



**YOUTH  
CLIMATE  
COUNCIL  
SIERRA LEONE**



# **ANNUAL REPORT 20 24**

**Empowering Youth for a Sustainable Future**

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Photo: Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyers, Mayor of Freetown and the YCC Secretariat



# Message from the National Coordinator

Dear Youth Advocates, Stakeholders, and Partners,

With great pride and humility, I present the 2024 Annual Report for the Youth Climate Council (YCC) Sierra Leone. This year has marked a significant chapter in our mission to place youth at the heart of climate action. Together, we have overcome challenges, seized opportunities, and amplified youth voices in shaping a sustainable future for Sierra Leone.

The climate crisis remains one of the most pressing challenges of our time, with its impacts felt across our nation—from rising temperatures to increased vulnerabilities. Yet, Sierra Leone's youth have risen to the challenge, demonstrating resilience and leadership. Through advocacy, young people have influenced key policies such as the Energy Transition and Green Growth Plan and the National Plastics and Plastic Waste Management Policy. Our capacity-building programs have empowered youth to lead initiatives in their communities, equipping them with the tools to drive change.

This year's standout achievement was the hosting of the first-ever Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) in Sierra Leone. With over 200 participants, this milestone event fostered collaboration and inspired action among young leaders. We also launched a Local Chapter of the Council in Freetown which is to serve as a platform to engage city leaders at the Freetown City Council and other local stakeholders.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our partners, stakeholders, and Secretariat. To every activist, organization, and supporter who believed in our vision: thank you.

Looking ahead, we are committed to scaling up youth engagement in climate action policy processes, strengthening partnerships, and championing community-driven solutions. Together, we can confront the challenges of climate change with urgency and hope.

In solidarity,  
Foday Mark Kamara,  
National Coordinator,  
Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone



# Meet the Secretariat

The Secretariat of Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone serves as the administrative and operational hub for all our activities. This year, the Secretariat has:

- Recruited additional staff and volunteers, strengthening its capacity to deliver on our strategic objectives.
- Established robust systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of our initiatives.
- Coordinated key events and campaigns, ensuring seamless execution and strong stakeholder engagement.



**Foday Kamara**  
*National Coordinator*



**Hassan Hindolo Senesie**  
*Research and Policy Lead*



**Success Sia Nyandemoh**  
*Communications Officer*



**Patrick H.G Samuels**  
*Partnerships Lead*



**Esther Yealie Kamara**  
*Capacity Building Officer*



## About the Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone

The Youth Climate Council (YCC) Sierra Leone was established to empower young people as key stakeholders in the fight against climate change. Serving as a unifying platform for youth voices, the Youth Climate Council (YCC) Sierra Leone fosters leadership, advocacy, and action to address environmental challenges and promote sustainable development in Sierra Leone.

The Youth Climate Council (YCC) Sierra Leone's core activities include shaping climate policies, building youth capacity, and implementing grassroots initiatives that align with national and international climate goals. By collaborating with diverse partners, the Council amplifies the contributions of young people, ensuring their perspectives are integrated into decision-making processes at all levels.

## Mission

The mission of the Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone is to promote grassroots youth climate activism in Sierra Leone via a democratic effort on a scale never seen before and build the resilience of young activists to enhance Sierra Leone's local engagement on climate policies.

## Vision

The Youth Climate Council's vision is to bring climate activists and youth-led climate groups together to create an institutional mechanism for a unified and collaborative movement that delivers a high positive impact for the collective.

## Our Work

The Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone's work focuses on three primary areas:

- 1. Policy Advocacy:** Ensuring youth voices shape national and international climate policies. By engaging policymakers and fostering dialogue, we aim to bridge the gap between youth priorities and government actions.
- 2. Capacity Building:** Equipping young people with skills and knowledge to lead climate action. Our training programs are tailored to build expertise in advocacy, project management, and green entrepreneurship.
- 3. Mobilizing Youth Climate Activists:** Mobilizing youth for climate resilience and sustainable development. We focus on creating localized solutions and fostering awareness at the community level.

## Key Initiatives and Achievements

In the first year of establishment, the Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone made key strides in establishing presence, building the youth movement and influencing policies.

- 1. Co-hosting the First-Ever Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) in Sierra Leone:** The Youth Climate Council co-hosted the first Local Conference of Youth as a platform to unite youth efforts in climate policy processes. The conference attracted over 200 participants and fostered dialogue, collaboration, and action among young leaders across the nation.
- 2. Policy Impact:** The Youth Climate Council served as part of the policy process of two key national climate policies, including contributions to the Sierra Leone Energy Transition Masterplan, and the National Plastics and Plastic Waste Management Policy.



Photo: Patrick Samuel, YCC Partnership Lead speaking at LCOY Sierra Leone 2024



## Key Initiatives and Achievements (Cont)

**3. Promoting Youth Participation in International Events:** Secured sponsorship from UNICEF for four of our members to attend COP29, ensuring Sierra Leone's youth are represented on the global stage and actively contributing to international climate dialogues.

**4. Capacity Building:** Over 50 young people received training on climate advocacy, , and sustainable practices from the Youth Climate Council, empowering them to lead initiatives in their communities.

**5. Establishment of the Freetown Chapter:** This new chapter has created localized opportunities for youth in the capital city to engage in climate action, fostering a city-wide network of young advocates and amplifying their voices in municipal decision-making processes.

**6. Nationwide Regional Youth Consultation on the State of the Youth Climate Movement:** This initiative engaged young people across Sierra Leone's regions to assess the youth climate movement's challenges, opportunities, and priorities. Insights from these consultations have informed our strategies and strengthened youth inclusion in national climate action.

**7. Formed Valuable Partnerships:** Collaborated with institutions like the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency, UNICEF, C40 Cities, Freetown City Council, UNICEF, Save the Children, and Bloomberg Philanthropies to drive impactful projects addressing urban climate challenges.



Photo: Stakeholders' Consultation for the establishment of YCC Freetown Chapter

## Challenges

Despite our significant progress in 2024, the Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone faced some challenges that underscored the complexities of driving youth-led climate action in a developing context:

- 1. Youth Inclusion in Decision-Making:** While strides have been made, youth representation in national and local decision-making processes is still inconsistent. Bureaucratic barriers and limited political will often hinder meaningful youth participation in climate policy formulation and implementation.
- 2. Capacity Gaps Among Youth:** Although we have started implementing capacity-building programs, gaps in knowledge among youth remain a significant barrier to meaningful youth participation in climate action policy processes in Sierra Leone. Many young people lack access to capacity building or training opportunities in critical areas such as climate science, policy advocacy, and project management.
- 3. Limited Funding and Resources:** Securing adequate funding to sustain and expand our programs remains a persistent challenge. Many of our initiatives require long-term investment, yet a lack of funding opportunities limits our ability to scale policy advocacy efforts.
- 4. Capacity Constraints of the Secretariat:** As the Youth Climate Council expands its activities, the Secretariat faces capacity challenges, including limited personnel expertise, infrastructure, and operational resources. These constraints often stretch the team, impacting the efficiency and effectiveness of policy advocacy efforts and stakeholder engagement.
- 5. Partner and Stakeholder Coordination:** While partnerships are essential to our success, coordinating diverse stakeholders across sectors often presents strategic challenges. Even though we have gained the support and cooperation of some key institutions in our operations, formalizing these partnerships has been challenging, especially with government institutions that have bureaucratic barriers.

Addressing these challenges will require innovative strategies, stronger partnerships, and sustained commitment. The Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone is determined to learn from these obstacles and transform them into opportunities for growth and resilience, as well as learning from the experience of other chapters that have experienced similar challenges.





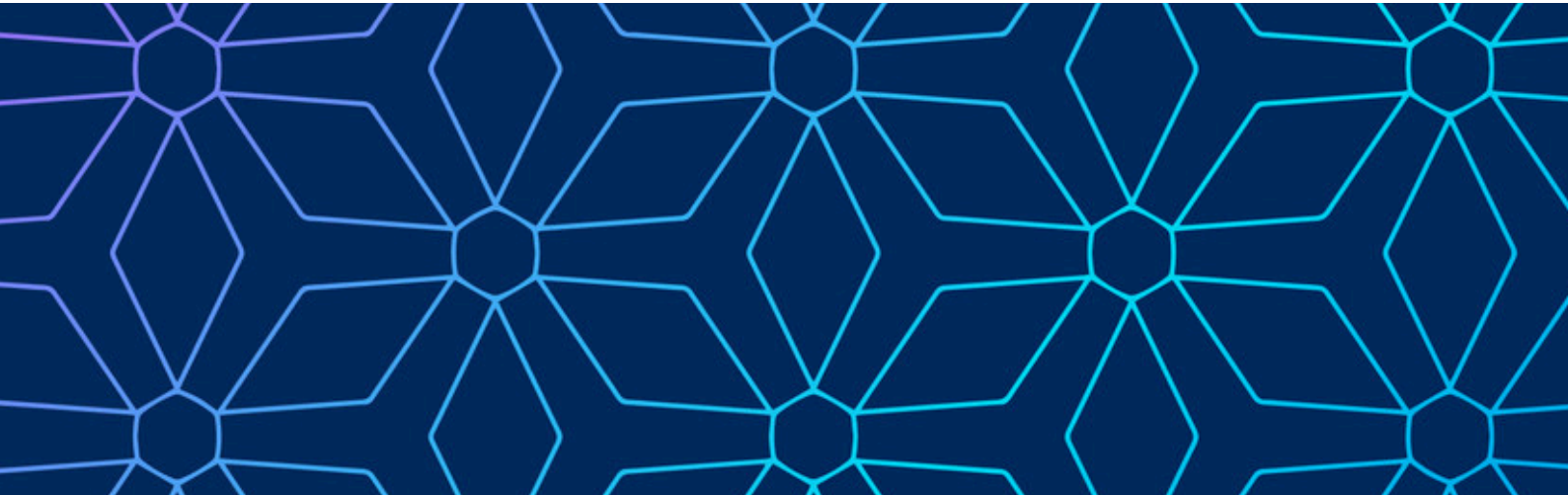
## Looking Ahead

As we reflect on our achievements in 2024, the path forward for the Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone is both inspiring and urgent. The next year will be pivotal in deepening our impact, expanding our reach, and ensuring that Sierra Leone's youth continue to play a central role in climate policy processes.

- 1. Scaling Up Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) Engagement:** We aim to lead youth-centred consultations ahead of the 2025 NDC update, ensuring robust and inclusive contributions from young people nationwide. Our efforts will focus on amplifying youth priorities, particularly around renewable energy, climate adaptation, and mitigation strategies.
- 2. Strengthening Local Chapters:** Building on the establishment of the Freetown Chapter, we will expand the Youth Climate Council's presence across all regions of Sierra Leone. By fostering localized youth councils through regional focal point organizations, we will create a network of empowered climate leaders equipped to address community-specific challenges.
- 3. Expanding Capacity-Building Programs:** Recognizing the transformative power of education and training, we plan to scale our capacity-building initiatives. New programs will focus on policy development and analysis, climate advocacy, and project management, enabling youth to meaningfully contribute to the climate policy process in Sierra Leone.
- 4. Deepening International Representation:** Following the success of facilitating youth participation at COP29, we will continue to secure opportunities for young climate advocates to engage in international climate negotiations and forums. This will ensure that Sierra Leone's youth remain visible and influential on the global stage.
- 5. Driving Community-Driven Solutions:** We will intensify grassroots engagement through projects aimed at addressing local climate challenges such as deforestation, plastic pollution, and water resource management. Emphasis will be placed on implementing innovative, community-led adaptation strategies.
- 6. Forging New Partnerships:** Partnerships remain central to our mission. In the coming year, we aim to deepen existing collaborations while exploring new opportunities with governments, civil society, and international organizations. This will enhance our capacity to deliver impactful, large-scale initiatives.

With a shared vision and collective action, 2025 promises to be a year of bold strides toward climate resilience. The Youth Climate Council Sierra Leone remains committed to empowering Sierra Leone's youth to lead the way in creating a sustainable, just, and inclusive future for all.

# THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS





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