basic Education Certificate Examinations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community Based Organisations</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>DYCs</td>
<td>District Youth Councils</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GoSL</td>
<td>Government of Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>ICPs</td>
<td>International Cooperation Partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAFFS</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDAs</td>
<td>Ministries, Departments and Agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEST</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Science and Technology</td>
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<td>MLSS</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Security</td>
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<td>MM</td>
<td>Ministry of Mines</td>
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<td>MSWGCA</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Childhood Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>M &amp; E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>MoFED</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance and Economic Development</td>
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<td>MoH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>MSE</td>
<td>Micro Small Enterprises</td>
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<td>MTI</td>
<td>Ministry of Trade and Industry</td>
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<td>MYES</td>
<td>Ministry of Youth Employment and Sports</td>
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<td>NYEAP</td>
<td>National Youth Employment Action Plan</td>
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<td>NYPSC</td>
<td>National Youth Policy Steering Committee</td>
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<td>PPPs</td>
<td>Public Private Partnerships</td>
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<td>RDCs</td>
<td>Rural District Councils</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
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<td>SCP</td>
<td>Smallholder Commercialisation Programme</td>
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<td>STDs</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Diseases</td>
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<tr>
<td>STIs</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Infections</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical Vocational Education Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASSCE</td>
<td>West African Senior School Certificate Examinations</td>
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Defining the Youth in Sierra Leone

The National Youth Policy and the National Youth Commission Act 2010 define youth as those between 15 and 35 years of age. The group constitutes about 34 percent of Sierra Leoneans or around 2 million of the estimated 5.9 million people. The total number of the population below the age of 35 years is about 73 percent, the majority of which are under 15 years.

The Youth may be categorized as follows (classifications to be reviewed):

i. Rural and Urban

ii. Formally employed and informally employed (for example, ghetto youth, bike riders);

iii. Organized and Unorganized

iv. Educated and Uneducated, more affluent and less affluent

v. In-School and Out-of-School, (including drop-outs)

vi. Skilled, Semi-skilled and Unskilled

vii. Male and Female (ages 15 – 19; 20 – 29; 30 – 35); (Adolescents under 15 years are classified under children);

viii. Physically challenged (disabled) and able-bodied

1.2 Challenges Facing the Youth – Across Sectors

The major challenges facing young people that the National Youth Policy seeks to address are:

i. Unemployment and under-employment resulting from inadequate and inappropriate training for the job market; (mismatches between demand and supply of labour);

ii. Lack of access to quality education for the youth in the educational sector with attendant inadequate or inappropriate preparation and training for the formal job market;

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2 Youth in Sierra Leone are legally defined as young women and men aged 15 – 35 years; the United Nations considers as youth those in the age bracket 15 – 24 years.
iii. Low investment in technical vocational education (TVET), resulting in high mismatch with labour market demands. Lack of policy coherence on TVET is also an aggravating factor;

iv. A large proportion of youth is in crowded cities, like Freetown, which also has a huge informal sector, largely survivalist and marked by low returns. A large percentage of youth is engaged in petty trading;

v. High incidence of drug and substance abuse amongst youth; and

vi. Failure to address gender issues amongst the youth, for example, sexual and reproductive issues facing young girls and women. Key issues that are specific to female youth are as follows:

   a. Teenage pregnancies: With 68 percent of girls have their first pregnancy between the ages of 12-20 for girls, teenage pregnancy is a major national challenge;

   b. High level of transactional sex amongst young girls, partly as a coping strategy against poverty;

   c. Growing risk of contracting HIV and AIDS by youth, in particular young girls, and;

   d. High vulnerability to sexually transmitted infections (STIs/STDs), in particular, risk of contracting the HIV virus.

1.3 Youth Participation in National Development

Key issues linked to youth participation in development include the following:

   i. Weak structures to support youth participation in development. Heavy investment required in terms of training, resource mobilisation to build capacities of youth serving decentralised structures.

   ii. Growing incidence of youth involved in violent conflicts (politically instigated)

   iii. Largely due to rural-urban migration accelerated during the war, increasing poverty and attendant socio-economic challenges, there has been an erosion of traditional social support systems for youth with weakened role of the family leading to moral decay, reduced integrity and low self-esteem.

   iv. Inadequate recreational, sporting and counselling facilities

   v. Inadequate opportunities to nurture diverse youth talent from tender age, from primary, junior and senior secondary, through to higher education institutions.

   vi. Inadequate mentoring opportunities which lead to weak moral, social, cultural and religious values in the youth.
2. THE YOUTH POLICY VISION

The Vision of the National Youth Policy is:

Nationally conscious and patriotic youth empowered to contribute positively to the development of Sierra Leone.

2.1 Goal

The main goal of the Youth Policy is to contribute to creating a more conducive environment in which youth development and empowerment interventions can sustainably achieve their desired objectives and realise its long term outcomes.

In pursuit of the goal:

- The GoSL and development partners recognise that a vibrant youth sector is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable social, economic and political security amongst all the categories of the Sierra Leonean people.

- To that effect, the GoSL and stakeholders shall support the integration of youth into the mainstream of national, regional and international development initiatives.

- The GoSL and development partners shall maintain a level playing field for youth, where feasible breaking all barriers that have kept youth historically marginalised. The aim will be to develop and maintain an environment in which sustainable youth programmes can thrive and be engineered to enable the youth realise their full potential.

To realize the vision the following objectives will be pursued:

i. Empower and actively involve the Sierra Leonean youth in a variety of redesigned or re-organised productive activities, in both rural and urban areas;

ii. Enable Sierra Leonean youth of all categories develop their full potential and self-esteem through approaches that enhance innovation and youth talent;

iii. Institutionalize youth participation at all levels of the decision making process, from central to decentralised level, to ensure the nurturing of democratic and productive culture;

iv. Enable the youth share, acquire and transfer knowledge, expertise, and experience through national, regional and international networks and peer-learning as well as through improved use of information communication technology (ICT);
v. Nurture the development of a new breed of youth, which is ready to serve through volunteerism, through to community level; and

vi. Inculcate in the youth a new identity based on self-reliance, patriotism, nationalism.

3. PRINCIPLES

3.1 Principles and Values

3.1.1 The key principles of the National Youth Policy are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BROAD BASED YOUTH EMPOWERMENT</strong></td>
<td>The GoSL and development partners will promote youth-centred broad-based development, including equal access to resources and opportunities, regardless of ethnic, political, religious, social, economic, cultural background and gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VOLUNTEERISM</strong></td>
<td>Cultivating the spirit and practice of volunteerism amongst the youth</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INNOVATION or CREATIVITY</strong></td>
<td>Promote innovation amongst the youth to take up new opportunities in all sectors, while building on existing options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DIVERSITY</strong></td>
<td>Promote diversity of youth talent and potential for different categories of youth and at different levels, regardless of their status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-VIOLENCE AND PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE</strong></td>
<td>The youth will endeavour to work in a non-violent manner, promote peaceful co-existence, even amongst people with divergent backgrounds or views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PATRIOTISM</strong></td>
<td>Love for country should be inculcated as a core value in the youth, commitment to nation-building.</td>
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<td><strong>SELF RELIANCE</strong></td>
<td>As future leaders, the youth should be imbued with the spirit of self-reliance to harness their potentials, creativity and initiative.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HONESTY AND INTEGRITY</strong></td>
<td>Honesty and Integrity are imperative for the youth in their personal and national development.</td>
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<td><strong>PARTICIPATION</strong></td>
<td>The views of the youth and their participation in national development will be sought. The Government and other stakeholders will consciously and consistently involve young people in</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>The youth must be challenged with opportunities to actively lead in matters that affect them, their communities, and the nation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOOD GOVERNANCE</td>
<td>The Government and other stakeholders will demonstrate principles of good governance such as accountability, transparency, and integrity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GENDER MAINSTREAMING</td>
<td>The Government and other stakeholders will actively promote gender mainstreaming in the implementation of all policies and programmes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DISABILITY AND MARGINALISATION*</td>
<td>The Government and other stakeholders recognises the existence of different categories of youth, including the disabled, out-of-school, employed, under-employed and unemployed, both rural and urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NETWORKING FOR DEVELOPMENT*</td>
<td>Government and other stakeholders will promote the building of strong networks for youth development at local, national, regional and international levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR DEVELOPMENT*</td>
<td>The Government and other stakeholders shall consciously and consistently pursue partnerships with the youth, targeting them in programmes of MDAs, national and international cooperating partners, ensuring synergy in strategy and programme development and social cohesion</td>
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4. **KEY STRATEGIES AND AREAS OF INTERVENTION**

Guided by the National Development Plan, An Agenda for Prosperity, Vision 2020, Sector Development Plans (to be reviewed), consultations with stakeholders, the Youth Policy addresses a number of critical areas for comprehensive youth empowerment.

4.1 **Sierra Leone Youth Policy Review – Intervention Areas**

1. Decent Youth Employment – generation of decent jobs in both formal and informal sector, including self-employment.


3. Enabling Micro and Small Enterprises Development Policy.

4. Youth in the Agricultural Sector/Agri-business Value Chains.

5. Education and Skills Training
   a. Primary, Junior Secondary, Senior Secondary education
   b. Informal education and training
   c. Higher Education Institutions, Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges
   d. Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET)

6. Science, Technology and Innovation (National System of Innovation)

7. Entrepreneurship Development

8. Building new entrepreneurial culture amongst the youth.

9. Information, Communication Technology (ICT)

10. Gender Mainstreaming

11. Youth and Management of the Environment

12. Health Promotion
   a. HIV and AIDS
   b. Drugs and Substance Abuse
   c. Sexual and Reproductive Health
   d. Young people with disability

13. Youth Participation in Development – Governance, Democracy and Leadership

14. National Youth Service/Volunteerism

15. Networks and Partnerships for Development
4.1.1 Generating Decent Employment for the Youth

Observing that stabilization of macro-economic indicators by itself is insufficient to promote and address the growing challenge of youth unemployment, the GoSL will put in place other practical measures to boost the creation of decent employment for young women and men.

As part of broader employment generation plan, priority will be given towards implementation of the National Employment Policy and National Youth Employment Action Plan (NYEAP), already developed. As a follow-up to the development of the National Employment Policy and the NYEAP, the GoSL and other stakeholders will support formulation of comprehensive, inclusive and engendered pro-employment job-rich growth targets for the country.

The GoSL and development partners will provide practical forms of support to the Sierra Leone National Youth Employment Action Plan, ensuring that youth employment issues are mainstreamed in all key sectors.

In this regard, the GoSL will also promote the deepening of establishment of public-private partnerships, ensuring that adequate measures are taken to implement the NYEAP.

4.1.2 Design and Adoption of Youth Sensitive Policies

Youth sensitive policies will be designed and implemented at sector and sub-sector levels, including an enabling legal and regulatory environment. The GoSL and development partners will support review of existing sector, sub-sector and national policies and strategies, as well as development of new sector policies with a view to enabling youth issues to become adequately mainstreamed within the sector plans and national development plans. Innovative public private partnerships (PPPs), backed up by a substantial resource mobilization strategy, will be formed in support of this priority national agenda. There shall be regular review of labour market realities and the legislative environment of the country as these affect employment of young women and men in both the formal and informal sector.

4.1.3 Enabling Micro and Small Enterprises Development Policy

Support to designing and implementation of a youth-oriented micro, small enterprises (MSE) policy: As part of a broad based strategy to support youth empowerment, the GoSL and development partners will support the development of a youth focused MSE policy, targeted at strengthening the capabilities of micro, small enterprises, in both the informal and formal sectors. Through new forms of public private partners, mechanisms of fast-tracking transition of large numbers of young women, men and children, from informal sector based survivalist low remunerating activities, which include, petty trading, and other welfarist activities, to higher return and more viable activities. The approach will also involve establishment of new entry points for youth to access viable business opportunities within various
sectors, and on the basis of priorities set in the NYEAP and the National Employment Policy. The GoSL and development partners will, in the process, endeavour to strengthen the technological capabilities\(^3\) of micro and small businesses in the country, in particular where large numbers of youth are engaged.

**4.1.4 Support to the Agricultural Sector/Agri-business Value Chains**

The agricultural sector has been identified in the National Action Plan on Youth Employment and the National Development Plan as a high potential area. Agro-based value chains are pivotal to economic empowerment of the Sierra Leonean youth, in terms of ability of the sector to absorb large numbers of young people, especially in rural areas.

The agricultural sector is an engine for growth of employment in Sierra Leone, providing the main source of employment and income for approximately 65 percent of the population in Sierra Leone. It contributes 46 percent of GDP. The performance of the agricultural sector is pivotal to the rate of socio-economic development and poverty reduction. Given the large numbers of Sierra Leoneans depending on agriculture, a variety of investment opportunities exist in downstream agro-based activities in agribusiness and processing of food and livestock products. Strategies that seek to increase productivity and returns to labour in agriculture are central to increasing productive employment for young people.

Being the main driver of poverty reduction in the short and medium term, the agricultural sector and agro-business sector has the potential to absorb large numbers of unskilled and semi skilled youth. In order to fully take advantage of and utilise that youth potential, the GoSL will take practical measures to promote youth involvement in agro-based value chains as these relate to available opportunities within various sub-sectors. This will be done in collaboration with the GoSL supported Smallholder Commercialisation Programme (SCP) currently being implemented through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS), in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), with the support of various development partners.

**4.2. Education Sector Development and Youth Empowerment**

**4.2.1 Addressing the challenge of out-school youth**

With poverty identified as one of the major underlying causes of children dropping out-of-school, the GoSL and development partners will provide transparent, equitable, efficient and accountable resource allocation systems to address the issue. National and international development partners will be mobilised to provide material, technical and financial support to education programmes for vulnerable youth.

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\(^3\) Technological capabilities (TCs) are defined as the knowledge, skills and efforts required for firms to bring about an indigenous process of technological development. This can occur by increasing efficiency in the management of the enterprise value chain and improving the innovation capabilities of MSEs.
children and support national programmes set out by Government. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and other stakeholders working in education, child protection and social protection will be facilitated to develop joint criteria and guidelines, for the identification of out-of-school children and the provision of holistic programmes addressing the out-of-school challenge. To address the issue of youth dropping out of school, a two-pronged intervention that provides short, medium and long-term assistance in supporting marginalised families to improve their socio-economic status to ensure that their children continue with school would be adopted. A holistic approach that involves various sectors and key stakeholders will be employed to tackle the complex and overlapping issues of out-of-school children. Basic education programmes will be repositioned to target improving access to schools by the disadvantaged out-of-school children, including dealing with challenges of over-aged children.

In view of large numbers of children completing primary education remaining unable to access Junior Secondary School, the GoSL will give priority to construction of more Secondary Schools, training and recruitment of qualified teachers, as well finding ways of improving the quality of education generally and at all levels. Increasing the number of appropriately qualified teachers and the provision of textbooks and other teaching learning materials for increased access at Junior Secondary School level with be a priority for government.

In view of high failure rates for the Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) and the West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) being repeated in recent years, the GoSL will focus on measures to designed to improve performance in the BECE and WSSCE, ensuring that a mechanism established to monitor the extent to which the recommendations of the Education Commission are being implemented fully.

4.2.2 Effort to tackle high illiteracy levels

The GoSL and development partners will develop programmes to strengthen literacy levels of young people, taking note issues of gender, marginalisation factors and socio-economic status of different groups of youth. Practical support will be given to youth from basic education and training, primary and secondary education, through to more advanced training, such as higher education learning, universities, TVET and apprenticeship training.

4.2.3 Gender mainstreaming in adult literacy and access to education

Particular attention will be made towards ensuring a level playing field for the illiterate young women and men, strengthening programmes designed to meet the needs of marginalised young women and men, for example, in the area of vocational education and training and raising literacy levels generally.
Renewed effort to support improvement in pass rates for both girls and boys at both junior and senior secondary schools will be sustained, together with other qualitative aspects of education for girls, including entry into higher learning institutions such as universities. Ensuing improved enrolment for both girls and boys at JSS and SSS levels will continue to be a priority for government and its development partners in the education sector.

4.2.4 Higher/tertiary education

Governance structures and laws governing Higher Education Institutions will be reviewed to assess how they hinder or facilitate the institutions to perform their missions and objectives; ensure that appropriate legislation is put in place to encourage innovation and improvement of quality of higher education learning.

Financing education sector development: Government must continue to prioritise Education and Health sectors, in addition to forging strategic innovative public and private partnerships and other sustainable approaches: Given the low public financial base from which the GoSL draws its budget for the education sector and the limited number of development partners involved in education, a new strategy needs to be employed. Relating to Higher/Tertiary Education Institutions, the GoSL is encouraged to consider other innovative avenues of complementing the government’s student grant scheme.

Stronger public and private partnerships will be nurtured, mobilising large mining and other private companies to invest a significant share of their profits in developing Higher/Tertiary Education Institutions and other priority areas within Education, Science, Technology and Innovation sectors. This could be deemed as part of the acknowledged community obligations of companies benefiting from the country’s national resources, for example, access to agricultural land and mining rights.

Equal opportunities for all; gender mainstreaming and disability mainstreaming: The GoSL will ensure equity in access to higher education through its affirmative gender policy on female students in the sciences and engineering disciplines and continue to support entry into HEIs by students with disabilities.

4.2.5 Technical vocation education training (TVET) and the youth in Sierra Leone

i. The GoSL will facilitate the redesign of TVET to ensure a new development approach for Sierra Leone which balances investment in infrastructure and relevant projects, with more significant investment in human resources development and upgrading. A two-pronged approach which focuses on deepening the national technological capabilities, including human resources, both in terms of quality and quantity, organizational and management skills will be adopted. The GoSI will have a strategic shift, with emphasis on developing a dynamic TVET system capable of meeting the challenges of a country in transition, to transformation and a more self-sustaining development phase. TVET development priorities would be in the following:
ii. Finalisation of the TVET policy, with implementation in place, accompanied by a comprehensive resources mobilization strategy to support prioritised interventions.

iii. Focus on a Youth focused National Human Resources Development Plan, on the basis of a new TVET Policy, and within the framework of the Education Sector Strategic Plan, incorporating development of a new-look TVET system and labour market-oriented education, skills and capacity development system. Human resources development support networks, focusing on effective public and private partnerships and forging of stronger linkages between TVET demand and supply in the labour market. A framework could be developed to establish a way in which private companies can invest in certain training programmes, focusing on areas for which there is definite demand, and where there is mutual benefits. Examples include, mining technology, technicians, engineers, middle level management programmes, business and marketing capacity development.

4.2.6 Science, technology and innovation - National system of innovation (NSI)

In the national youth policy framework, a strong proposal is made to place youth in the forefront of innovation. Every country has a national system of innovation (NSI), which is the sum total of activities that contribute to innovations of any kind, whether as improved practices or as new products. When a deliberate, concerted and sustained effort is made to enhance the effectiveness and efficacy of the system through focused support and improvements in system design, based on the acceleration made possible in learning organisation mode, the system becomes a national system of innovation. The explicit intention of the National Youth Policy is to improve the lives of the country's youth. Innovation is perceived to achieve this in two ways: through progressively increasing youth-involving economic growth and enhancing participation of the youth in the economy.

Innovation, and the national innovation system that nurtures it, will be pivotal in realising the overall aim and policy objectives of the National Youth Policy. Within the framework youth national youth development and empowerment, the GoSL will ensure that the national system of innovation adequately supports a transition from strong reliance on a resource-and commodity-based economy to one that is characterised by value-adding and knowledge-intensive activities.

The GoSL will support the strengthening of PPPs in building the National System of Innovation (NSI), at all levels, with particular focus on micro and small firms, in which

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4Innovation is the capacity to generate, acquire and apply knowledge to advance economic and social purposes. It includes both the search for frontier technologies driven by research and development (R&D), as well as the forms of learning and adaptation that might be market led or socially driven. Innovation is fundamentally uncertain, highly contextual and path dependent, but it is at the heart of moving the country from its present mix of resource- and efficiency-driven economic activity to one that is driven by the generation and application of knowledge. It is about doing new things in new ways.
large numbers of youth operate; with more opportunities available for more young people to be involved.

The GoSL and development partners will create an environment to make the NSI contribute more to wider inclusion of the youth in the mainstream economy and also with a view to reducing poverty levels, which also characterise youth nationally. In particular, new international development partnerships will be sought to promote the development of a strong national system of innovation\(^5\).

{Particular attention will be paid to adoption of innovative approaches to human resources and skills development for the youth; including those that gear them to access opportunities with higher levels of sophistication.}

### 4.3 Managing the Health of Sierra Leonean Youth

**4.3.1 HIV and AIDS**

Given that the youth in Sierra Leone are a high risk group and vulnerable to increased HIV rate of infection, the GoSL and development partners will scale up education and awareness programmes across all groups of the population, paying particular attention to addressing gender issues; tackling challenges relating to young women who are noted to be more vulnerable to HIV and AIDS than male counterparts. HIV and AIDS programmes will be mobilised to reach out to groups found to be least knowledgeable of the risk such as rural areas, where awareness campaigns have been less visible to date.

**4.3.2 Sexual and reproductive health, teenage pregnancies**

In view of teenage pregnancies being noted to be a major challenge amongst Sierra Leonean young girls/women, the consequences for young girls dropping out of school early and reducing their educational opportunities, substantial programmes will be developed to improve awareness and availability of contraceptives to ensure that young women are better able to manage their sexual reproductive health. The GoSL and development partners will also support awareness and education interventions designed to eliminate the practice and remove the negative effects of FGM in affected communities and regions.

**4.3.4 Substance and drug abuse**

In view of the growing challenge of drug and substance abuse amongst young people in the country, the GoSL and other partners will monitor closely developments in substance and drug abuse, put in place mechanisms of exploring

\(^5\) The development of a strong national system of innovation, involving deepening the establishment of science technology and innovation capabilities of the country is critical if the country is to move forward to sustainably empower its youth from survivalist, informal sector activities to more dynamic regional and internationally competitive development path. A sound national system of innovation will contribute to the much needed transformation required for broad based empowerment of the young women and men of the country and lead to a more sustained development path marked with growth and national prosperity.
cost effective ways of tackling the challenge amongst youth, together with dissemination of relevant and accurate information on abused substances in Sierra Leone, with a view to taking timely and appropriate action.

4.3.5 Young people with disability

The GoSL and development partners will develop and promote practical interventions targeted at supporting the livelihood system and general welfare of disabled persons. The Disability Act (2012) will be backed up by sustained strategies of financial resource mobilization, capacity building and training, to support the key entry points for scaling up opportunities for disabled young people to have more decent livelihoods and lifestyle.

4.4 Youth Participation in Development

4.4.1 Search for innovative options

A variety of opportunities for youth participation in development on the basis of development best practice have been identified. They include establishment of functional management and organisational structures, effective strategies of managing youth-oriented sexual reproductive health issues through use of peer-to-peer educators, tackling the growing challenge of teenage pregnancies, laying adequate foundation to prepare youth for the world of work through structured internship schemes, use of youth as volunteers for community development work and as shall be determined through programmes supported by the yet to be finalised national youth service.

The GoSL and development partners will prioritise the establishment of broad-based partnerships centred on youth development. This will be undertaken with the view that successful interventions designed to tackle youth development challenges, in particular those related to the key issue of creation of decent employment for young women and men is dependent upon building substantial partnerships and alliances on a local, national, regional and global level. The National Youth Employment Action Plan, with its various intervention areas, will be used as instrument for the conversion of youth employment priorities into concrete action and to strengthen the coordination of youth relevant interventions, in particular productive activities.

The effective PPPs, the GoSL and development partners will scale up support for the capacity building of the National Youth Commission and all key decentralised youth structures at grassroots level. Examples include the District Youth Advisory Committees, District Youth Councils (DYCs) and Chiefdom/Zonal Youth Councils.

The GoSL and development partners will endeavour to learn from other countries involved in youth empowerment and in similar context, taking measures to scale up development best practice.

**Strengthening of youth participation:** Youth participation will be broadened through advocacy, awareness raising, sensitising youth on various issues, focusing on mind-set/attitudinal change, finding new ways of unleashing youth potential, and
involvement in non-traditional areas, including areas with higher levels of sophistication and where youth are generally not found or only scarcely involved. An example is Information Communication Technologies (ICT), where youth could lead in the development of the country to higher levels of sophistication, through targeted capacity building and training in areas with identified market need. Another area is in agro-based value chain development, where youth could be in the forefront of the transformation of the agricultural sector from its uncompetitive status to a globally competitive level.

Use of youth role models: Through NAYCOM and other institutional mechanisms, the GoSL and development partners will make use of youth role models to mobilise youth to become more interested in agriculture, creating an environment for the youth to move into higher value agro-based productive enterprises. A new-look agricultural sector will be established which offers diverse opportunities for the youth population.

4.4.2 National youth service - volunteerism

The GoSL and stakeholders will support the implementation of a National Youth Service, which would focus on delivery in a number of key outcome areas as follows:

i. Building and strengthening a culture of innovation amongst youth, designed to foster development of a new generation of youth with a new mind-set and capable of contributing more substantially to national transformation;

ii. Holistic development of the youth, focusing on inculcating core values of discipline, integrity, honour, stature, patriotism, selflessness, among the young people and preparing youth to be more productive citizens; and

iii. preparing young people for the world of work by strengthening their skills and enabling them generate new knowledge; promoting a culture of volunteerism that facilitate youth acquire first hand work experience

5. IDENTIFIABLE GROUPS UNDER THE NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

5.1 Broader perspective

In addressing the priority issues of the youth, special attention shall be paid to identifiable youth groups. In each of the target areas, government, stakeholders and other youth organisations will pay attention and emphasis to youth groups specified: Attention will be paid to priorities of various youth age groups, for examples, male or female youth from ages 15 – 19; 20 – 29; 30 – 35). The needs of adolescents under 15 years are classified under children, and would be referred to institutional mechanisms that handle issues pertaining to that group.

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6 The process of finalizing a National Youth Service was at an advanced stage at the time of preparation of the new National Youth Policy.
5.2 Rural and urban youth
Facilitate equal access to employment opportunities by both rural and urban youth, ensuring balance of resource allocation by region.

5.3 Informally and formally employed, including self-employed youth
Ensure formation of stakeholder partnership to support, including business development services, for youth operating in the informal sector, such as ghetto youth, bike riders and rural youth involved in agro-based activities, youth in urban farming and marketing of commodities.

5.4 Skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled
Facilitate appropriate deployment of skilled and semi-skilled youth, opening up new opportunities through the National Youth Service and volunteerism activities, taking note of gender differences.

5.5 Youth with special talents
Provide mechanism to identify and nurture youth talent from an early age, opportunities of harnessing and utilizing the creative potentials of young persons who are gifted and talented with a view to enabling better use in national development.

5.6 Post-basic and secondary school drop-outs (junior/senior high schools)
Facilitate equal access to relevant skills and quality educational opportunities.

5.7 Youth in higher education and tertiary institutions
Prepare youth for gainful employment to become productive citizens, focusing upon strengthening linkages with social, political, and economic development partners.

5.8 Out-of-school, unemployed, under-employed, idle youth
Develop and implement interventions that will benefit this under-privileged category of youth, by identifying opportunities for self-employment and generation of decent work. Explore options for continuing education by this category of youth in non-formal environment and learning practical skills that open new opportunities that make the vulnerable youth to become productive.

5.9 Female youth
Advocate the elimination of all forms of discrimination and enhance protection from sexual harassment, physical violence and abuse, labour exploitation, as well as all other negative attitudes and cultural practices. The policy will protect and advance the interests and aspirations of female youth and provide them with dignity and motivation to work as equal partners promoting the national development agenda.
Ensure that young mothers are well catered for and a framework followed to encourage completion of at least secondary education.

5.10 Youth involved in drugs and substance abuse
Provide comprehensive counselling services for affected and vulnerable youth, including tackling the root causes, enabling them to adopt values that make youth better citizens.

5.11 Youth with disability
Uphold society’s responsibility towards youth with disability and difficult health conditions.

6. RIGHTS OF THE YOUTH

6.1 The Rights of Sierra Leonean youth are enshrined in the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone (Act No. 6 of 1991) and any treaty/convention related to the youth to which Sierra Leone is signatory, shall be respected and upheld by all stakeholders. In exercising these rights, the youth will be oriented to position themselves to assume the responsibilities that are expected of them.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 The State/Ministry of Youth Employment and Sports
The GoSL has provided a starting point to carry forward the youth empowerment agenda: The GoSL has made a start in tackling youth development issues in the country through the 2003 Youth Policy and the current policy review. The GoSL recognises the existence of formidable challenges within key sectors and MDAs where youth development issues need to be mainstreamed. The constraints include inherent organisational capacity, human and financial issues which negate the effectiveness, achievement of outcomes and sustainability of many interventions. The GoSL, in collaboration with its development partners will endeavour to address key issues which are known to hinder progress at both central and decentralised levels.

7.1.1 In this policy, the role of the state is to be the following:

i. Ensure that the youth enjoy their fundamental rights enshrined in the 1991 Constitution.

ii. Ensure that a comprehensive youth development framework is understood, implemented and used as a basis for all programming effort, ensuring proper coordination and synergy for all youth programmes and projects;
iii. Create an environment in which financial, material and human resources are mobilised and allocated to youth development priorities in a transparent manner;

iv. Ensure that an adequate monitoring and evaluation system is developed and implemented, accompanied by a sound tracking system to monitor achievement of desirable results or outcomes; {Consideration will be made to ensure that alignment with the national monitoring and evaluation framework, where feasible, for example, in implementation of National Development Plan}.

v. Create an environment where effective PPPs are developed, with clear roles and responsibilities defined for each category of stakeholders; with roles of more significant players properly defined for synergy, cohesion and better integration; and

vi. Provide exemplary leadership and a conducive environment for good governance, including in managing available national resources.

7.2 Parents/Guardians

7.2.1 Families need to create an environment that upholds cultural values, provide adequate guidance to enable the youth to have proper direction, equipping the youth for proper growth and development which makes them in a better position to contribute to their communities in tangible ways. The obligations of parents, in the policy, are to:

i. Lay solid foundation for the youth to become productive citizens through responsible parenthood;

ii. Provision of the physical and psychological needs of the youth, from more tender stages;

iii. Provision of educational growth and development needs of the youth;

iv. Provision of guidance and counselling for the youth;

v. Training young people to make decisions and to understand the implications of choices made;

vi. Training youth to have financial plans that will enable them to eventually become financially independent;

vii. Treating the youth with dignity and respect; and

viii. Open space for the youth to contribute towards their communities and eventually to national development, by encouraging participation in local community projects.

7.3 The Youth

7.3.1 The upholding of moral upbringing and making youth law abiding citizenship is deemed necessary. In this policy, the Sierra Leonean youth is expected to demonstrate:
i. Uphold the country’s traditional and cultural norms, including responsible behaviour towards peers, respect for adults, courtesy to disabled persons and those with health challenges;

ii. Respect for and protection of public property;

iii. Willingness to be involved in volunteerism service, assistance of people in need, without expecting payment always;

iv. Respect for the rights and dignity of female youth;

v. Non-participation in acts of violence, crime, exploitation, and in the oppression of vulnerable groups;

vi. Participation in activities that protect and safeguard the environment; focus on both rural and urban areas;

vii. Promotion of good Sierra Leonean culture and practices; and

viii. Willingness to take up new opportunities and challenges, with an orientation towards innovation, doing things differently.

7.4 The Private Sector

7.41 The policy recognises the growing role of the private sector in national development. The private sector is expected to support the youth in the following manner:

i. Be sensitive to the needs of youth, in particular inexperienced graduates, from universities and colleges; creating new opportunities for gainful employment;

ii. On-the-job training and apprenticeship and/or internship opportunities, in particular in areas where there is clear demand, not excluding management training;

iii. Enter into PPPs to advance programmes for the youth, in particular contributing financially and/or materially to support youth oriented micro and small businesses, in both rural and urban areas;

iv. Support capacity building for umbrella associations for micro and small businesses for the youth, including sector based associations; and

v. Support platforms that offer youth entrepreneurs business development services, targeted at up-scaling youth entrepreneurship.

7.5 Civil Society Organizations

7.5.1 The policy recognizes the role of CSOs, in particular youth serving organisations in providing training and capacity building to the youth through internships and other associations, assisting youth prepare to become more productive citizens. Within a broader perspective, the policy expects CSOs to provide the youth with the following services:

i. Opening up new entry points for the youth to develop capacities in various areas priority areas to national development, through more diversified internships;
ii. Facilitate resource mobilisation with international cooperation partners to support a more coordinated and systemic approach to youth empowerment, with a stronger results orientation;

iii. Create opportunities for the youth to take part in leadership roles in society;

iv. Through PPPs, strengthen decentralised youth structures to generate the skills required to establish sustainable youth organisations at community level;

v. Ensure the establishment of safety nets for vulnerable youth at local community level; and

vi. Contribute to creation of an environment in which youth empowerment programmes and projects can operate sustainably and be up-scaled to achieve up better results.

7.6 Religious Organizations and Traditional Authorities

7.6.1 The youth need to grow within a proper cultural context. The youth need to be guided to have the right moral compass than enables them to live responsibly as youth and in their adult-hood.

The policy envisages that Religious Organizations and Traditional Authorities, and associated structures will give their input providing moral guidance to the youth through the following ways:

i. Provide religious and moral upbringing to the youth in the best traditions that are acceptable in Sierra Leonean culture and norms;

ii. Through practical forms of support, the youth would be assisted to understand, appreciate and adopt acceptable national values and embrace the country’s cultural heritage;

iii. Strengthen understanding of the sanctity of the family unit through the strengthening of both the nuclear and extended families; and

iv. Supporting the youth to implement the various “plans of action for youth empowerment” prepared by the international organizations.

7.7 International Cooperation Partners (ICPs)

7.7.1 This policy acknowledges the critical role that international cooperation partners have in national development and specifically with respect to youth empowerment programmes. The following roles and responsibilities are envisaged to be assumed by ICPs, as part of their contribution to successful implementation of the youth policy:
i. Participate in a coordinated resource mobilisation and financing strategy for comprehensive youth development programmes, taking cognisance that ICPs have different thrusts, are differently structured and organised;

ii. Support interventions designed to unlock the potential of the youth, enabling better nurturing of youth talent, through investment in innovative programmes with high transformational possibilities;

iii. Through different forms of technical assistance, support capacity building and training of decentralised youth structures, providing more visible and open platforms for consulting, communicating and interacting with the youth;

iv. Provide platforms for sharing experiences on youth empowerment and development best practice, based on lessons learned internationally.

8. IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS

The GoSL will initiate a comprehensive resource mobilisation strategy for youth development interventions and empowerment, nationally. Innovative ways of resource mobilisation and doing business for sustaining youth development programmes in Sierra Leone will be adopted. The Youth Policy advocates for the establishment of a variety of practical interventions designed to uplift the wellbeing of the youth and to meet the needs of different youth groups.

The Ministry responsible for youth affairs shall facilitate and institute the establishment of a National Youth Policy Steering Committee (NYPSC), chaired by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth and the NAYCOM Commissioner as Co-Chairperson.

Through a coherent advocacy plan, the NYPSC will ensure that the Youth Policy is well understood and mainstreamed in all key sectors, policies and programmes of MDAs. The NYPSC will comprise a wide variety of stakeholders, namely, key MDAs, such as MAFFS, Office of the Vice President, MTI, MEST, MoFED, MLSS, MoH, Ministry of Mines, Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs (MSWGCA), CSOs and representative youth associations and youth-serving agencies. One or two ICPs may also be engaged, with observer status at the NYPSC level.

8.1 The policy provides a framework for collective action, implementation coordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) arrangements for youth development among MDAs, youth organisations, CSOs and international cooperation partners and other stakeholders for youth empowerment.

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7 It is envisaged that all youth development and empowerment interventions implemented through support of ICPs will be aligned to the National Youth Policy.

8 For sustainability, the Youth Policy stresses local ownership in its implementation and coordination arrangements.
8.2 The Ministry responsible for youth affairs will oversee the coordination, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and review of the National Youth Policy.

8.3 This shall be done in collaboration with NAYCOM but with the active participation of the youth and in collaboration with relevant MDAs, CSOs and other stakeholders;

8.4 The National Youth Commission shall carry out its core function including the under-listed:

   i. Mobilize and organize the youth for participation in a range of youth empowerment programmes and projects as shall be priorities in the National Action Plans;

   ii. Take leadership on resource mobilisation, ensure that decentralised youth structures are adequately resourced and capacitated;

   iii. In collaboration with the Ministry responsible for youth affairs, take leadership in the design of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system for youth empowerment and development activities.

   iv. Provide a platform for sharing of lessons learned on youth development activities, packaging the lessons to inform the youth and other stakeholders as necessary.

8.5 Youth Associations, including District Youth Committees (DYC’s), Zonal Youth Committees and their associates, shall play a central role at national, regional district and local levels in the implementation of this National Youth Policy.

   i. They shall position themselves to work closely with NAYCOM and other stakeholders, including CSOs, ensuring that policy makers are kept informed on the views and aspirations of the youth, as well as emerging challenges confronting them.

8.6 Civil society organizations or non-governmental organizations, including community-based organizations (CBOs) play a central role in youth empowerment. CSOs are expected to do the following:

   i. Align all their programmes and project plans to new priorities set in the new National Youth Policy;

   ii. Review existing CSO interventions, ensuring stronger partnerships are forged in youth development planning, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation as envisaged in the policy;

   iii. Support resource mobilisation to compliment the effort of the NYPSC technical and financial support to projects, including training and capacity building of identified youth groups;
iv. Promote programmes targeted at nurturing a new innovative or entrepreneurship culture for the youth, including mentorship programmes; and

v. Provide regular reports of progress made to the NYPSC, highlighting achievement of results and challenges encountered; including making available to the NYPSC, independent external evaluations of projects.

8.7 This policy further recognizes the important complementary role of ICPs in national development and specifically in youth empowerment, notably in recent years. The policy, therefore, anticipates that ICPs will be assume the following roles:

i. Providing technical and financial support to prioritised youth development sectors and programmes;

ii. Promoting youth empowerment networks, including support to youth volunteerism and internships schemes; and

iii. Promotion of youth development best practice, learnership schemes and exchange programmes.
The following is a draft organigramme designed to give an overview of the implementation and coordination arrangements for the National Youth Policy.

**Diagram 1 : National Youth Policy Implementation Organigramme**

Important Note

The implementation and coordination of the Youth Policy involves a package of intervention areas which are critical for youth empowerment and development. Cross-sectoral linkages will be taken into account with a view to achieving higher level impact.
9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

9.1 The Ministry responsible for youth issues, in collaboration with the National Youth Commission, shall monitor the implementation of the National Youth Policy to ensure that it fully responds to the development needs and aspirations of the youth, enabling improvement in the contribution by the youth to the broader development agenda.

9.1.1 The Ministry shall lead the process of reviewing the policy, as necessary (but at least once in every five years) and in line with policies of the GoSL. During the period of review, the prevailing policy shall be the policy of the country.

9.2 Action Plan

9.2.1 The National Youth Policy will be implemented largely through a mainstreaming approach\(^9\) and through the National Youth Employment Action Plan and other Action Plans that shall be developed to complement existing ones. The plans outline comprehensive strategies, projects and activities, time frames with respect to immediate, short, medium and long term that will need to achieve desired objectives.

9.2.2 The National Youth Commission in collaboration with relevant stakeholders has developed the National Youth Employment Action Plan for the implementation of this policy and will be reviewed as and when necessary. Additional dimensions are expected to be added to the Action Plan, to cover broader perspective and more youth development priorities.

10. CONCLUSIONS

Through this policy and other measures, Sierra Leonean youth will be encouraged to arise and become more self-determined, work harder, be a great deal more creative and entrepreneurial minded, unlock their potential and become more productive and focused citizens. Government and development partners will continue to support the capacity building of decentralised youth-led organisations and structures, at district and local levels, in particular those run by the youth themselves. This will enable them to link up with local economic development initiatives and local government authorities and the work of like-minded CSOs and CBOs.

\(^9\) The mainstreaming approach involves different MDAs carrying out the youth empowerment agenda by ensuring that a distinct budget and resource allocation is made to support youth development. An example involves the MAFFS, with its Smallholder Commercialisation Programme, which is envisaged to benefit significant proportion of emerging young farmers. The same applies with the MEST programmes and several other interventions. A clear monitoring and tracking system, which is enforceable through NAYCOM and the NYPSG can be adopted, in addition to other measures, at higher national level.
10.1 Having realised that the Youth are a key resource for the country, which can be nurtured in terms of potential and capability to become better positioned to support national transformation in a more impactful way, some in-roads have been made in the direction of youth empowerment in past 5 years. Whist some encouraging successes have been recorded, for example, in the establishment of decentralised youth structures affiliated to the National Youth Commission, the battle to carry forward the youth development agenda to enable transition of large numbers of youth from the present lowly state to levels of desirable excellence remains a formidable challenge.

10.2 The National Youth Policy is grounded in the reality facing the Sierra Leonean youth and will guide and direct systemic youth empowerment interventions, enabling synergies to be forged through the combined effort of a wide variety of stakeholders. This is central to achievement of impact which has been elusive in many of our national programmes. The policy document captures the major issues, challenges and opportunities, accompanied by new ways of organising and working that are pivotal to youth development. Whilst the policy by itself is not a panacea to youth empowerment, because of the many challenges that need to be tackled first, it provides a fresh direction for all stakeholders involved in youth empowerment in the country.

10.3 In this Policy, Government declares the importance of results-oriented youth involvement in national development and emphasizes the complementary role of MDAs, CSOs and international cooperating partners, as well as other stakeholders, in unequivocal pursuit of youth development in Sierra Leone. Government therefore calls upon all development stakeholders to cooperate and establish sustainable networks of supporting the youth that will make the results that the Policy seeks to achieve become reality.
REFERENCES (TO ADD ALL KEY REFERENCES)


Sierra Leone Local Content Policy

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**Acronyms**

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<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
<td>SLIEPA</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency</td>
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<td>MTI</td>
<td>Ministry of Trade and Industry</td>
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<td>LCR</td>
<td>Local Content Requirements</td>
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<td>PSDS</td>
<td>Private Sector Development Strategy</td>
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<td>NPPA</td>
<td>National Public Procurement Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDA</td>
<td>Ministries, Departments and Agencies</td>
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<td>SMEs</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSADP</td>
<td>National Sustainable Agriculture Development Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
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<td>TRIMS</td>
<td>Agreement on Trade Related Investment Measures</td>
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<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLCCIA</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture</td>
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**Definitions**

For purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

"**foreign investor**" means in the case of a natural person means a person who is not a citizen of Sierra Leone and in the case of a company, a company incorporated under the laws of any country other than Sierra Leone in which more than fifty percent of the shares are held by a person who is not a citizen of Sierra Leone and in the case of partnerships, means a partnership in which the partnership controlling interest is owned by a person who is not a citizen of Sierra Leone;

"**local investor**" means a natural person who is a citizen of Sierra Leone; a Company incorporated under the laws of Sierra Leone in which the majority of the shares are held by a person who is a citizen of Sierra Leone, or a partnership in which the partnership controlling interest is owned by a person who is a citizen of Sierra Leone;
Sierra Leone Local Content Policy

1. BACKGROUND

The Government’s development objectives are focused on supporting the private sector in Sierra Leone which is considered to be the engine of growth for the overall economic development of the Country. Through wide-ranging legal and policy reforms, the Government seeks to create an environment that promotes the development of the private sector. Efforts are also being made to address the challenges that are faced by entrepreneurs including lack of access to finance and entrepreneurial skills development particularly amongst the small and medium enterprises.

In the same measure, the Government has placed emphasis on positioning Sierra Leone as an attractive investment destination through targeted policy and legal reforms that will facilitate the operations of large to small enterprises. With the creation of Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA), the Government has made strides in attracting large foreign investors in key sectors of agriculture, mining and tourism. By granting investment incentives to investors and improving access to facilities through the establishment of export processing zones, the Government has created an enabling environment for investors.

As a result of all these efforts, there is increased private sector participation and growth from national, regional and international actors. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Sierra Leone has particularly seen an increase as investors take opportunities available in agriculture, agro-processing, mining, tourism and other sectors. Such investment is not only expected to improve Sierra Leone’s economic performance through competitiveness of its products but to lead to transfer of technology, employment and transfer of skills to the local population.

Despite the increase in investment flows, the domestic private sector has not been integrated with the new investments. There has not been sufficient integration with the domestic market through utilization of locally sourced products, employment of Sierra Leoneans at managerial level, nor transfer of knowledge and skill to domestic firms and individuals.

Without the necessary regulatory and policy framework, the investment to Sierra Leone will not yield significant benefit to the economy of Sierra Leone. The national Policy on Local Content for Sierra Leone will therefore ensure that there are linkages between foreign companies or enterprises and the local economy. This Policy while building on the
efforts of the Government to promote foreign investment will require investors to meet a set of performance targets in their operations.

2. RATIONALE FOR POLICY

This policy is necessary to ensure that there is sufficient linkage between the local economy and foreign enterprises. By setting specific performance requirements, the Government aims to ensure that the benefits that Sierra Leone seeks to obtain from FDI including improved technology and managerial skills are integrated into the domestic market and distribution networks.

By ensuring linkages between large domestic and foreign firms, small and medium domestic firms will improve their competitiveness and economic performance as there is transfer of knowledge and skills to domestic firms.

As the domestic sector continues to grow and develop, the Local Content Policy will facilitate the transfer of knowledge and information which can be acquired through better interaction with the foreign enterprises which have more superior production methods. Sierra Leonean service providers such as lawyers, insurers and bankers also need to be integrated into the large investments in order to grow and acquire better expertise.

Although the need to integrate the domestic private sector to large investments has been identified as key to the development of the private sector, there is no comprehensive policy that provides a framework for its implementation. Different sector policies and laws currently address the need to have local content and as such, it has been difficult to monitor the extent to which large firms particularly foreign investors have integrated their production methods to the domestic market for instance through use of locally sourced products. The Policy will also streamline measures so that investors are not unduly burdened with the requirements for local content.

Due to the disparity of information available to the private sector, the Policy will provide mechanisms that will enable the private sector to know and take advantage of opportunities in the market. The Policy will also create channels which will facilitate linkages between foreign enterprises and the domestic firms through which the available skill and resources can be identified locally.

Furthermore, the policy will provide a benchmark for negotiations of investment agreements which will be guided by the stipulations in the policy and apply not only to large domestic and foreign firms but also to their affiliates such as operators, contractors, subcontractors, and other entities involved in any project, operation, activity or transaction in Sierra Leone.
3. SCOPE
The Policy will provide policy statements and strategies in the following areas:

i. Promotion of the use of locally sourced Sierra Leonean goods and services
ii. Promotion of the development of Sierra Leonean Small and Medium Enterprises
iii. Employment and training requirements which will require investors to employ a stipulated percentage of Sierra Leoneans at various levels of the labour force
iv. Institutional arrangements for the implementation of the Policy
v. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Policy

4. POLICY COORDINATION AND LINKAGE
This Policy will be designed to comply with the overall national policies including Sierra Leone Vision 2025 and the Agenda for Change (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) II). In Particular, the Local Content Policy will enhance the implementation of the Agenda for Change which identifies the development of the private sector as central to achieving economic development of Sierra Leone.

The National Trade Policy also supports the development of the local manufacturing industry, by creating linkages, which is what this Policy seeks to achieve. The Local Content Policy will therefore provide the necessary policy direction to achieve the goals and objectives of the National Trade Policy. Furthermore, this Policy will support the Private Sector Development Strategy (PSDS) which seeks to promote the culture of entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone through the increase of transfer of know-how and skills by creating market linkages where larger businesses will be encouraged to transfer know-how and skills to their suppliers and distributors.

The Local Content Policy will also support existing sector strategies including the National Sustainable Agriculture Development Plan (NSADP) which *inter alia* seeks to promote commercial agriculture through private sector support. This Policy will boost the implementation of the Smallholder Commercialization programme of the NSADP with one of its component on productivity and formation of farmer based organizations that would benefit from being integrated into the large scale agricultural investments.

The Policy will also bring together the provisions relating to the promotion of local content in the various related policies and laws such as the Feeder Roads Policy, the Petroleum Act, the Mines and Minerals Act 2009, the Business Start-up Act (Amended 2007) and the National Public Procurement Act.
5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Policy will be governed by the following principles which shall be adhered to by all actors in its implementation:

i. Promotion of a friendly investment climate

The Policy will be implemented with a view to improving the investment climate of Sierra Leone. The interests of investors shall be considered when implementing the policy to ensure that there are no obstacles created to doing business in Sierra Leone. The provisions of the Policy will therefore be crafted to ensure a balance between the interests of investors to ensure that they are not unduly affected while facilitating benefits for the domestic SMEs.

ii. Strengthening of the domestic Private Sector

The development of the domestic private sector is the overriding goal of this Policy which will ensure that domestic SMEs are integrated with foreign enterprises and are able to participate in the economic development. Policies will be designed to strengthen the domestic private sector to enable them take advantage of investment opportunities in the market by creating linkages with large investments.

iii. Transparency

The Policy recognizes the need for transparency in implementing various strategies and policy measures through for instance monitoring procurement, assessing the amount of local Content and review of employment of Sierra Leoneans. Running transparent systems will be vital to garnering the support of all players in the successful implementation of the Policy.

iv. Capacity and Institutional building

Mindful that there is limited skilled labour in many sectors of the economy, this Policy will operate with a view to building up a skilled work force in Sierra Leone. The Policy is also mindful of the need to build the capacity of trade support institutions such as Universities, Government Institutions as well as the private sector.

v. Adherence to international and regional Obligations

This Policy will adhere to Sierra Leone’s international and regional obligations especially those arising due to membership to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In regard to the WTO, this Policy will conform to the provisions of the WTO’s Agreement on Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMS) in as far as the agreement forbids some investment measures. This
Policy will also conform to obligations within the Mano-River Union area on promoting trade.

vi. **Mutual Cooperation**

The successful realization of the goals of this Policy shall be determined by the level of cooperation and transfer of technology between Government and the private sector actors. The Policy will therefore promote coordination between the different stakeholders in a manner that encourages mutual cooperation and transfer of technology.

### 6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

**6.1 Goal of the Policy**

The overall goal of the Local Content Policy is to promote growth and development of the domestic private sector by creating linkages with the large domestic and foreign firms through the utilization of local resources and products, and to promote the integration of the Sierra Leoneans in all economic activities. Furthermore, this Policy intends to set a policy framework for the consistent implementation of sectoral based local content policies for key sectors of the economy such as the Oil and Gas, the Mining, and the Agricultural.

**6.2 Policy Objectives**

1. To promote the utilization of locally available Sierra Leonean goods in the industrial and manufacturing sectors.
2. To facilitate the development of Sierra Leonean service providers by promoting linkages with more advanced and experienced foreign companies.
3. To support the growth of small and medium enterprises through targeted Government procurement.
4. To promote employment of Sierra Leonean citizens through participation in the private sector.
5. To develop the human and institutional capacity of Sierra Leoneans through training and transfer of knowledge and technology from foreign firms to Sierra Leoneans.
6. To establish an institutional framework for the implementation and monitoring of the Policy.
7. To promote a culture of local ownership and participation in aspects of productive economic activity.
6.3 Policies and Strategies

6.3.1 To promote the utilization of locally available Sierra Leonean goods and services

In order to support and develop the domestic private sector and to realize financial benefits to a broader section of Sierra Leoneans, the Government will encourage enterprises operating in all sectors of the economy to use goods and services produced in Sierra Leone. As a pre-requisite to receiving any investment incentive, the Government will require all enterprises to give preference to Sierra Leonean goods where they are of better, equal or of comparable value to those obtained from other sources and available in the Sierra Leonean market. Government will grant incentives to only those enterprises that satisfy the local content requirements of this Policy or other related instruments. Non-compliance with the local content requirements will result in the withdrawal of fiscal incentives.

The Government will stipulate percentage targets of local content that are to be met by enterprises operating in key sectors of the economy such as agriculture and tourism. The stipulated targets will ensure that there is an incremental use of Sierra Leonean goods especially as the domestic production capacity increases.

In order to develop the services sector, in particular the banking, legal, insurance, construction, catering, power and transportation including fleet handling, haulage, fuel transportation subsectors; enterprises shall be required to use Sierra Leonean service providers for a stipulated minimum percentage share of their requirements where the capacity exists in the market.

Policy Prescriptions

In order to achieve this objective, the Government will implement the following strategies:

1. Coordinate the award and continued use of government investment incentives by investors in order to ensure compliance with the Local Content Policy.
2. Stipulate percentage targets for local content requirements for sectors not specified in this Policy. The following sector local content targets are recommended to be met by manufacturing firms:
   a. In the manufacturing industry, firms shall be required to use at least 10 % of domestically produced inputs. For the bakery and confectionery industry in particular 10% inclusion of Cassava flour produced locally from locally grown Cassava is a requirement.
b. In the beer industry, manufacturers shall utilise at least 20% of locally produced sorghum.

3. In the application for any tax or other incentive by any enterprise, the Government will require the enterprise to submit a local content plan detailing how they will use and increase the percentage of Sierra Leonean content in their production and activities and how they will develop matching programmes between local and foreign firms.

4. All enterprises operating businesses in any services sector in Sierra Leone including but not limited to banking, insurance, transportation, construction, catering and legal matters, shall retain only the services of Sierra Leonean service providers whose firms are registered and located in Sierra Leone. Where there is no Sierra Leonean entity to render the required service and it becomes necessary to employ a foreign entity, the foreign entity shall operate in partnership with a Sierra Leonean owned and registered company. The foreign entity shall provide the Committee with a local participation plan which shall describe the roles and duties of each partner.

5. Support Sierra Leonean business associations to improve their capacity to supply local products and services.

6. Encourage out-grower schemes for agricultural products to supply large firms and manufacturers.

6.3.2 To support the domestic private sector through targeted Public and Private Procurement

In order to ensure that there is utilization of Sierra Leone goods and services in a way that promotes the creation of backward and forward linkages, public procurement shall be streamlined to give preferential margins to domestic SMEs. Government entities shall be encouraged to give preference to domestic suppliers according to the provisions of the National Public Procurement Act (NPPA) and Regulations regarding the award of preferential margins.

The private sector will also be encouraged to give first consideration to Sierra Leonean goods and services in their procurement process.

Policy Prescriptions:

In order to achieve this objective, the Government will implement the following strategies:
1. Ensure that Sierra Leonean firms are given first consideration in the award of contracts and concessions in sectors such as mining and the petroleum industry subject to established rules.

2. Provide a preferential margin of 10 per cent to domestic firms in government and private procurement.

3. The NPPA to develop guidelines for Government entities to provide a margin of domestic preferences in terms of ownership, origin of raw materials, partnership with local firms etc.

4. Facilitate the development of a bidding process for all large firms and investors for acquiring goods and services which shall give full and fair opportunity to Sierra Leonean service suppliers and ensure that all procurement bids by foreign enterprises are advertised locally and internationally.

5. Promote the consideration of Sierra Leonean Content when evaluating any bid. Where bids are within 5% of each other at financial stage, the bid containing the highest level of Sierra Leonean content shall be selected provided the Sierra Leonean content in the selected bid is at least 5% higher than its closest competitor.

6. Strengthen domestic firms through public private partnerships to train and build capacity to enable them to take advantage of the available opportunities and meet international competitive bidding standards.¹

7. Coordinate with private sector organisations such as the Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (SLCCIA) to facilitate access to information regarding available opportunities for procurement.

**6.3.3 To promote the employment of Sierra Leoneans in all sectors of the economy**

In order to harness maximum benefits from investment and to ensure transfer of knowledge to Sierra Leoneans, the Government will promote the employment of Sierra Leoneans in all sectors of the economy. Where the necessary skills exist, Sierra Leoneans shall have first priority of employment over foreign nationals. The Government will put in

¹ Article 7 of the Investment Promotion Act of 2004 states the Government’s commitment to improving the capacity of Sierra Leonean business enterprises to compete effectively, both locally and internationally.
place measures to develop the necessary skills for Sierra Leoneans in the sectors where such skills are needed.

The Government will also facilitate transfer of knowledge and skills to Sierra Leonean citizens in order to develop and improve the quality of the work force.

**Policy Prescriptions:**

To achieve this objective, the Government will implement the following strategies:

1. Sierra Leoneans shall be given the first consideration for employment and training in any project executed by any enterprise or investor in Sierra Leone.

2. Where the enterprises or investor can not employ Sierra Leoneans due to lack of trained personnel, the enterprise or investor shall submit to the Local Content Committee as established by this Policy, a plan to develop such training for Sierra Leoneans.\(^2\)

3. For positions not held by Sierra Leoneans, the investor shall submit a succession plan which shall stipulate Sierra Leoneans to understudy the expatriate for a maximum period of five years.

4. In all enterprises operating in any sector of the economy; at least 20% of the managerial and 50% of intermediate positions shall be held by Sierra Leonean citizens. The Work Permit Committee as established under the Business Start-Up (Amendment) Act 2007 can however provide an exemption to this requirement where the requesting enterprise proves to the Committee that there is no sufficiently skilled manpower to take-up the managerial or intermediate posts. The respective ratio will be increased over the time and after 5 years of establishment will stand at 60% for managerial positions and 80% for intermediate positions. Where it is proven that required skills are not present locally and ratio cannot be met, the company must demonstrate a capacity building plan to substitute expatriate with local capacity within five years.

5. All junior level staff such as drivers, security personnel, secretaries, general casual labourers and all similar junior or intermediate positions shall be held by Sierra Leonean citizens.

6. All enterprises shall make application for expatriate quotas to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The application shall be detailed and shall include job titles, description of responsibilities, the duration of the proposed employment in Sierra

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\(^2\) These strategies are in conformity with Articles 34 B, 34 C and 34 D in Section 2 of the Business Start-up Act Amended 2007
Leone and any other information required by the Work Permit Committee for purposes of implementing the provision of this Policy.

7. **Employment and Training Plan:** An investor shall submit to the Work Permit Committee an Employment and Training Plan which shall contain the following:

   i. an outline of the hiring and training needs of the investor with a breakdown of the skills needed, anticipated skills shortages in the Sierra Leonean labour force, specialized training requirements and the anticipated expenditures that will be made directly by the investor in implementing the Employment and Training Plan.

   ii. a time frame for employment opportunities for each phase of project development and operations, to enable members of the Sierra Leone workforce to prepare themselves for such opportunities.

8. The investor will report regularly to the Committee on employment and training activities. The report shall include number of new employees hired during the reporting period, their nationality and their employment status;

6.3.4 **To promote the development of human resources capacity of Sierra Leoneans**

In order to develop and enhance the skills of the Sierra Leonean workforce, the Government will support tertiary and technical institutions to provide training according to the skills needed in the economy.

The Government will coordinate with the private sector, foreign investors and development partners to develop the necessary skills through specialized training provided in universities and other technical institutions.

**Policy Prescriptions**

The Government will implement the following strategies in order to achieve the above objective.

1. Transform the education curriculum of tertiary, vocational, technical and commercial education institutions to prioritize science and technology according to the skills requirements of the industrial sector.

2. Align the education curriculum of tertiary, vocational, technical and commercial education institutions with the growth sectors of the economy, such as mining, oil
and gas, fisheries, agriculture, etc to produce a skilled workforce for these sectors by 2025.

3. Encourage private sector investment in the development of entrepreneurship and management training institutes.

4. Provide incentives for sector-specific training and skills development in entrepreneurship and management, in public and private sector training institutions as well as within industry associations and at the firm-level.

5. Encourage skills development for the youth through on-the-job training, internships and artisanal apprenticeships in established industries and firms.

6. To encourage large domestic and foreign industrial enterprises to develop training programmes for Sierra Leoneans to ensure transfer of knowledge, technology and expertise.

**6.3.5 The promotion of Local Ownership**

To ensure the promotion of local ownership, the Government will encourage local partnership between Sierra Leoneans and foreign investors and their agents. A foreign company that partners with Sierra Leonean firms will be granted preferential treatment when competing against companies with no percentage of equity share ownership by Sierra Leonean firms or citizens.

**Policy Prescriptions:**

The Government will implement the following strategies aimed at achieving the above objective:

1. Give first consideration for assigning rights such as mineral concessions to companies with significant equity ownership by Sierra Leoneans citizens.

2. Increase access to finance for Sierra Leoneans citizens through Government initiated programmes as set out in the financial sector development plan and in the Agenda for Change.

3. Incorporate the promotion of partnership between foreign investors and Sierra Leoneans into investment promotion strategy.

4. Encourage capacity building amongst Sierra Leonean entrepreneurs to enable them develop the technical skills needed to effectively engage in partnership with foreign companies and entities.
7. IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Negotiation of Investment Agreements
This Policy shall provide a benchmark for the negotiation of investment agreements between the Government of Sierra Leone and other countries or with business enterprises to ensure that all investors conform to the stipulations of this Policy.

7.2 Granting of Incentives conditional on fulfilment of the conditions in the Policy
The successful implementation of this Policy will be supported by making the initial award to or continued use of incentives by investors conditional on them putting into operation the obligations stipulated in this Policy.

7.3 Institutional framework
There are several Government agencies that are currently monitoring aspects relating to private sector development in general and the promotion of local content development in particular. Some of the most important institutions are the following:

Coordination and Role of Existing institutions

i. Ministry of Trade and Industry
The Ministry in general has the mandate to develop private sector development in Sierra Leone. Through its implementing agency, the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA), the Ministry also has a mandate to encourage and facilitate investment and to promote exports in Sierra Leone. The Ministry of Trade and Industry shall have the overall responsibility of overseeing the implementation of this Policy.

ii. Ministry of Labour and Social Security
This Ministry is mandated to coordinate matters relating to labour, and in particular monitor the employment of expatriates in Sierra Leone. Under the General Law (Business Start-up) Amendment Act, the application for permits is to the Work Permit Committee that is chaired by the representative from the Ministry responsible for Labour. This Committee therefore will play a very important role in monitoring the level of employment of Sierra Leoneans.

iii. National Public Procurement Authority (NPPA)
The NPPA’s responsibility is to oversee government procurement to ensure transparency and value for money. Since this Policy also requires that Government Agencies consider
local content in the award of contracts, the role of the NPPA is vital in publishing guidelines for the MDAs to follow when considering local content. The NPPA will also play an advocacy role among MDAs to encourage the implementation of the Policy.

iv. Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

By overseeing the granting of government incentives including fiscal incentives to investors, the MoFED is a key institution that shall be involved in the implementation of the Policy. The continued enjoyment of fiscal incentives by investors will be conditional on their adherence to the requirements of this Policy. MoFED will therefore need to coordinate with MTI and other stakeholders before incentives are awarded or extended.

v. Sector Specific MDAs

Other government agencies such as the Ministry of Mining and Mineral Resources, the Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructure (MWHI), the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS), the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and the Directorate of Petroleum Resources also deal with issues relating to the private sector and in particular effort to increase the participation of Sierra Leoneans in the economy. The Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources oversees the application of local content in the mining sector as provided by the Mining and Minerals Act. It is therefore important that all there sector specific agencies participate in the implementation of the Local Content Policy.

vi. Private Sector Participation

The role of the private sector is vital for the successful implementation of this Policy whose main aim is to support the development of the local private sector. The Government will promote and support the private sector by creating information channels through which the members can know about the opportunities for investment created through this Policy. Through established institutions such as the Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (SLCCIA), the Government will also support the domestic private sector to create linkages with large domestic as well as foreign firms. Since the domestic private sector is still weak with serious constraints to produce sufficient quantities with competitive quality, the Government will continue to address obstacles such as access to finance that will enhance the capacity of the domestic SMEs.

7.4 Creation of the Local Content Committee

In order to effectively coordinate amongst the different institutions and stakeholders on the implementation of the Policy, a committee called the Local Content Committee shall be established.
7.4.1 Composition of the Local Content Committee

The Local Content Committee shall consist of the following members:

i. A representative of the Ministry of Trade and Industry who shall be the Chair of the Committee

ii. A representative of the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General

iii. A representative of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

iv. A representative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security

v. A representative of the Strategy and Policy Unit in the Office of the President.

vi. A representative of the National Public Procurement Agency

vii. A representative of the National Revenue Authority

viii. A representative of the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency

ix. Two representatives of the Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture (SLCCIA)

x. Two representatives from Civil Society

xi. A representative from a Government Ministry, Government Agency or professional body directly responsible for a particular sector, or having a major stake in the subject matter under review by the Committee.

7.4.2 Functions of the Local Content Committee

The Committee shall carry out the following functions:

i. Supervise, coordinate and monitor the implementation of this Policy

ii. Appraise, evaluate and approve local content plans and reports submitted to the Committee

iii. Liaise with sector operators and institutions to monitor the implementation of the policy

iv. Coordinate with the private sector to enable Sierra Leoneans to take advantage of available opportunities.

v. Receive the local content plans of investors and assess their implementation.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE POLICY

In order to enable the Local Content Committee to monitor the implementation of the Local Content Policy, investors will be obligated to submit to the Committee the following documents

i. Business plan

ii. Capital plan
iii. Procurement plan

iv. Imports plan

v. Employment plan

vi. Training plan.

These plans will be revised on an annual basis and submitted to the Committee. It is also expected that companies will comply with all regulated obligations to provide annual financial reports to OARG, and copy the Committee.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry in its oversight role to develop the private sector and serving as a secretariat to the Local Content Committee will be responsible for gathering information regarding the status of implementation of the various programmes, and will conduct random checks at companies sites. The Private Sector Unit of the Ministry will support the Committee to coordinate with all stakeholders and to obtain the relevant information relating to the implementation of the programme. The Committee shall compare various benchmarks with actual implementation of the programmes in the Policy.
Over 70 percent of our country’s population are under the age of 35, and a third of the nation’s citizens is in the youth age category 15 -35. This makes Sierra Leone a country of young people, and a country that can only move forward with the energy, resilience and creativity of its youths. That is why the youths of this country are at the center of most of my government’s development programs. Young people must have opportunities to develop their creativity and other relevant skills to enhance their contributions to the building of this country. Young people must be supported to overcome challenges that include underemployment, unemployment, limited skills, sexual reproductive health, gender disparity, and low enterprise development capacity.

Ensuring this requires institutional and other scaffolds to support the endeavours of young people to build better lives. We created the Ministry of Youth Affairs and established the National Youth Commission to provide these institutional scaffolds and provide leadership in designing and implementing policies with youths for the continued construction of a peaceful and prosperous society.

From increasing employment opportunities to healthcare, skills development, and placing youths in leadership positions at all levels of government, we are marching forward with the youths of this country. However, more actions need to be undertaken. But we must choose those actions with the greatest potential of overcoming obstacles, and which also position youths at the very centre of the country’s socio-economic development process. Together with the youths of this country, we have developed a revised National Youth Policy as a guide for choosing and ensuring actions towards the realization of goals for youths set out in our Agenda for Prosperity.

The Revised National Youth Policy of 2014 guides us as to where more needs to be done, how it must be done, who should take the lead in taking specific actions, emerging challenges, how to overcome them and move on with the aspirations and zeal of young people to better their lives, their communities and the nation.

The document provides a comprehensive plan for stakeholders’ intervention in Education, Agriculture, Health and Sanitation, Science and Technology and in all development programs at all levels. I remain committed to serve as Chairman of the Inter-Ministerial Committee to ensure proper linkages and effective coordination with MDAs and other stakeholders in Youth interventions.

Let me encourage all Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Partners in youth development to work closely with the Ministry of Youth Affairs in developing appropriate policies and programmes for the furtherance of Youth Inclusion, Participation and Sustainable Development in our beloved nation.

Dr Ernest Bai Koroma
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone
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<th>ACRONYM</th>
<th>FULL FORM</th>
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<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>BECE</td>
<td>Basic Education Certificate Examinations</td>
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<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
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In February 2013, His Excellency the President, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma established a separate Ministry of Youth Affairs for the first time in the history of Sierra Leone. The primary responsibility of this Ministry is to develop appropriate policies and programs that are geared towards youth empowerment and inclusion in the decision making process.

After a thorough examination of the 2003 National Youth Policy, the Ministry realized the institutional and policy gaps that existed in the implementation of that Policy especially when it centered on addressing youth issues in post-conflict situations and mainstreaming them in national institutions.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs worked in collaboration with the National Youth Commission, the World Bank and young people to carry out a comprehensive study and expert consultations with MDAs, Civil Society Organizations and youths in all the four regions of the country. Based on the findings, a revised Youth Policy Framework was formulated and presented by an international consultant, Dr. Stephen Chipika to all stakeholders for validation.

The revised National Youth Policy of 2014 sought to create a conducive environment in which the youth of Sierra Leone will develop a shared vision, national consciousness and nurture a sense of ownership on national issues concerning young people, participating in the political, economic, social and cultural endeavors and benefit fairly from the outcomes of their efforts. The 2014 National Youth Policy also focuses on decent job creation and support to building the potentials and creativity of young people.

In addition, young people should comport themselves in an organized manner as law abiding citizens, with accelerated productive quality and high integrity to enhance their continuous contribution to the development of this country. They should be in position to play leadership roles in order to ensure their participation and benefits.

Finally, I wish to thank all those who in diverse ways contributed to the revision of the 2003 National Youth Policy and on the development of the 2014 revised National Youth Policy. My heartfelt gratitude goes to my predecessor Hon. Paul Kamara, Staff of My Ministry, World Bank, UNDP, UNFPA, Plan Sierra Leone, Road Maintenance Fund Administration (RMFMA), YMCA, District Youth Leaders and Youth Serving agencies / organizations who are giving their support to the Ministry of Youth Affairs towards policy development, programs implementation and coordination of youth activities in this noble nation.
SECTION IX

9.0 NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY REVIEW AND DECLARATION OF PARTNERSHIP

9.1 National Youth Policy Review
This Policy shall be reviewed every five years to incorporate emerging issues and new approaches to youth development.

9.2 Declaration of Partnership

9.2.1 Observe 21st -26th April every year as a National Youth Development Week.

9.2.2 All Persons/institutions (These include: Development Partners, Youth Serving Agencies, NGOs, INGOs, CSOs Private Sector etc) that wish to intervene on youth issues in Sierra Leone whether in the form of Grants or Direct implementation, should do so through the Ministry of Youth Affairs. In the case of the National Youth Commission, the Ministry of Youth Affairs shall be informed and detailed written program(s) submitted to the same before implementation starts.

9.2.3 All Youth Serving organizations/agencies (INGOs, NGOs, CBOs, CSO) shall register with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and provide a comprehensive update on their respective activities every year. The National Youth Commission shall assist the Ministry of Youth Affairs to keep a register of all Youth Organizations/Associations.

9.2.4 Youth Serving Organizations/Agencies, be it International or Local will only be allowed to register as Non Governmental Organization (NGO) by MoFED and SLANGO on production of Attestation from the Ministry of Youth Affairs.

9.2.5 The Directorate of the Ministry of Youth Affairs should be strengthened to provide the leadership responsibility including monitoring of the existing structures and partners (District Youth Councils, Chiefdom Youth Councils, and Youth Serving Organizations.)

5.6 Youth in Higher Education and Tertiary Institution
5.7 Out of School, Unemployed, Under-Employed and under privileged Youth
5.8 Female Youth
5.9 Youth Involved in Drugs and Substance Abuse
5.10 Youth with Disability
5.11 Rights of the Youth

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6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
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6.2 Parents / Guardians
6.3 The Youth
6.4 The Private Sector
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6.6 Religious Organizations and Traditional Authorities
6.7 International Cooperation Partners (ICPs)

SECTION VII

7.0 INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES, COORDINATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY
7.1 Inter-Ministerial Committee and Key Structures
7.2 The National Youth Commission
7.3 The National Youth Advisory Council
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7.5 Civil Society Organizations and Community Based Organizations
7.6 International Cooperation Partners (ICPs)

SECTION VIII

8.0 FINANCING MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY
8.1 National Youth Empowerment Fund
8.2 Multi-Donor Trust Fund

SECTION IX

9.0 NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY REVIEW AND DECLARATION OF PARTNERSHIP
9.1 National Youth Policy Review
9.2 Declaration of Partnership
SECTION I

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Defining the Youth in Sierra Leone
The National Youth Policy of Sierra Leone defines youth as young people, (male and female) between 15 and 35 years of age. The group constitutes about 34 percent of Sierra Leoneans or around 2 million of the estimated 5.9 million people. The total number of the population below the age of 35 years is about 73 percent, the majority of which are under 15 years.

The Youth may be categorized as follows;
   I. Rural and Urban
   ii. Employed and Unemployed
   iii. Educated and Uneducated,
   iv. In-School and Out-of-School,
   v. Skilled and Unskilled
   vi. Male and Female: (ages 15 – 19; Adolescents) 20 – 29; (Youth) 30 – 35 (young Adult); (under 15 years are classified as children);
   vii. Physically challenged and able-bodied/mentally challenged

1.2 Defining a Youth Organisation
A youth organisation is any organisation set up and managed by individuals in the 15-35 age brackets with common developmental objectives geared towards social/economic development.

1.3 Defining a Youth Serving Agency
A Youth Serving Agency is an outfit managed by Adults or co-managed youth and adults that provides services for the development of young people or specialized in activities that center on youths

SECTION VIII

8.0 FINANCING MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY.

8.1 National Youth Empowerment Fund
The financing of the implementation of the National Youth Policy will entail mobilisation of national resources through the establishment of the National Youth Empowerment Fund. The NYEF, will be established initially from funds drawn from the national budget with further support to be provided by willing international development partners and other national stakeholders.

8.2 Multi-Donor Trust Fund
The establishment of a Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) is envisaged. This is with a view to mobilising willing international donors to support the implementation of this Policy and also to provide financial support to other priority intervention areas in the National Youth Policy such as Education and Training Health and the Agricultural Sector, amongst others stated in this policy document
i. Provide technical and financial support to prioritised youth development programmes and interventions;

ii. Promote youth empowerment networks, including support to youth volunteerism and internships schemes; and

iii. Support exchange of youth development best practices, internship schemes and exchange programmes, drawing upon lessons learned from other countries with substantial youth development programs.

1.4 Challenges Facing the Youth – Across Sectors

The major challenges facing young people that the National Youth Policy seeks to address are:

i. Unemployment and under-employment resulting from inadequate and inappropriate training for the job market; (mismatches between demand and supply of labour);

ii. Lack of access to quality education for the youth in the educational sector with attendant inadequate or inappropriate preparation and training for the formal job market;

iii. Low investment in Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET), resulting in high mismatch with labour market demands. Lack of policy coherence on TVET is also an aggravating factor;

iv. A large proportion of youth is in crowded cities, like Freetown, which also has a huge informal sector, largely survivalists and marked by low returns. A large percentage of youth is engaged in petty trading;

v. High incidence of drugs and substance abuse amongst youth; and

vi. Failure to address gender issues amongst the youth, for example, sexual and reproductive issues facing young girls and women.

Key issues that are specific to female youth are as follows:

a. Teenage pregnancies with 68 percent of girls having their first pregnancy between the ages of 12-20. Teenage pregnancy is a major national challenge;

b. High level of transactional sex amongst young girls, partly as a coping strategy against poverty;

c. High vulnerability to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), in particular, risk of contracting HIV and AIDS.
1.5 Youth Participation in National Development

Key issues linked to youth participation in development include the following:

i. Weak structures to support youth participation in development. Heavy investment required in terms of training and resource mobilisation to build capacities of youth serving decentralised structures.

ii. Growing incidence of youth involved in violent conflicts some of which are politically instigated.

iii. Largely due to rural-urban migration accelerated during the war, increasing poverty and attendant socio-economic challenges, there has been an erosion of traditional social support systems for youth with weakened role of the family leading to moral decay, reduced integrity and low self-esteem.

iv. Inadequate recreational, sporting and counselling facilities

v. Inadequate opportunities to nurture diverse youth talents from tender age, from primary, junior and senior secondary, through to higher educational institutions.

iv. Provide regular reports of progress made in youth policy implementation to the Inter-Ministerial Committee, highlighting achievement of results and challenges encountered. In this regard, regular M & E review sessions shall be undertaken in all districts, with a view to enhancing exchange of information on progress made over time at all levels.

7.5 Civil Society Organizations and Community Based Organizations

7.5.1 Civil Society Organizations and Community Based Organizations play a central role in youth empowerment. CSOs are expected to do the following:

i. Align all their programmes and project plans to new priorities set in the new National Youth Policy;

ii. Review existing CSO/CBO interventions, ensuring stronger partnerships are forged with the Youth Directorate, DYCs and CYCs in youth development planning, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation as envisaged in the National Youth Policy;

iii. Support resource mobilisation to compliment the effort of the Inter-Ministerial Committee, technical and financial support to programmes and projects, including training and capacity building of identified youth groups; and

iv. Promote programs targeted at nurturing new innovation or entrepreneurial culture for the youth, including mentorship programs.

7.6 International Cooperation Partners (ICPs)

This policy further recognizes the important complementary role of ICPs in national development and specifically in youth empowerment. The policy therefore anticipates that ICPs will take the following roles:
7.2 The National Youth Commission
The role of the National Youth Commission in this policy is as contained in the National Youth Commission Act of 2009 being an Act to establish the National Youth Commission to empower the Youth to develop their potential, creativity and skills for national development and other related matters.

7.3 The National Youth Advisory Council (NYAC)
The National Youth Advisory Council shall play a supportive role in the implementation of all youth related programs.

7.3.1 The Council shall be headed by a National Coordinator who will report directly to the Director of Youth on all matters relating to youth development in the country.

7.3.2 The Council will serve as a channel of communication for all issues including Government Policy and programs to all affiliated youth organizations. The National Youth Council will be the central meeting place for all youth organizations in the country.

7.4 District Youth Councils and Decentralized Youth Associations
The membership of District Youth Councils will be drawn from Youth Organizations, NGOs operating in the districts, Youth Workers and ex-officio members from youth clubs in the districts

7.4.1 District Youth Councils (DYCs), Chiefdom Youth Councils (CYC), and Zonal Youth Councils (ZYC) and their associates, shall play central roles at national, regional, district and local levels in the implementation of this National Youth Policy as follows:

i. Identify youth and youth groups requiring assistance, mobilizing resources to support youth programs, including those in rural areas;

ii. Position themselves to work closely with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and other stakeholders, ensuring that all key sectors are kept informed on the views and aspirations of the youth, as well as other emerging challenges;

iii. Participate in the implementation of the National Youth Policy as well as in monitoring and evaluation activities, including regular reporting on progress relating to specific interventions, programs or projects; and

SECTION 11:

2.0 VISION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Vision
Develop and empower youths to be nationally conscious and patriotic to contribute positively to the development of Sierra Leone.

2.2 Goal
The Goal of the Youth Policy is to contribute to the establishment of a more conducive environment in which youth development and empowerment programmes can be collectively and sustainably achieved.

2.3 Objectives

i. Empower and actively involve youths in a variety of productive activities to develop their full potential and self-esteem through approaches that enhance innovation and youth talent in both rural and urban areas;

ii. Institutionalize youth participation at all levels of the decision making process, from central to decentralised level, to ensure the nurturing of democratic and productive culture;

iii. Promote effective collaboration and partnership with MDAs, National and International Non-Governmental Organizations in youth development;

iv. Enable the youth to acquire, share and transfer knowledge, expertise, and experience through national, regional and International networks and peer-learning as well as through improved use of Information Communication Technology (ICT);

v. Nurture the development of a new breed of youth, who are ready to serve through volunteerism and internships; and

vi. Inculcate in the youth a new identity based on self-reliance, patriotism and nationalism.
SECTION III

3.0 PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

3.1 The key principles of the National Youth Policy are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BROAD BASED YOUTH EMPOWERMENT</td>
<td>The GoSL and development partners will promote youth-centred, broad-based development, including equal access to resources and opportunities, regardless of ethnic, political, religious, social, economic, cultural background and gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOLUNTEERISM</td>
<td>Cultivating the spirit and practice of volunteerism among the youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INNOVATION or CREATIVITY</td>
<td>Promote innovation amongst the youth to kick up new opportunities in all sectors, while building on existing options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVERSITY</td>
<td>Promote diversity of youth talent and potential for different categories of youth at different levels, regardless of their status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-VIOLENCE AND PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE</td>
<td>The youth will endeavour to work in a non-violent manner to promote peaceful co-existence, even amongst people with divergent backgrounds or views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PATRIOTISM</td>
<td>Love for country should be inculcated as a core value in the youth, commitment to nation-building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELF RELIANCE</td>
<td>As future leaders, the youth should be imbued with the spirit of self-reliance to harness their potentials, creativity and initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONESTY AND INTEGRITY</td>
<td>Honesty and integrity are imperative for the youth in their personal and national development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARTICIPATION</td>
<td>The views of the youth and their participation in national development will be sought. The Government and other stakeholders will consciously and consistently involve young people in decision making at every level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>The youth must be challenged with opportunities to actively lead in matters that affect them, their communities, and the nation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD GOVERNANCE</td>
<td>The Government and other stakeholders will demonstrate principles of good governance such as accountability, transparency, and integrity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER MAINSTREAMING</td>
<td>The Government and other stakeholders will actively promote gender mainstreaming in the implementation of all policies and programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISABILITY AND MARGINALISATION</td>
<td>The Government and other stakeholders recognizes the existence of different categories of youth, including the disabled, out-of-school, employed, under-employed and unemployed, both rural and urban.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NETWORKING FOR DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>Government and other stakeholders will promote the building of strong networks for youth development at local, national, regional and international levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>The Government and other stakeholders shall: consciously and consistently pursue partnerships with the youth, targeting youth in programmes of MDAs, national and international cooperating partners, ensuring synergy in strategy and programme development and social and cultural cohesion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.1.3 Through a coherent advocacy and marketing plan, the Inter-Ministerial Committee will ensure that the Youth Policy is well understood and mainstreamed in all key sectors, policies and programs of MDAs. The Inter-Ministerial Committee will comprise The President/Office of the President, MOYA, MoFED, MAFFS, MITI, MEST, MLSS, MoHS, MMR, (MSWGCA), MoS and others.

7.1.4 The policy provides a framework for collective action, implementation coordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) arrangements for youth development among MDAs, youth serving organizations, youth, CSOs, international cooperation partners and other stakeholders relevant to youth empowerment.

7.1.5 The Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs will oversee the coordination, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and review of the National Youth Policy. This shall be done with active participation of the youth and in collaboration with relevant MDAs, CSOs and other stakeholders.

7.1.6 The Ministry of Youth Affairs in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders shall facilitate the process for the review of the National Youth Policy after every five years.
SECTION IV

4.0 PRIORITY AREAS OF INTERVENTION AND KEY STRATEGIES

Guided by the National Development Plan, the Agenda for Prosperity, Vision 2035, Sector Development Plans, and through consultations with stakeholders, the National Youth Policy addresses a number of critical areas for comprehensive youth empowerment.

4.1 INTERVENTION 1: YOUTH SENSITIVE POLICY ANALYSIS AND ADVICE

The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to the formulation and reviewing of existing sector, sub-sector and national policies and strategies, as well as to the development of new policies with a view to enabling youth issues to become adequately mainstreamed within all the sector and national development plans. Where such policies are not available or found inappropriate, the GoSL will ensure that policy reviews are undertaken, with the leadership of management in the relevant sectors or MDAs.

Strategic Objective 4.1.1:- Ensure that youth sensitive policies are designed, implemented and mainstreamed in all sectors and sub-sectors, as well as being reviewed from time to time to ensure their alignment with the national youth development agenda.
6.7 International Cooperation Partners (ICPs) shall:

i. Participate in a coordinated resource mobilisation and financing strategy for comprehensive youth development programmes, taking cognisance that ICPs have different mandates, depending on their comparative advantages, human and financial capacities;

ii. Support interventions designed to unlock the potential of the youth, through technical support, enabling better nurturing of youth talent, and investment in innovative programs with high transformational possibilities;

iii. Provide platforms for sharing best practices on youth empowerment and development, based on lessons learned internationally and locally.

iv. Work with the Ministry of Youth Affairs in the formulation and implementation of all Youth policies and programs

Strategic objective 4.1.2: Ensure that a supportive legal and regulatory environment is established, with new legislation drafted and adopted by Parliament and new regulations formulated by local government authorities in both urban and rural areas.

Lead Authority: Ministry of Youth Affairs
Supporting Ministries/Sectors: Office of the President, Ministries responsible for Justice and Legal Drafting; Finance and Economic Development, Internal Affairs; Labour and Social Security; Local Government and Rural Development; Education, Science and Technology; Trade and Industry; Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security; Information and Communication and the National Youth Commission.
4.2 INTERVENTION II: MAINSTREAMING YOUTH IN ALL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AT ALL LEVELS

The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report, to ensure at least 10% of youth representation in decision making processes and senior management positions. Also at least 10% of other middle management positions of influence in all government sectors and institutions, including in the formal private sector, should be occupied by the youth.

Strategic Objective 4.2.1: Improvement in access by the youth to productive opportunities – such as support to internship programmes in all the sectors to prepare young people for the world of work. This will generate new knowledge and promote a culture of volunteerism. Support should also be provided for the implementation of a National Youth Service which will help to build and strengthen a culture of innovation amongst youth, and ensure a holistic development of the youth that will focus on inculcating core values of discipline, integrity, honour, stature, patriotism, and selflessness among youth.

Strategic Objective 4.2.2: Prioritise the establishment of broad-based Public Private partnerships (PPP) centred on youth development.

Strategic Objective 4.2.3: Scale up support for the capacity building of the Ministry of Youth Affairs, and all key decentralised youth structures at grassroots level: District Youth Councils (DYCs) and Chiefdom/Zonal Youth Councils (CYC), to enable youth to participate fully in governance, democracy and leadership.

Strategic Objective 4.2.4: Learn from other countries involved in youth empowerment and development and scale up development best practices and enhance synergy and mainstreaming of the youth with other sectors in the country's development and transformation.

Strategic Objective 4.2.5: Strengthen youth development advocacy and establish sustained dialogue on the youth development agenda.

Strategic Objective 4.2.6: Use of youth role models in order to motivate youth to get involved in new areas with high value added and transformative potential.

6.5 Civil Society Organizations/Community Based Organizations shall;

i. Open up new entry points for the youth to develop capacities in various priority areas to national development, through more diversified internships;

ii. Facilitate resource mobilisation with international partners to support a more coordinated and systematic approach to youth empowerment.

iii. Create opportunities for the youth to take part in leadership roles in society;

iv. Strengthen decentralised youth structures to generate the skills required to establish sustainable youth organisations at community level;

v. Ensure the establishment of safety nets for vulnerable youth at local community level; and

vi. Contribute to the creation of an environment in which youth empowerment programmes and projects can operate sustainably and be up-scaled to achieve better results.

6.6 Religious Organizations and Traditional Authorities

These bodies shall;

i. Provide religious and moral upbringing to the youth in the best traditions that are acceptable in Sierra Leonean culture and norms;

ii. Assist the youth to understand, appreciate and adopt acceptable national values and embrace the country's cultural heritage;

iii. Strengthen understanding of the sanctity of the family unit through the strengthening of both the nuclear and extended families; and

iv. Support the youth to implement the various “plans of action for youth empowerment” prepared by them in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth Affairs, the National Youth Commission and development partners.
6.4 The Private Sector shall;

i. Be sensitive to the needs of youth, particularly inexperienced graduates, from universities and colleges in creating new opportunities for gainful employment;

ii. Engage in on-the-job training and apprenticeship and/or internship opportunities, in particular in areas where there is clear demand, including management training or preparing the youth for more responsible decision making;

iii. Participate in PPPs to advance programs for the youth, in particular contributing financially and/or materially to support youth oriented micro and small businesses, in both rural and urban areas;

iv. Support capacity building for umbrella associations for the youth, in particular, micro and small businesses, including sector based associations;

v. Support platforms that offer youth entrepreneurs business development services, targeted at up-scaling youth entrepreneurship and skills.

vi. Contribute financially to the Youth Trust Fund and give material support to youth programs

4.3 INTERVENTION III: EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to ensuring that education and training in Sierra Leone is improved both in terms of access at all levels of education and training and in terms of quality to ensure that it meets the growing needs of Sierra Leonean youths and children, and ensuring that where necessary practical measures are taken to fully meet the needs and challenges of the development phase of the country.

Strategic Objective 4.3.1: Adopt a holistic approach that involves the participation of all key stakeholders in order to tackle the complex and overlapping issues of out-of-school children.

Strategic Objective 4.3.2: Reposition basic education and training programmes, targeting them to improve access to schools by the disadvantaged and out-of-school children, including dealing with challenges of over-aged children.
6.2 Parents/Guardians shall;

i. Lay a solid foundation for the youth to become productive citizens through responsible parenthood;
ii. Provide physical and psychological needs of the youth, from an early stage;
iii. Provide educational growth and development needs of the youth;
iv. Provide guidance and counselling for the youth;
v. Train young people to make decisions and to understand the implications of the choices they make;
vi. Train youth to have financial plans that will enable them to eventually become financially independent;

6.3 The Youth shall;

i. Become custodians of their own development
ii. Uphold the country’s traditional and cultural norms, including responsible behaviour towards peers, respect for adults, courtesy to disabled persons and those with health challenges
iii. Respect and protect public property
iv. Espouse honest work ethics and reject and expose corruption
v. Defend democracy, the rule of law and all human rights and fundamental freedoms
vi. Be willing to be involved in voluntary services, assist people in need without expecting payment always
vii. Respect the rights and dignity of female youth
viii. Work towards a society free of violence, drug and substance abuse, crime, exploitation, coercion, intimidation, suppression and oppression of vulnerable groups
ix. Protect the environment and conserve nature
x. Promote Sierra Leonean culture and practices; and
xi. Be willing to take up new opportunities and challenges, with an orientation towards being more creative and productive.
Strategic Objective 4.3.8: Gender mainstreaming in adult literacy and access to education to ensure a level playing field for the illiterate young women and men, in line with the African Youth Charter.

Strategic Objective 4.3.9: Review governance structures and laws governing Higher Education Institutions in order to assess how they hinder or facilitate the institutions to perform their missions and objectives.

Strategic Objective 4.3.10: Prioritise education and training in addition to forging strategic innovative public and private partnerships and other sustainable approaches.

Strategic Objective 4.3.11: Ensure improved access to higher education and other key resources, through an affirmative gender policy on female students in the sciences and engineering disciplines and continue to support entry into HEIs by students with disabilities.

Strategic Objective 4.3.12: Seek innovative ways to improve the quality of Technical Vocational and Educational Training (TVET)

Lead Authority: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Supporting Ministries / Sectors: Ministries of Youth Affairs; Finance and Economic Development, Labour and Social Security; Local Government and Rural Development; Social Welfare Gender and Children Affairs; Sports; Trade and Industries; Tourism and Culture; National Youth Commission; Disabled Commission; Mining Companies and Private Sector.

4.4 INTERVENTION IV: YOUTH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The Government of Sierra Leone and development partners are committed to the full economic empowerment of the youth, through the establishment of the National Youth Empowerment Fund (NYEF) and by strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and National Youth Commission and the District Youth Councils; supporting the creation of decent employment for the youth in both the formal and informal sector and promoting the establishment of viable micro and small enterprises for the youth in all sectors.

Strategic Objective 4.4.1: Implementation of the National Employment Policy and the Sierra Leone National Youth Programme (2014 - 2018) a Blue print for youth development

SECTION VI

6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 The State/Ministry of Youth Affairs shall:

i. Ensure that the youth enjoy their fundamental rights enshrined in the 1991 Constitution as well as being in full conformity to the African Youth Charter, developed by the African Union Commission in 2006.

ii. Ensure that a comprehensive youth development framework is understood through active marketing and advocacy work, implemented and used as a basis for all programming effort for the youth, ensuring proper coordination and synergy for all youth programmes and projects in the country;

iii. Establish a special youth fund with resources contributed by government, the private sector and international partners

iv. Create an environment in which all financial, material and human resources mobilized are allocated to youth development priorities in a transparent manner;

v. Ensure that an adequate monitoring and evaluation system is developed and implemented, accompanied by a sound tracking system to monitor achievement of desirable outcomes;

vi. Create an environment where effective PPPs are developed, with clear roles and responsibilities defined for all stakeholders to enable improved cohesion and better integration of programmes and projects;

vii. Provide exemplary leadership and a conducive environment for good governance, youth participation in development, including managing available national resources as well as those channelled through the support of international development partners.

viii. Establish a National Youth Service to encourage youths to contribute to national development

ix. Establish and supervise Districts, Chiefdoms and Zonal Youth Councils.
5.10 Youth with disability
Special programmes will be organized and mechanisms put in place to address youth with disability and difficult health conditions.

5.11 Rights of the Youth
The Rights of Sierra Leonean youth are enshrined in the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone (Act No. 6 of 1991) and any treaty/convention related to the youth to which Sierra Leone is signatory, shall be respected and upheld by all stakeholders. In exercising these rights, the youth will be oriented to position themselves to assume the responsibilities that are expected of them, including those spelt out in the African Youth Charter.

Strategic Objective 4.4.2: Formulate comprehensive, inclusive and engendered pro-employment job-rich growth targets for the country, as part of a follow-up to the development of the National Employment Policy and the blueprint for youth development.

Strategic Objective 4.4.3: Review of labour market realities and the legislative environment of the country.

Strategic Objective 4.4.4: Create an enabling environment for new value creation by the youth, support to a dynamic Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), both in the formal and non-formal sector.

Strategic Objective 4.4.5: Develop an SME Policy targeted at strengthening the capabilities of micro and small enterprises, in both the informal and formal sectors.
Strategic Objective 4.4.6: Strengthen entrepreneurship training and skills development and practice for youth that provide services as well as those marketing products.

Strategic Objective 4.4.7: Develop and promote practical measures to support the livelihood system and general welfare of young disabled persons and facilitate the implementation of the Disability Act (2012).

Strategic Objective 4.4.8: Establish new mechanisms of financing youth enterprises through the establishment of a National Youth Empowerment Fund (NYEF), managed by the Ministry of Youth Affairs, with an oversight from the Office of the President.

Lead Authority: Ministry of Youth Affairs
Supporting Ministries/Sectors: Office of the President; Ministries of Finance and Economic Development; Trade and Industry; Labour and Social Security; Education, Science and Technology; Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security; Fisheries and Marine Resources; National Youth Commission, National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), Non-State Actors; Youth Serving Organisations; Commercial and Development Finance Institutions; Micro Finance Institutions; International Donors and other Development Partners.

4.5 INTERVENTION V: AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AGRI-BUSINESS VALUE CHAINS

The Government of Sierra Leone and development partners are committed to the full participation of the youth in the revitalised agricultural sector with a view to taking new opportunities that enable decent job creation in agri-business value chains. The GoSL and development partners will facilitate entry by the youth in agricultural sector value chains and the allied marine resources sector, through a variety of measures designed to nurture the emergence of a new generation of youth involved in dynamic farming and non-farm industries.

5.7 Out-of-School, Unemployed, Under-employed and Under privileged Youth
Develop and implement interventions that will benefit under-privileged youth, by identifying opportunities for self-employment and generation of decent work. Explore options for continuing education by disadvantaged youth in the non-formal sector and enabling them to learn practical skills that open new opportunities that will make vulnerable youth to become productive citizens.

5.8 Female Youth
Advocate for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against young women, enhance protection from sexual harassment, physical violence and abuse, labour exploitation, as well as all other negative attitudes and cultural malpractices. The policy will protect and advance the interests and aspirations of female youth and provide them with dignity and motivation to work as equal partners in the national development agenda. Programmes will be developed and implemented to cater for young mothers to encourage the furtherance and completion of at least secondary education.

5.9 Youth involved in drugs and substance abuse
Provide comprehensive counseling services for affected and vulnerable youth, including tackling the root causes of such a practice or habit, enabling them to adopt values that make youth better and more productive citizens.
5.3 Skilled, Semi-skilled and Unskilled
Facilitate appropriate deployment of skilled and semi-skilled youth, opening up new opportunities through the National Youth Internships and volunteerism activities, taking special attention to gender differences.

5.4 Youth with Special Talents
Provide mechanism to identify and nurture youth talent from an early age, opportunities of harnessing and utilizing the creative potentials of young persons who are gifted and talented with a view to enabling better use in national development.

5.5 Post-basic and Secondary school drop-outs (junior/senior high schools)
Facilitate equal access to relevant skills and quality educational opportunities for these groups of young people.

5.6 Youth in Higher Education and Tertiary Institutions
Prepare youth for gainful employment to become productive citizens, focusing upon strengthening linkages with social, cultural, political, and economic development partners.

Strategic Objective 4.5.1: Giving priority to the revamping of farming enterprises and agri-business value chains, promote access to finance, appropriate technology and marketing opportunities, accompanied by capacity building and training

Strategic Objective 4.5.2: Mobilise and motivate the youth through the use of role models, publicity of success stories through community radio stations, television, newsletters and other media.

Strategic Objective 4.5.3: Establish special agricultural sector support windows to foster youth involvement in agro-based value chains, with inputs envisaged from the Youth Empowerment Fund and other funding avenues.

Strategic Objective 4.5.4: Support the building of technological capabilities in the fisheries and marine resources sector to enable large numbers of young people to benefit from investment and improvement in the sector.

Strategic Objective 4.5.5 Develop National Sustainable Agricultural Development Plan targeting support to agricultural producers and processing, small scale irrigation system, feeder road construction, rural financial services and safety net.

Strategic Objective 4.5.6 Improve and extend the Sierra Leone Agric-Business Initiatives (SABI) to all regions. Establish National, District and Chiefdom Youth Farms.
Strategic Objective 4.5.7 Enhance regular monitoring and evaluation of all Youth related agricultural projects.

Lead Authorities: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security and Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
Supporting Ministries/Sectors: Ministries of Youth Affairs; Finance and Economic Development; Local Government and Rural Development; Social Welfare Gender and Children Affairs; Non-State Actors; Youth Serving Organizations; Development Finance Institutions; Micro Finance Institutions, International Fund for Agricultural Developments; NaYCOM and Development Partners.

SECTION V

5.0 IDENTIFIABLE YOUTH GROUPS

In addressing the priority issues of the youth, special attention shall be paid to identifiable youth groups. In each of the areas, government, stakeholders and other youth organizations will pay attention and emphasis to youth groups specified:

Attention will be paid to priorities of various youth age groups, for examples, male or female youth from ages (15 – 19; 20 – 29; 30 – 35). The needs of adolescents under 15 years are classified under children, and would be referred to institutional mechanisms that handle issues pertaining to that group.

5.1 Rural and Urban youth
Facilitate equal access to employment opportunities by both rural and urban youth, ensuring balance of resource allocation by region, and also depending on resource endowment.

5.2 Informally and formally employed, including self-employed youth
Ensure formation of stakeholder partnerships to support youth in all groups, including youth operating in the informal sector, such as ghetto youth, bike riders and rural youth involved in agro-based activities and non-farm activities, youth in urban and peri-urban areas.
4.6 INTERVENTION VI: HEALTH AND PROMOTION OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

The Government of Sierra Leone and development partners are committed to improving the overall health status of young women and men, enhancing full participation of the youth in health systems and services programmes, and in promotion of healthy lifestyles for the youth.

Strategic Objective 4.6.1: Scale up access to health services, including essential drugs, increasing education and awareness programmes on HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Strategic Objective 4.6.2: Improve Sexual Reproductive Health rights of young women to reduce high prevalence of teenage pregnancies and also to enhance access and peaceful utilization of family planning.

Strategic Objective 4.6.3: Implement and monitor programmes to reduce the growing drug and substance abuse challenge amongst young people in the country.

Strategic Objective 4.6.4: Promote programmes and activities to rehabilitate youth in breach of the law, targeting young prisoners, gangsters, youth in trouble-spots and those known to have related anti-social welfare.

Strategic Objective 4.6.5: Develop and implement targeted health services support for young disabled persons and other marginalised youth groups; through strategies involving priority needs assessment of health and healthy lifestyles, gap analysis and adoption of practical measures to address major challenges identified, in collaboration with the Disabled Persons Commission.

Strategic Objective 4.6.6 Promote Water Sanitation and Hygiene in schools programmes and provide toilet facilities and health curriculum in schools.

Strategic Objective 4.7.3: Through exchange of development best practices in science, technology and innovation, create an environment to make the NSI contribute more to wider inclusion of the youth in the mainstream economy and also with a view to reducing the high poverty levels amongst the youth.

Strategic Objective 4.7.4: Develop and implement special measures to support the youth to enter the emerging ICT sector, provide targeted capacity building, training and mobilization of the youth through the education and training system and through advocacy and promotional campaigns.

Lead Authority: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Supporting Ministries/Sectors: Ministries of Youth Affairs; Finance and Economic Development; Local Government and Rural Development; Sports; Energy and Power; NaYCOM; Non-State Actors; Youth Serving Organisations; Development Partners.
**Strategic Objectives 4.6.7** Provide support to Expanded Programmes on Immunization (EPI) for young people.

**Strategic Objective 4.6.8** Provide Health training for Youth in their various communities.

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**Lead Authority:** Ministry of Health and Sanitation  
**Supporting Ministries/Sectors:** Ministries of Youth Affairs; Finance and Economic Development; Social Welfare Gender and Children Affairs; Water Resources; Local Government and Rural Development; Non-State Actors, Youth Serving Organisations, Development Partners.

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**4.7 INTERVENTION VII: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to establishing a new culture of management of Science, Technology and Innovation Systems, including the growing Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), with a view to creating increased opportunities and space for entry by the youth.

**Strategic Objective 4.7.1:** Ensure that the national system of innovation adequately supports, in a dynamic way, transition from strong reliance on a resource-and commodity-based economy to one that is characterised by value-adding and knowledge-intensive activities; enable large numbers of youth to benefit from expansion of the science, technology and innovation sector, through affirmative action.

**Strategic Objective 4.7.2:** Support the strengthening of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in building the National System of Innovation (NSI), at all levels, with particular focus on micro and small firms.