



Sierra Leone's Education Sector Concludes ACE Week

The Ministries of Technical and Higher Education and Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MTHE & MBSSE) have jointly as a sector rounded-off their Annual Celebration of Education (ACE) week in Bo District, spanning from 22nd to 26th January, 2024.



The theme for this year's event (Learning for Lasting Peace) clearly aligns with the theme of the sixth International Day of Education, which occurred on 24th January, 2024 falling within one of the days of Sierra Leone's ACE Week.

The first International Day of Education, which was celebrated on 24th January, 2019 after a resolution was passed by the United Nations General Assembly on 3rd December, 2018, clearly underscored United Nations target towards supporting the efforts of its member states in realizing Sustainable Development Goal-4 (Quality Education).



The SDG-4 is in tandem with MTHE and MBSSE's vision statement which is "to ensure the provision of quality education for national development and global competitiveness." Hence, the idea to celebrate this year's ACE Week in line with the International Day of Education was well-thought-out.

The ACE Week creates a platform for Sierra Leone's education sector (vis-à-vis MTHE and MBSSE) to share its success stories and challenges, display some of the innovative and hands-on exercise that obtains within basic, higher, technical and vocational training institutions across the country, and prepare for the sector's sustainable transformation in subsequent years.



The five-day event comprised panel discussions on education, recognition of individual and institutional contributions towards Sierra Leone's educational system, demonstration of inventive skills by some of the academic and technical/vocational institutions, and football as well as volleyball matches between participants of the event.

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H.E. Rtd. Brig. Dr. Julius Maada Bio
President- SL

In officially recognizing the International Day of Education and the ACE Week, H.E. Rtd. Brig. Dr. Julius Maada Bio, noted His government's realization that education is human right, a public good and a public responsibility, adding that an educated and enlightened society is astutely aware of the indispensable role of peace in both democracy and development.

"As a nation that has emerged from the shadows of conflict, our first-hand experiences, stories and scars are poignant reminders that in the throes of violence, there are no victors- only shared suffering and loss" he said.

He mentioned that this year's ACE Week serves as a collaborative platform for key education sector stakeholders to reflect on the achievements, address the challenges and advance access to quality education in the country as stipulated in the Education Sector Plan 2022-2026.

"Together, let us reaffirm our dedication to fostering an educational landscape that not only impacts knowledge but also instills the value of unity, respect and empathy," he implored all present.

In speaking about the awarding of individuals for their contribution to Sierra Leone's educational system, the Minister of Technical and Higher Education, Dr. Haja Ramatulai Wurie, said that MTHE recognizes a number of students who are training in Government Technical Institutes across Sierra Leone with a view to sending a message out there that vocational training is not for dropouts.

"Vocational training would help us to develop our middle-level manpower, and the middle-level manpower is very important for socio-economic development," she said, while expressing Government's commitment to working with young people who are further empowered and motivated to do their best within their educational space.



Dr. Haja Ramatulai Wurie
Minister, MTHE

The Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, Conrad Sackey, admonished all present to observe the International Day of Education as an event that has a global focus aimed at highlighting the contribution of education to promoting sustainable peace.

"We have seen a surge in violent conflicts in various parts of the world. Although these conflicts are taking place in distant lands, they are nevertheless having a devastating effect on our economy," he said.

He pointed out that despite Sierra Leone's eleven-year horrific civil war, the country's peace had been broken in the last five years by series of violence and insurrections, noting that such episodes have served as a painful reminder that sustainable peace is not certain.

He urged all citizens to be tolerant to their diversity and different shades of opinion in achieving sustainable peace, adding that education must play a vital role in such endeavor.

The Deputy Minister of Technical and Higher Education, Sarjoh Aziz-Kamara, registered Government's unwavering commitment to investing in human capital development as a cornerstone for driving sustainable peace and economic prosperity.

He pointed out that the foundation of enduring peace is built on the pillars of education and knowledge, adding that sustaining lasting peace requires a collaborative effort and radical inclusion of stakeholders from various sectors of society.

"In our pursuit for lasting peace, let us come together to co-create solutions that transcend boundaries and foster a sense of shared responsibility. By pulling our collective wisdom and resources, we can design innovative strategies that address the root causes of unrest and inequality," he said.



Sarjoh Aziz-Kamara
Dept. Minister, MTHE



Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh
V. President, SL

Vice President Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, in his official closure of the ACE Week, thanked all the participants for making the week's celebration a resounding success.

“This year's theme ‘Learning for Lasting Peace’ resonates not only with our specific context as a country, but across the world particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. The idea behind it is that investing in education has the tendency to translate into sustainable peace,” he said.

He noted that the ACE Week serves as an opportunity for them as a Government to celebrate the numerous successes they have had since 2018 as well as acknowledge their challenges and see those challenges as a promising roadmap that will enable the country to move forward.



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