



Society for Indigenous Languages, Communities, and Cultures (SILCC) of Sierra Leone

Annual Newsletter 2024

Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

As we reflect on 2024, we are proud to share the important strides made toward preserving and revitalizing Sierra Leone's indigenous languages, communities, cultures, and its priceless and threatened ecosystems. This year has been a testament to the power of collective effort and the richness of Sierra Leone's heritage. As you know, we are very small organization, driven largely by the passion and tireless effort of one person in particular: Gibrilla Kamara. Under Gibrilla's leadership, SILCC has developed into a respected and well-known organization throughout Kambia District and across the country.

As we look ahead to 2025, our ambitions are high, but so is the need for cultural and ecological revitalization in Sierra Leone. As we look forward to expanding our scope, funding, and efforts in 2025, we welcome your continued support and encouragement.

If you are interested in supporting our work financially, you can contact Joshua McDermott to make a one-time or recurring donation at joshualewmcdermott@gmail.com and at +1-412-722-9514 or you can contact us at silccsierraleone@gmail.com.

Please remember to follow us online on [Facebook](#) and at silccsalone.org.

Looking Back: 2024 Initiatives

Community Engagement in Tonko Limba and Samu Chiefdoms

Throughout the year, our team held interactive meetings with local leaders, community members, and youth to discuss language preservation and cultural heritage. These sessions deepened connections and strengthened our shared commitment to safeguarding indigenous practices.

Developing a Storybook in Limba for Primary School Children

Building on efforts from 2023, we completed a Limba language storybook designed to engage young learners. This resource promotes literacy, language preservation, and nurtures pride in cultural identity.

Documenting Traditional Healers and Herbal Medicine Practices

From February to July, we collaborated with traditional healers in Tonko Limba, including a renowned bone specialist, to document their knowledge and practices. This project highlights the crucial role of indigenous medicine in community well-being and cultural continuity.

Preserving Blacksmithing Traditions

In February, our team documented the craft of blacksmith workers, capturing techniques, tools, and stories from these skilled artisans in Tonko Limba Chiefdom. This effort ensures that their invaluable expertise is not lost to time.

Independence Day Celebration in Remote Communities in Samu Chiefdom

In April, we joined remote communities in Samu Chiefdom in celebrating Sierra Leone's Independence Day, incorporating cultural performances, storytelling, and discussions about preservation of the Bollum Language.

Bullom (Mani) Language Revitalization Manual

In May, we met with Bullom elders in Moribaya to develop storybook and language guide in the endangered language of Bullom (Mani) for usage in schools around the Samu Chiefdom to support the revitalization of the Bollum language among children and adults. This resource serves as a foundation for language-learning initiatives and community workshops.

Tree Planting and Seed Distribution

Throughout the year, SILCC worked with primary schools and school children in planting trees and distributing cocoa seeds to promote respect for trees, provide shade and fruit for the schools in the future, and to teach children the importance of the environment. We planted trees at three schools in Samu Chiefdom, five schools Masungbala Chiefdom, and four schools in Tonko Limba Chiefdom.

Forest Preservation Celebration in Konta Village, Tonko Limba

In December, we concluded the year by partnering with indigenous communities in Konta to celebrate forest preservation. This event underscored the critical link between environmental stewardship and cultural heritage. Through our efforts in Konta, we have entered into a memorandum of understanding with community members to protect the forest from destructive commercial activities and to bring back traditional forestry

cultural practices. We hope to expand, formalize, and spread this initiative going forward.

Looking Ahead: 2025 Initiatives

As we enter 2025, SILCC remains committed to deepening its impact across Sierra Leone. Our goals for the year include:

Expanding Our Forest Preservation Initiatives

We will build on our forest preservation work by revitalizing traditional cultural practices that emphasize protecting and honoring the forest. These efforts aim to integrate indigenous knowledge with modern conservation strategies.

Expanding to Koinadugu District

Our forest protection program will extend into the Koinadugu District, the far north of the country and home to country's largest old growth forests and many of its wild animals, engaging new communities and fostering sustainable land management practices.

Promoting Governance and Land Reforms

We aim to advocate for democratic governance and land tenure reforms in rural Sierra Leone, ensuring equitable access to resources and empowering communities to manage their lands effectively and equitably.

Establishing New Offices

To strengthen our presence and operations, we are excited to announce the establishment of new offices in Konta Village and Kambia Town in Kambia District. These locations will serve as hubs for community engagement and program implementation. We hope to finish completion of the offices in 2025.

Establishing a Poultry Farm in Konta Village, Tonko Limba

As part of our commitment to economic empowerment, we plan to establish a poultry farm in Konta. This initiative will support local widows, provide nutritional support to school children, and generate income to sustain SILCC's programs.

We extend heartfelt gratitude to our partners, volunteers, and donors who made 2024 a year of remarkable achievements. Your commitment to preserving our shared heritage inspires and sustains our work. Together, we can continue empowering communities, preserving cultures and languages, and revitalizing the environment.

Sincerely,

The SILCC Team

