

NEW EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE-SIERRA LEONE

Annual Report 2024

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary
2. Organizational Background
3. Strategic Context & Alignment
4. Objectives & Reporting Frameworks
5. Beneficiary Overview
6. Project Components
 - 6.1 Inland Valley Swamp Rice Cultivation
 - 6.2 Scholastic Materials Distribution
 - 6.3 WASH Infrastructure – Hand-Pump Well & Latrine
 - 6.4 Women & Youth Empowerment Programs
7. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL)
8. Logical Framework Matrix
9. Theory of Change
10. Financial Overview
11. Risk Management
12. Sustainability & Exit Strategy
13. Next Steps & Recommendations

1. Acronyms

IVSR: Inland Valley Swamp Rice
NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
WASH: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
MEL: Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals
LFA: Logical Framework Approach
RBM: Results-Based Management

1. Executive Summary

In 2024, New Empowerment Initiative–Sierra Leone (NEI-SL) implemented four integrated interventions across Bo and Pujehun Districts, funded by our sole patron, Sir Patrick Bijou, with a grant of USD 45,000.

- ♦ **Agriculture:** Trained and equipped 1,000 smallholder farmers : (Ngeyawami Barri:190 men & 60 women; Nyeyama Barri: 160 men & 90 women; Karleh Lugbu: 150 men & 100 women, Yambama Lugbu: 175 men & 75 women in Inland Valley Swamp Rice (IVSR) techniques.
- ♦ **Education:** Supplied full scholastic kits to 2,500 primary pupils—Ansarul Primary School Buma-Sami(620 pupils: 340 boys, 280 girls), Ansarul Primary School Kondiama (700 pupils: 325 boys, 375 girls), SLC primary School Ngeyawami (600 pupils: 296 boys, 304 girls) and BDEC Primary School Jimmi(580 pupils: 285 boys, 295 girls)
- ♦ **WASH:** Drilled one hand-pump well and constructed a ventilated pit latrine in Kpawama, benefiting ~1,500 residents (632 men, 868 women).
- ♦ **Empowerment:** Delivered vocational, financial-literacy, and entrepreneurship training to 150 women and 120 youth (64 female, 56 male) in Bo City.

Key outcomes:

- ♦ Rice yields rose by **50%**, raising average household income by USD 150/season.
- ♦ School attendance jumped from **77%** to **95%**, with test scores improving 18 percentage points.
- ♦ Waterborne illness cases dropped by **72%**, and daily water-fetch time fell by two hours.
- ♦ **61%** of youth trainees launched or secured employment within three months.

This report details our approach, results, financial performance, lessons learned, and sustainability measures.

2. Organizational Background

NEI-SL is a youth-led, grassroots nonprofit, NGO established in 2022, dedicated to fostering self-reliance, resilience, and equitable opportunity in Sierra Leone's most underserved communities. We pursue inclusive rural development by integrating sustainable agriculture, quality education, WASH infrastructure, and community empowerment.

The Organization is Governed by an 11-member Board of Trustees, NEI-SL benefits from strategic oversight by professionals in public health, agriculture, education, law, and finance. A multidisciplinary team of 25 full-time staff including agronomists, educators, WASH engineers, social workers, M&E specialists, and administrators where all ensures technical excellence and integrity in project delivery.

NEI-SL's approach emphasizes participatory planning, gender equity, environmental stewardship, and alignment with Sierra Leone's national development strategy and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6).

3. Strategic Context & Alignment

Bo and Pujehun Districts exhibit:

- ♦ Low upland rice yields (1.2 t/ha vs. national 2.3 t/ha).
- ♦ Schools with severe textbook and stationery shortages.
- ♦ Communities reliant on unsafe water sources and open defecation.
- ♦ High urban unemployment among women and youth.

NEI-SL interventions address these gaps by:

- ♦ Introducing IVSR to boost food security and incomes.
- ♦ Distributing scholastic kits to reduce absenteeism and dropout.
- ♦ Installing safe WASH facilities to cut disease burden.
- ♦ Equipping women and youth with marketable skills and start-up support.

4. Objectives & Reporting Frameworks

Overall Goal

Enhance livelihoods, health, and human capital in Bo & Pujehun Districts.

Specific Objectives

1. Achieve $\geq 70\%$ yield increase for 1,000 IVSR farmers.
2. Reach $\geq 95\%$ attendance among 2,500 primary pupils.
3. Reduce waterborne illness cases by $\geq 80\%$ in Kpawama.
4. Enable $\geq 50\%$ of 270 empowerment trainees to generate income post-training.

Reporting Frameworks

- ◆ Results-Based Management (RBM): Inputs \longrightarrow Activities \longrightarrow Outputs \longrightarrow Outcomes \longrightarrow Impact
- ◆ Logical Framework Approach (LFA)
- ◆ Theory of Change (ToC)

5. Beneficiary Overview

Intervention	Location	Total	Men	Women	Boys	Girls
IVSR Cultivation	Nyeyama & Ngeyawami Barri (Pjhn)	500	320	160	–	–
IVSR Cultivation	Karleh & Yambama Lugbu (Bo)	500	330	190	–	–
Scholastic Kits	Ansarul Primary Schools at Buma-Sami & Kondiama	1,320	–	–	665	655
Scholastic Kits	SLC primary School Ngeyawami & BDEC Primary School Jimmi	1180	–	–	581	599
WASH Facility	Kpawama (Bo District)	~1,500	632	868	–	–
Women Empowerment Program	Bo City	150	–	150	–	–
Youth Empowerment Program	Bo City	120	56	64	–	–

6. Project Components

6.1 Inland Valley Swamp Rice Cultivation

Activities

- ♦ Four 3-day agronomy training workshops per community.
- ♦ Distribution of 100 bushel IVSR seed & tool kits.
- ♦ Establishment of two Farmer Field Schools (FFS) for peer-learning.

Outputs & Outcomes

Metric	Baseline	Endline	Change
Yield (t/ha)	1.2	1.8	+50%
Avg. seasonal income (USD)	50	200	+300%
IPM adoption rate (%)	–	92	–

Impact

Surplus markets enabled farmer reinvestment in education and farm inputs. Women's FFS formed savings clubs for collective resilience.

6.2 Scholastic Materials Distribution

Activities

- ◆ Needs assessments with headteachers & PTAs.
- ◆ Procurement and equitable distribution ceremonies.

Outputs & Outcomes

Indicator	Baseline	Endline	Change
Attendance rate (%)	77	95	+18 pp
Average test scores (%)	65	83	+18 pp
Dropout rate (%)	12	7	-5 pp

Impact

Enhanced learning environments increased teacher motivation. Girl-child retention rose, narrowing gender gaps in primary education.

6.3 WASH Infrastructure – Hand-Pump Well & Latrine

Activities

- ◆ Hydrogeological survey & 45 m borehole drilling.
- ◆ Installation of India Mark II pump and VIP latrine.
- ◆ Four community hygiene-promotion workshops using local drama.

Outputs & Outcomes

Metric	Baseline	Endline	Change
Waterborne illness cases (mo)	45	13	-72%
Avg. water-fetch time (hrs/day)	3	1.0	-2 hrs
Latrine usage rate (%)	35	90	+55 pp
Pump uptime (%)	-	100	-

Impact

Time savings supported women's income-generation and children's study. A community maintenance fund now sustains pump functionality.

6.4 Women & Youth Empowerment Programs

Women's Program (Bo City)

- ◆ Vocational training: tailoring, hairdressing, agri-processing.
- ◆ Financial literacy & business-planning workshops.
- ◆ 150 women trained; 90 business start-up kits distributed.

Youth Program (Bo City)

- ◆ Business skills: ICT basics, micro-enterprise management.
- ◆ Mentorship circles and pitch competitions.
- ◆ 120 youth trained (64 female, 56 male); 80 start-up kits awarded.

Outputs & Outcomes

Indicator	Women Program	Youth Program
Trainees	150	120
Start-up kits distributed	90	80
Microenterprises launched	30	17
Post-training employment (%)	58	65
Income growth reported (%)	75	80

Impact

New ventures diversified urban economies. Women reported increased leadership roles; youth networks continue peer-supported growth.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL)

i. Baseline (Jan 2024): Established reference values for yields, attendance, disease incidence, and livelihood indicators.

ii. Routine Monitoring:

Monthly farm visits & yield logs.

Daily school register audits.

Clinic data reviews; hygiene observations.

iii. Midline (Jul 2024): Captured +25% yield, +10 pp attendance, -40% illnesses; led to adaptive training schedules.

iv. Endline (Dec 2024): Independent evaluators confirmed all target achievements.

v. Adaptive Learning:

- ◆ Translated training manuals into Mende.
- ◆ Used community drama for hygiene messaging.
- ◆ Established SMS feedback channels for rapid issue resolution.

8. Logical Framework Matrix

Summary		Indicators	Verification	Assumptions
Goal: Enhanced well-being		Income \geq USD 120/season	Income survey; cooperative records	Stable market prices
01.	Rice productivity	↑ Yield \geq 1.6 t/ha	FFS logs; agronomist reports	Favorable weather
02.	School access	Attendance \geq 90%	School registers	Parental support
03.	Disease reduction	Cases \leq 15/mo	Clinic logs	Proper WASH use
04.	Empowerment	\geq 50% post-training income growth	Follow-up surveys	Enabling business environment
Output 1.1: Farmers trained		1,000 trained; 2 FFS	Attendance sheets; FFS reports	Farmer commitment
Output 2.1: Kits distributed		2,500 kits delivered	Distribution logs; photos	Timely procurement
Output 3.1: WASH facilities		1 well; 1 latrine installed	Site inspection; handover cert.	Survey accuracy
Output 4.1: Trainees trained		270 trainees; kits distributed	Training records; kit logs	Trainee engagement

9. Theory of Change

Inputs

- ♦ Funding (USD 45,000)
- ♦ Seeds, tools, scholastic kits
- ♦ Trainers, engineers, facilitators
- ♦ Community committees

Activities

- ♦ Farmer trainings & FFS
- ♦ Kit distribution ceremonies
- ♦ Borehole & latrine construction
- ♦ Vocational & entrepreneurship workshops

Outputs

- ♦ 1,000 skilled IVSR farmers
- ♦ 2,500 pupils equipped
- ♦ 1 functional well & latrine
- ♦ 270 empowered women & youth

Outcomes

- ♦ +50% rice yields
- ♦ 95% school attendance
- ♦ -72% waterborne illness
- ♦ 61% youth employment

Impact

- ♦ Sustained income growth, better health & education, and resilient rural-urban communities

10. Financial Overview

Category	Budget (USD)	Actual (USD)	Variance (USD)	Variance (%)
IVSR Cultivation	18,000	17,800	200	1.3 %
Scholastic Materials	10,000	9,600	400	3.3 %
WASH Infrastructure	7,500	7,350	150	1.5 %
Women & Youth Empowerment	6,300	6,200	100	1.7 %
Monitoring, Evaluation & Admin	3,200	3,150	50	2.5 %
Total	45,000	44,100	900	2.0 %

Savings of USD 900 were reallocated to pump spare parts and community maintenance training.

11. Risk Management

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Seed delivery disruptions	Medium	High	Multi-supplier contracts; buffer stocks
Training attendance drop	Low	Medium	Off-peak scheduling; participant stipends
Borehole site complications	Medium	High	Detailed hydro surveys; certified drillers
Urban program dropout	Low	Medium	Mentorship support; continuous follow-up

12. Sustainability & Exit Strategy

- ♦ **Farmer Cooperatives:** FFS groups legally registered; linked to input subsidies and credit schemes.
- ♦ **School PTAs:** Trained to budget for annual scholastic replenishment; termly review meetings scheduled.
- ♦ **WASH Committee:** User-fee model established; pump caretakers trained; maintenance manuals issued.
- ♦ **Alumni Networks:** Business clusters formed for peer support; quarterly learning forums planned.

13. Next Steps & Recommendations

1. **Scale IVSR** to four additional communities with USD 60,000 funding.
2. **Value-addition:** Partner cooperatives with rice millers to develop branded products.
3. **Digital Learning:** Pilot solar-powered tablet hubs with e-content in rural schools.
4. **WASH Microfinance:** Launch small-loan schemes for household latrine construction and repairs.
5. **Impact Advocacy:** Publish case-study compendium and policy briefs to attract new donors.

NEI-SL extends its deepest gratitude to Sir Patrick Bijou for his transformative patronage. Together, we strengthen food security, education, health, and economic opportunity across Sierra Leone.