

The MoHS Weekly Activity Bulletin summarizes key activities, including meetings of the preceding week, carried out by the Offices of the Minister and Chief Medical Officer, Directorates, Programmers, and Agencies of the Ministry.

### Top stories



Health Minister Pledges Sierra Leone's Commitment to a 24% Increase in Vaccination Uptake



Hospitals on Wheels Deliver Free Healthcare Services in Kenema & Kambia Districts



EPI Initiates TWGs ahead of Upcoming HPV Campaign

### Health Minister Pledges Sierra Leone's Commitment to a 24% Increase in Vaccination Uptake



Minister of Health and Sanitation, Dr. Austin Demby has, in a meeting with Ministers of Health from West and Central Africa, committed to upscaling Sierra Leone's vaccination uptake from 46 to 70% by December 2022.

The communique was signed in Dakar, Senegal, at a meeting organized by the UN, African CDC, IOM, and the Vaccine Improvement Initiative in West and Central Africa (Viiwca).

The overarching objective of the meeting was to firm up commitments to providing financial aid in support of the ECOWAS/

WAHO/ECCAS's regional enhanced vaccination scheme designed to increase the COVID-19 vaccination rate from current low levels to 70% of the targeted population to be vaccinated in the region of West and Central Africa as per WHO guidelines for COVID-19.

Quality, free and accessible healthcare services have, from 12-16 September 2022, been simultaneously provided to the people of Kenema and Kambia districts.

### Hospitals on Wheels Deliver Free Healthcare Services in Kenema & Kambia Districts

The Ministry of Health and Sanitation's move to taking medical services to the doorsteps of the people is central to achieving Universal Health Coverage.

Electrocardiography (ECG) for testing of the heart, Otopscope device (for eye examination), COVID-19 vaccination, ear treatment, prenatal care, laboratory testing services etc. were among the free services provided by the busses.

In five days, nearly 3,000 people in both districts benefited from the "ZERO COST" healthcare services provided by the Hospitals on Wheels project. The Ministry of Health and Sanitation is firmly committed to ensuring that these busses reach all 16 districts as quickly as possible.



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### EPI Initiates TWGs ahead of Upcoming HPV Campaign



Over the week, the Extended Programme on Immunization (EPI) has activated Technical Working Group meetings across various districts on the imminent Human Papilloma Virus vaccination campaign for the eradication of Cervical Cancer. These multiple working groups will map out strategies, and garner community ownership and participation for the successful rollout of the campaign.

Most cases of cervical cancer follow infections with high-risk types of genital human papillomavirus. Genital HPV infection is extremely common; about 4 in 5 people will be infected with at least one type during their lifetimes. Genital HPV is usually passed on during sexual contact with someone infected. The best way to protect yourself and others against HPV is to be vaccinated. In women, the vaccine protects against 9 types of HPV that cause cervical cancer. The upcoming HPV vaccination campaign will largely focus on school immunization of girls between the ages of 9 and 11.

The Directorate of Food and Nutrition, in collaboration with the West African Health Organisation (WAHO), has completed three weeks of an intensive training programme on nutritional management in burns injury, non-communicable diseases, and other related conditions.

### Directorate of Food & Nutrition Completes Nutritional Management Training

The training modules covered topics included nutrition in burns management, interventions in the management of diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidaemia, and stroke, food portion size calculations and exchanges as well as parenteral nutrition. Participants also partook in practical sessions that allowed them to try their hands-on formulation of homemade, cost-effective enteral feeds formulated from scratch from recipes.



The training involved three batches of healthcare professionals including 41 nutritionists, 4 doctors, and 16 nurses. In total, 61 participants were trained within this period.

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### Environmental Health & Sanitation Validates Sanitation Policy Implementation Guideline



The Directorate of Environmental Health and Sanitation has on Thursday, 15th September 2022 validated the Sanitation Policy Implementation Guideline at Radisson Blu, Freetown.

The validation was preceded by the development of the African Sanitation Policy Guideline (ASPG) by the Secretariat of the African Minister's Council on Water (AMCOW) to guide African governments on the review, revision, and development of sanitation policies and associated implementation strategies.

A consultant's service was procured by UNICEF to support Sanitation Policy Implementation (SPIG) development in Sierra Leone. A Technical Working Group (TWG) was formed to provide technical inputs, comments, and suggestions throughout the process. Desk review, interviews, and consultative and Bottleneck analysis (BNA) had been done targeting different stakeholders and MDAs at all levels. The validation meeting was attended by MoHS health development partners, civil society organisations, district councils, and MoHS directorates and programmes.

Within the week, the Directorate of **DFN Orientates Key Target Groups on SWBO** Food and Nutrition organized the orientation of the "Warm Chain" (various actors that support breastfeeding across different society levels) in various districts on the Stronger With Breastfeeding Only Campaign.

The Stronger With Breastmilk Only campaign focuses on stopping the practice of giving water to babies younger than six months as an entry point for shifting norms and behaviours towards improved breastfeeding practices.

Studies by WHO have shown that exclusive breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure child health and survival. Breastfed children perform better on intelligence tests, are less likely to be overweight or obese, and are less prone to diabetes later in life. Women who breast-feed also have a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancers.

