

Achievements Since Inception:

- DCI-SL has led civil society campaigns and provided technical inputs towards the development and passage of many child rights policies and legislations in Sierra Leone. These include the Child Rights Act 2007, the National Child Justice Strategy 2006 and 2013, the Sexual Offences Act 2012, the National Age Verification Guidelines, the National Referral Protocol on Sexual Gender Based Violence, the National Child Reintegration Policy, to name but a few.;
- Through legal advocacy since 2003, DCI-SL has been able to secure justice for over 5,000 child victims of abuse/violence and also removed over 10,000 children from police cells, prisons and other detention facilities, and succeeded in reintegrating over 70% of them into their families and communities. In this regard, one of DCI-SL's lawyers Mohamed Pa-momo Fofanah won the 2004 Reebok International Human Rights Award for the successful legal representation of children in conflict with the law and child victims of abuse in Sierra Leone. DCI-SL has also won several awards from the Children's Forum Network, the Young Men's Christian Association and other institutions for her successful work in the area of promoting child justice and legal rights of children in Sierra Leone;
- DCI-SL has led civil society organizations to submit three alternative reports on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols;
- DCI-SL has directly supported access to education and life skills building for over 5000 girls who were school dropouts, victims of sexual violence and/or living in vulnerable situations including in forced marriages that were tantamount to bondage;
- In 2014 DCI-SL registered & provided emergency Psychosocial First Aid (PFA), Livelihood & reintegration support for 7,638 EVD affected children (52% girls & 48% boys in Bo, Bombali, Kono, Kenema, Moyamba & Western Area);
- In 2012 DCI-SL supported & facilitated birth registration of 23,088 children (54.5% boys, 45.5% girls in Bombali & Kenema Districts);
- In 2013 Plan Sierra Leone & DCI-SL won most inspiring Award at the International Girl Power Project meeting that was held in Addis Ababa involving the 10 countries where the Girl Power Project is being implemented.



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ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE



DEFENCE FOR CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL SIERRA LEONE

Name of the NGO:	Defence for Children International Sierra Leone
Acronym:	DCI-SL
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Founder:	Group of Young Sierra Leoneans
Year of establishment:	1998
Registration Number:	CF/99/2007
State Entities Registered with:	(a) Office of the Administrator & Registrar General (OARG) (b) Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender & Children's Affairs (MSWGCA)

Vision: A Sierra Leone where children have a voice and are protected in both law and practice.

Mission: DCI-SL seeks to advance the protection of the rights and welfare of children in Sierra Leone through efforts geared towards child protection systems strengthening, access to justice, child & family empowerment and sustainable reintegration of vulnerable children.

MOTTO:

PROTECTING & EMPOWERING CHILDREN

Organisational Objectives:

The general objectives of DCI-SL are as follows:

- To engage in practical actions directed towards promoting and protecting the rights of the child;
- To foster awareness and solidarity around children's rights issues and initiatives;
- To advocate for the passage, implementation and enforcement of child rights laws that are consistent with minimum international standards;
- To promote international standards and procedures in dealing with children in conflict with the law and child victims of abuse/violations at all levels;
- To strengthen formal and traditional justice systems for the protection the rights of the child

Core Values:

- The values of DCI-SL that underpin all activities and endeavours shall be based on the following express statements:
 - We are committed and focused exclusively on child rights;
 - We are radical in our campaigns;
 - We are transparent;
 - We are uncompromising on issues of child abuse.

Guiding Principles & Strategies:

STRATEGIES

- Use of best practice at all times;
- Child & Family Empowerment;
- Push Policy into action- access to justice;
- Contribute to National Agenda;
- Child Protection System Strengthening;
- Child Participation;
- Advocacy;
- Network & Build Alliance

PRINCIPLES

- Adhere to ethical code of conduct (child protection, conflict of interest);
- Be child friendly and seek the best interest of the child at all times;
- Gender Equity;
- None Discrimination

Operational Districts:

DCI-SL operates currently in six operational districts across the country.

- Western Rural & Urban Districts (Western Area);
- Bo District (Southern Region);
- Kenema District (Eastern Region);
- Kono District (Eastern Region);
- Moyamba District (Southern Region);
- Bombali District (Northern Region)

Staffing Capacity:

Currently DCI-SL has about 45 staff (58% Male & 42% Female) comprising both males & female with qualifications ranging from Diploma to Masters Degree in various disciplines from reputable institutions.

Areas of Work/ Thematic Programmes :

Child Justice - Promoting legal protection and justice for children in conflict with the law and child victims of violence and witnesses. This involves providing legal assistance to children to claim their rights (E.g right to property of their deceased parents in accordance with the Child Rights Act and the Devolution of Estate Act) and also be able to seek legal redress when in conflict with the law or abused.

Violence against Children especially ending Child Exploitation—We campaign and support communities to end sexual and economic exploitation of children, early/forceful marriage. Hence we build child protection mechanisms particularly at community level to prevent and respond to **child trafficking, child marriage and child labour**.

Promoting Civil Rights of Children—We promote and campaign for birth registration of all children as a way of regularizing their nationality and access to education and other services that require proof of identity.

Defence for Girls Initiative- DCI-SL also implements specialized programmes that promote equal rights and opportunities for girls and young women, in addition to the other projects that cater for all children.

Civil society mobilization for joint advocacy- DCI-SL has gained tremendous experience in mobilizing and leading civil society organisations to engage national, regional and international mechanisms on children's rights. A good example is the formation of the Child Rights Coalition Sierra Leone (CRC-SL).

Regional and international level advocacy- in addition to working through national coalitions and networks to engage regional and international child rights and human rights mechanisms, DCI-SL also carries out direct engagement with UN and AU (African union) bodies.

Ebola Response - DCI-SL contributes to addressing critical gaps particularly concerning children in the government EVD responses programme .