



ENJOY HIGHER WITHDRAWAL LIMITS WITH **UBA VISA CARD** on our ATMs and PoS

Daily transaction limits for cards have been
INCREASED
Cash withdrawal: Increased from **SLE 3,000 to SLE 6,000**
POS/Web: increased from **SLE 15,000 to SLE 35,000**



Africa's Global Bank

www.uba.com/leone

Follow us: Concord Times Newspaper | @Concordtimes | sl_concord_times



CONCORD TIMES

NEWSPAPER

Vol. 17, No 140250901

Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Price: Le 2

ALSO INSIDE

CGSL national debating championship for girls reaches semi-finals



UNION TRUST BANK LIMITED

...Empowering Sierra Leone Commerce

▶ SCAN N PAY

- Easy to use merchant payment.
- Person to person (P2P) or person to business (P2B) payment.
- Make payment using mobile phone.
- Total visibility of your transaction

Head Office: 2 Howe Street, Freetown,
PMB 1237, Freetown, Sierra Leone
Mobile: 077 713533, 077630832, 088 635750



Samura Kamara launches APC 'One Nation' Manifesto, outlines ten-point to address key challenges

By Alhaji Haruna Sani

Sierra Leone likely to secure UN Security Council seat



2023 Presidential candidate and leader of the main opposition All People's Congress (APC) party, Dr. Samura M.W Kamara has yesterday, June 29, officially unveiled the 'One Nation' manifesto aimed at fostering national unity, addressing economic deficiencies, and promoting sustainable development across the country.

While officially launching the party's 2023 manifesto at the Lagoonda Resort, Kamara's ten-point plan outlines his vision for a prosperous Sierra Leone founded upon empathic and service-oriented governance, technical competence, and the utilization of data, technology, and innovation. Samura said his party's number one priority is to build 'One Nation' - rebuilding national unity and cohesion.

Cont. Page 5



Dr. Samura Kamara making a statement at the launch

2023 Elections: PPRC Chairman calls on politicians to maintain peace during campaigns

Alleged Killer of FBC lecturer brought to court

Bola Ahmed Tinubu sworn in as Nigeria's new president



10 key takeaways from Nigeria's new president's inaugural speech

ECOBANK SAVE AND WIN PROMO!

The more you Save the Greater Your Chances of Winning

ecobank.com



Terms and Conditions Apply

Save **NLE 5,000, NLE 10,000, NLE 20,000** or more and enter the draw



FROM KUSH AND GHETTO MENTALITY TO FREE EDUCATION: BIO'S QUIET HUMAN CAPITAL REVOLUTION

By Sheikh Bakarr Kamara

The aftermath of the APCs mismanagement of our educational system reads like a horror movie from the imaginary banana republic of Costaguana in the fabled Joseph Conrad fiction-Nostromo. The school dropout rates were scary to say the least, and what passed for an educational system under the APCs tragic reign was a clay legged mockery of what sainted our country with the legendary Athens of West Africa tag. Teachers went unpaid, promotions were virtually non-existent except for those who were family members or cronies of the system under the APC. Little or no funding support for text or exercise books, public examinations like the WASCE became so mired in open examination malpractices with the open support of government functionaries, that the results of such exams were not even worth a toilet paper. Poor overburdened parents who could no longer afford school fees painfully and helplessly watched as their children were kicked out of schools. As a consequence of the massive dropout rate in our schools courtesy of unbridled corruption, our children imbibed a ghetto mentality of Kush and other dangerous substances - at least as a way of passing a hopeless existence. The late Minister Dr. Minkailu Bah and his cronies so comprehensively looted the Ministry's coffers, that the office's functionaries sat idly all day long with nothing of any meaningful substance to do. After looting the Ministry's coffers of some 68 million United States Dollars and billions of Leones (See COI Report), the Minister and his cronies embarked on what was the only available convenient option-tracking non-existent Ghost Teachers during their entire ten-year mandate.

BRETTON WOODS

Of course, the Bretton Woods institutions were left so rankled by APCs comprehensive looting of the country's lean treasury that particularly the education related UNESCO and its partners, simply packed up and bade farewell leaving the APC and nearly 3 million hapless children in their wake with nowhere to turn to. It was on the back of this wretched state of affairs that the then leader of the opposition Rtd. Brig. Julius Maada Bio saw this massive development lacuna, and launched his elections manifesto with a well-oiled campaign machinery. I have always insisted that President Bio won the 2018 elections largely on the basis of the fact that in 2018, it was the SLPP that had the clearest and most consistent campaign message-Vote for Me and I Will Give Your Children hope and Free Primary and Secondary Education - This message resonated with the people perhaps not only on the basis of its clarity alone, but against the background of the APC's wretched legacy of prioritising thieving and gangsterism over the noble principle of education and skills acquisition for a better future.

To me, that just a few months into office, President Bio was to actualise his dream of providing free education for over 2.6 million children, coupled with the supply of text and exercise books at the initial cost of 276 billion Leones to 12 thousand schools, employ 12,000 new teachers, train 25 thousand more teachers and pay an initial 500 billion Leones in tuition fees alone in a matter of months upon assumption of office, was nothing short of a miracle. If I am to say the truth, as an unbelieving Thomas, I would never have believed that such a monumental feat of free education, free meals, free exercise and core text books, bus transportation for nearly 3

million school children could be achieved in my life time. Today I dare say, to commit 22 percent of state resources to the free education, lunch, transportation

etc. at a cost of over a trillion Leones is the biggest development project ever undertaken in Sierra Leone in such a short space of time.

HIPC

One of the reasons for my doubt was predicated not only upon its declaration of austerity but really the near state of total collapse in which the APC had left the country in 2018. To clearly understand my import here, we need to go back a bit down memory lane. We have to remember that on the eve of President Kabbah exiting office, such was the efficiency with which our economy was run and so rosy were the signs of looming growth and prosperity under Kabbah, that the Bretton Woods institutions singled us out as one of the countries that best qualified for perhaps the biggest debt relief ever granted any developing economy globally. So, under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief programme, the IMF and The World Bank comprehensively cancelled all of our debts which amounted to 994 million or close to a billion U.S Dollars under the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative from just the IMF, IDA, AfDB and other Multilateral Creditors. This list is far from exhaustive; Bilateral Creditors also alone waived 244.3 million of our debts while Commercial Creditors cancelled 90.0 million Dollars (credit IMF Press Release NO.06/286-December 2006)

In all, nearly 2 billion of our debts were cancelled on the eve of President Kabbah's exit from State House. Furthermore, President Koroma inherited 1.6 billion dollars in our reserves. By the time of his ascension to power, never mind the trillions of Leones that he also inherited. In spite of the fact that President Koroma's government inherited a debt free country unburdened by the suffocating monthly debt servicing to which President Bio's administration is subjected to every month, President Koroma bequeathed to President Bio in 2018 an external debt of 2 billion US Dollars and a domestic debt of 4.9 trillion Leones which as at 2018 was equivalent to 636 million US Dollars (Credit Desmond Davies of Newafricanmagazine.com, May 1 2018). The above were the reasons why I doubted President Bio's capacity to deliver on a project of this magnitude, but to the amazement of his compatriots and the world at large-and to me in particular, the free education and school feeding programmes have been unqualified successes and a lesson in human capital development.

UNIVERSAL FREE EDUCATION

Today 2.6 million (about the entire population of the nation states of the Gambia and Cape Verde) are beneficiaries of free education complete with text and exercise books, school feeding and transportation. Amazingly, although it has been achieved at enormous cost, sacrifice and at the opportunity cost of other critical sectors, the president has craftily continued to ensure that other sectors like health and agriculture are not disadvantaged unduly. The statistics speak for themselves. By 2019 alone, government shelled out 637 billion Leones on the cost of tuition fees alone up from 500 million in 2018. This expenditure occasioned a more than 500 percent increment in school enrollment from 2012 to 2021. It is a mammoth task to sit 2.6 million children in schools, so to alleviate the problem of accommodation, the government embarked upon a massive approval of schools which were tottering on the brink of collapse as a result of inadequate funding. To this end, the government swiftly upped schools approved and placed on

the government's budget which includes 54 percent of Pre-Primary schools, 79 percent of primary schools and 77 percent of junior and senior secondary schools. It is common knowledge that the indicators for progress in schools are how well students fare in

examinations. To this end, the government in 2020 further subsidised struggling parents by paying 277 billion Leones in examination fees, a further 57 billion Leones was further spent to increase the number of teachers on government payroll by 2020 - it is important to note that most were teachers who had not received salaries for years. Over 276 billion was further spent in 2021 on examinations fees support for students taking public exams. Between 2020 and 2022 also, to further create a more conducive learning environment, the government shelled out 33 billion and 164 billion Leones on exercise and core text books for students respectively. The positive ripple effects of these interventions meant that one million new students were enrolled in our schools between 2018 to 2022 - a 37 percent increment in school enrollment within this period. This intervention triggered the highest school completion rate among girl children in West Africa. The government's examinations fees support between 2018 to 2022 translated into a 79 percent increment in students taking public examinations.

New school buildings mean new furniture. To that end Bio's administration in 2021 alone cashed out 3 billion Leones on school furniture and set up three Early Childhood Centres in Moyamba, Kambia and Pujehun to further boost the government's emphasis of 'catching them early' which was geared towards strengthening children's academic foundation in their formative years.

It is important to note that the vast stride this government has made in education has not gone unnoticed. On the home front, the sports betting company Mercury constructed an ultra-modern all girls boarding secondary school in Portloko in support of the programme's girls empowerment mandate. On the international front, material, financial and moral support keeps pouring in as the world looks in amazing wonder as to how a small developing country, was able to provide free education and lunch for 2.6 million children. Such is the level of admiration for what President Bio has been able to achieve in just five years, that he was invited to chair the Global Transforming Education Programme in September 2022 as a Global Champion for Education as the world sought to use Sierra Leone's example to address what the UN referred to as a Global Learning Crisis. President Bio's stunning achievements have made him the poster boy of the world's global education drive. Coming hard on the heels of the Global Learning Crisis summit, the red carpet was also rolled out for him to attend the UNESCO, UNICEF and EU funded Gender Transformation Summit in May 2022, in a bid to form a formidable global coalition around girls' education and women's empowerment.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT

The European Union in addition to its myriad support to the free education project has also funded the rehabilitation of 100 schools in Bombali, Portloko, Bo and Kenema. Furthermore, under the GPE programme, the government has also received a total financial support of 115 million dollars for President Bio's flagship programme. By 2022, 818 thousand students had benefitted from the school feeding programme. To ensure compliance and quality, the government recruited 165 Quality Assurance Officials who have been deployed all over the country to help with the monitoring and evaluation of the programme. So comprehensive has government support to education been, that out of its concern for the burden on students who pay

substantial sums to check their results after publication, it has funded a Result Checkers app to help hundreds of thousands of these students check their results online at no cost to them.

When a government makes the kind of monumental efforts and sacrifice this government has made in the area of human capital development, it expects a positive outcome. The outcomes for Bio's

administration in this regard has been nothing but fantastic. As a result of the free education and government's funding of thousands of students' examination fees, the number of pupils taking the WASCE exams has risen by 470 percent between 2018 to 2022 reaching a record 186,000 students. As girls and women empowerment are at the heart of the free education programme, it is just appropriate that the impact on them is as positive as everybody would have wanted. In 2022, more females than men took the exams and the pass rate in individual papers climbed dramatically from 64 percent in 2020 to 77 percent in 2022. A five subject pass is the benchmark for university admission. The number of students who passed this magic number increased by 1,863 percent between 2018 to 2022. Even more amazing is the fact that all the top students passed all eight subjects attempted and the top school recorded a 100 percent five credit pass and all of the students obtained direct university entrance. Students obtaining the 5 credits bench mark entry requirement in a single sitting increased by an amazing 1,781 percent between 2018 to 2022.

In 2022 alone, 108 students obtained requirements that were far better in quality and quantity far more than what was achieved in the previous 5 years combined, with the number of females outnumbering their male counterparts. The pass rate for the compulsory subjects of English and mathematics ranged between 63 to 90 percent with males slightly out performing females in English and their male counterparts upstaging them in mathematics. The result in the dicey Core Science discipline was stunning. The students who took this paper triumphed with a 95 percent pass rate. The mouthwatering pass rate in the core English and Maths subjects was largely motivated by the availability of free 3.1 million maths and English textbooks to the beneficiaries.

While the figures above are nothing short of amazing, they become even more of a celebration when put into context. Before President Bio's accession to power in 2018, the WASCE pass rate especially in the bench mark 5 subjects was less than 10 percent and the pass rate in the core English and maths areas wavered between 3 and 5 percent. That the pass rate in these two subjects now fluctuate between 64 to 90 percent is utterly remarkable and is nothing short of a glowing testament to what President Bio and his government have been able to achieve in these unpredictable and demanding five years. Such a feat can only be achieved with back breaking commitment and dedication.

UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE

Put into greater context, such was the enormity of the unprecedented success students scored in the 2022 WASCE exams, that the University of Sierra Leone found in its hands over 8 thousand successful undergraduate applicants, all fighting for only less than 2000 spaces. The University had to resort to the conduct of an examination to fish out the best out of the rest. Such was the enormity of the outstanding success of President Bio's Free Quality Education. Any parent who craves success for their school going children should sit back and reflect on what President Bio has been able to achieve for them in this COVID ravaged world in these five years. There is no

doubt that if these elections are going to be about hope, the future of our children, a viable and sustainable economy, food self-sufficiency, then there is no doubt that President Bio's track record of formidable achievements is a pointer that he is the only credible, viable and available alternative. A vote for president Bio will be a concrete endorsement of his quiet human capital development revolution.



EASTER-RAMADAN PROMO

Receive Money Worldwide from our branches and get rewarded with exciting gift items!

Go to any UBA Branch to receive cash from AfriCash, MoneyGram, Ria, Western Union and get a reward.



The more you receive,
the bigger the reward!



Africa's Global Bank | www.ubasierraleone.com

LOCAL NEWS

By Alfred Koroma

Sierra Leone is set to be selected to the United Nations Security Council on the 6th of June, next month, according to Prof. David Francis, Minister of Foreign and International Corporation. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations tasked with the primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security. In May 2022, President Julius Maada Bio launched a bid to present Sierra Leone's candidature for a seat in the Non-Permanent Category of the UN security organ for the period 2024-

2025.

If elected in June, it will be the second time Sierra Leone, the 100 member of the UN would have served as Non-Permanent member of the UN Security Council. The country was first elected into the council in 1971.

There are 193 members state in the UN. To win the Security Council seat, Sierra Leone needs two-thirds of the member states vote at the UN General Assembly session next month. That means, the country is required to gather about 129 votes, if all the member states vote.

Sierra Leone secured its candidacy against Nigeria which backed down to support Sierra

Samura Kamara launches APC 'One Nation' Manifesto, outlines ten-point to address key challenges

From Cover

He said his party shall take immediate steps to restore national cohesion, peace, and unity in Sierra Leone. "We shall foster the equitable distribution of opportunities and undertake constitutional and institutional changes to entrench decentralization and local governance, and ensure fair, transparent and protected access to resources".

Second priority on the manifesto is to address economic deficiencies and the cost-of-living crisis at the structural level.

"We shall restore macroeconomic stability and work towards transforming Sierra Leone from consumption to a competitive production economy. This will include prioritizing private sector development, particularly indigenous businesses and in rural communities, leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA), as well as other trade blocs and agreements; and harnessing the potentials of digital transformation," he said.

The third point in the manifesto is to intensify efforts in job creation and the establishment of pathways for every adult, especially the youth and women, to earn a living wage.

Kamara said through sustainable cross sectorial interventions, his government shall collaborate with local and international partners to create jobs while simultaneously reforming and capacitating the civil and public service to prioritize efficient and effective delivery of services.

Number four on the manifesto is to accelerate investments in our people, with a specific focus on the capabilities of children, women, and youth.

He promised that his government enhances efficient and equitable social spending, elevating the quality of life and explicitly caring for the most vulnerable segments of the population, including women, youth and People



with Disabilities PWDs.

The remaining five points included the acceleration of investments in physical and digital infrastructure development, deepen and strengthen decentralization and rural development, enhance democratic good governance and the rule law, protect our environment, and respond to climate change, strengthen economic diplomacy and foster partnerships with the Diaspora for national development.

Prior to the launch of the manifesto, host of the party's key stakeholders delivered statement. According to Dr. Abdulai O. Conteh "Under Dr Samura Kamara, I believe the problem of acute unemployment will be addressed because it was better when he was part of the team under EBK".

Dr. Joseph Sam Sesay, deputy Veterans Leader and Former Minister of Agriculture under the APC said Sierra Leoneans never knew about tribes or region. "The 2023 election is not about the APC; it is about redeeming Sierra Leone".

Mariama Lowe, Leader, and National Women's Congress "The horrors of the life in the last five years in Sierra have been unbearable. Our women have suffered economic hardship, intimidation, rape with impunity. We need one nation where women will be protected and respected."



Leone. And according to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Union (AU) and the West African regional bloc, ECOWAS and other countries have also confirmed they will vote for Sierra Leone.

"For the first time Sierra Leone is going to get elected to go back to the Security Council after 50 years. We have done a lot of work in the last two years. We have done a lot of campaigns for this election," the Minister told the State Broadcaster last week.

"I'm very pleased to say as of today, we have got a lot of positive responses that they will vote for us on the 6th of June. The confirmation shows a mark of confidence that Sierra Leone will be elected to the UN Security Council for the non-permanent category for the period 2024-2025," Prof Francis added."

If successful, Sierra Leone will use the seat to advocate for youth and

women in peace processes and peace keeping operations with a focus on fighting terrorism, climate change and human security. The country will also support small arms control, canvass support for the common African position, affirms the need for a system which significantly leads to holding the principles, objectives and ideals of the UN Charter for a shared world and regional balance, says President Bio while launching the bid at State House last year.

He said winning the seat will give the country opportunity to share with the world, its unique selling point which includes religious tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and resilience, referring to the bid as a national duty for all.

"Our time in the Security Council we will support a priority that strengthens and address partnership and representation in the Security Council."

Alleged Killer of FBC lecturer brought to court

By Mohamed J Kargbo

34-year-old Ibrahim Kalokoh, a herbalist, made his first appearance before Magistrate Mark Ngeba of the Court No:1 at Pademba Road in Freetown and was remanded for murder.

Santigie Kabba Bangura, lecturer of the Geography Department, Fourah Bay College, was missing for some months and was later found dead and buried in the house of the herbalist.

The accused is standing trial on one count charge of murder.

The indictment was read out to him by the court registrar, but he was asked to say nothing.

It was alleged that on March 6, 2023, at Shebro Town, Waterloo, the accused murdered Kabba Santigie Bangura.

The state prosecutor brought in prosecution witness No:1 to testify in court.

Pw1 Rosaline Ya Alimany Bangura the widow of the deceased took the witness stands but was unable to testify after she burst into tears.

The state counsel sought for an adjourned date, saying that her witness was not in the right state of mind to testify.

The matter was adjourned to 5th June 2023 for further hearings.

LOCAL NEWS

By Alfred Koroma

Former Member of Parliament, Hon. Tennison Hindolo Sandy, representing Constituency 120 has during the weekend launched a house-to-house campaign to re-elect the ruling Sierra Leone Peoples Party Government.

The former Member of Parliament is seeking to return to return to the legislative House after serving a first five-year term. Launching the campaign on Saturday 27th May, Hon. Sandy said he was launching the house-to-house campaign to respectfully meet his constituents in their homes, show gratitude and tell them why they should reelect President Bio and the entire Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP).

"My message is simple and clear: I'm campaigning to show the need to reelect President Bio for a second term; the reason I should return to parliament and why

Mohamed Gento Kamara should be elected Mayor of the Freetown City Council," he told the crowd in Moyiba Community.

"We removed the criminal libel law, the death penalty and gave women 30 percent quota, and we recently opened a new ultramodern airport."

Crowds of supporters of the SLPP and several community stakeholders in Constituency 120, including councilors and aspiring councilors graced the MP's launching of the house-to-house campaign on during the weekend.

"We have voted for APC in Moyiba community but we have not seen the benefits. Hon. Hindolo's few years as MP has touched many lives in this community," says Councilor Aruna White Koroma of 419. He highlighted President Bio's achievements, saying launching the house-to-house campaign is the right step to defeat their opponents.

You have plenty things to talk to



Hon. Hon. Tennison Hindolo Sandy, wife and supporters at the launching of the campaign

people about president Bio's leaders. Let us avoid violence, he government in this election, says advised, enlightening the people Musa Tamba, representative from on how to vote under the new the SLPP Young Generation electoral system.

2023 Elections: PPRC Chairman calls on politicians to maintain peace during campaigns

By Ishmael Dumbuya



PPRC Chair, Abdulai M Bangura

The Chairman of the Political Parties Regulation Commission (PPRC), Abdulai M Bangura, has called on all politicians to be peaceful and law-abiding during campaigns period throughout the country.

In a recent address on Radio Democracy, Chairman Bangura urged politicians to display an utmost political tolerance, ensure the free and unrestricted access of all political parties to all communities, as well as foster a tranquil and harmonious campaign environment.

He added that such conditions are essential for conducting a free, fair, transparent and credible election.

He went on to stress that the importance of mutual respect between politicians and the electorates paves a clear path for a peaceful co-existence among Sierra Leoneans.

Chairman Bangura called for a continuous communication and engagement on emerging issues related to the campaign trail.

He admonished all political parties,

their supporters, and independent candidates to treat each other with respect in order to promote a peaceful co-existence, noting that that proactive approach will aim to foster a positive relationship between the political entities in order to enhance a transparent and coordinative electoral process.

The Chairman however in his concluding remarks assured the public that the campaigns have so far been very peaceful, but stressing the need for improvement and pledged to guide the process to address any challenges that avails itself.

The stages for political campaigns have so far been declared by the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (EC-SL), with each political party given their stipulated date for campaigns. The SLPP presented their manifesto to the public on Tuesday 23rd May and the APC yesterday 29th May. So far, the political tension seems to be relatively peaceful with not much security personnel on the streets of Freetown.

CGSL national debating championship for girls reaches semi-finals



As the excitement reaches its peak, the National Debating Championship for Girls 2023 is gearing up for the highly anticipated semi-finals. Set to take place on Tuesday, 30th May 2023, at the Africell American Corner, this stage of the competition promises to showcase the incredible talent and intellectual prowess of the remaining four schools.

The journey of the semi-finalists has been marked by passion, dedication, and a commitment to breaking barriers. Providence International, known for their articulate arguments and persuasive speaking skills, will face a tough challenge against John F. Kennedy. Both teams have

demonstrated exceptional abilities in crafting compelling cases and countering their opponents' points with poise and precision.

On the other side of the bracket, Beacon High School, the defending champions, are set to battle The International School Limited. Having triumphed in previous rounds with their well-researched arguments and powerful delivery, Beacon High School will undoubtedly bring their A-game to defend their title. However, The International School Limited, known for their analytical approach and thorough evidence-based arguments, will provide a formidable challenge.

Throughout the competition, Marigold, a dedicated organization empowering girl with technological skills and online safety awareness, has been the proud sponsor of the National Debating Championship for Girls. Their support has been instrumental in creating an inclusive and empowering environment for the debaters, equipping them with the necessary skills to navigate the digital landscape safely.

The semi-finals will not only be a battle of words and ideas but also a celebration of the progress these remarkable young women have made. Their journey from the initial rounds to the semi-finals is a testament to their resilience, hard work, and unwavering commitment to challenging societal norms and advocating for gender equality.



Live the
Good Life
With our



FLEXIBLE LOAN!

- Zenith offers fast and eazy loan
- Interest rate is very attractive
- Payment tenor is up to 36 months(3years)

HEAD OFFICE
18-20 Rawdon
Street Freetown

KENEMA
27 Kaisamba Terrace
Off Hanga Road

BO
54 Tikonko
Road Bo

WELLINGTON
282 Bai Bureh Road,
Wellington Industrial Estate

CLINE TOWN
155 Fourabay Road
Freetown

LUMLEY
15 Freetown Road
Lumley Freetown

LUNGI
F/T International
Airport, Lungi

MAKENI CASH CENTER
Ernest Bai Koroma University
of Science and Technology
Makeni Campus

....in your best interest



Rokel Commercial Bank Sierra Leone Limited Request for Expression of Interest

Procurement Number: RCBSL/ADMIN/IT/ICB/2023/005

Assignment Title: Provision of Internet Services and Virtual Private Network (VPN) Connectivity to our Provincial Branches, Wellington Branch and our various ATMs located remotely- All terminated at our Head Office - Siaka Stevens Street.

Date of Issuance: Thursday 18th May 2023

Rokel Commercial Bank Sierra Leone Limited (RCBank SL Ltd) has allocated funds and intends to apply part of these funds for eligible payment under the contract for consulting services for the Provision of Internet Services and Virtual Private Network (VPN) Connectivity to our Provincial Branches, Wellington Branch and our various ATMs located remotely.

Overview of Requirements:

- Ø For the internet connections, we seek a bandwidth in the range of **120 Mbps** with the provision of a **CIDR of 29 of 6 usable IP addresses** for the primary connections.
- Ø We also seek a backup connection different from the Primary connection for the internet connection - that will be on a pay-when-use basis or a minimal monthly fee.

Wide Area Network (WAN) Virtual Private Network (VPN) Connections

- Ø We ask that the primary WAN - VPN connections be fibre and that a backup connection different from the primary fibre connection be available that the provider can switch to from his end, in case of downtime, with the primary fibre link.
- Ø We also need a **secondary backup VPNs connection and Internet connections to the Disaster Recovery Site**, similar to the VPNs connection to the Head Offices. This will only be activated when need be to work from the DR site. This should be charged at a minimal monthly fee for the connections.

Branches VPN	Required Mbps
Head Office	50 Mbps (VPNs terminated point)
Wellington Branch -	8 Mbps
Moyamba Branch	8 Mbps
Bo Branch	10 Mbps
Pujehun Branch	8 Mbps
Kenema Branch	10 Mbps
Kailahun Branch	8 Mbps
Tongo Branch	5 Mbps
Bonthe Island Outlet	5 Mbps
Makeni Branch	10 Mbps
Koidu Branch	10 Mbps
Kabala Branch	8 Mbps

ATMs and Outlets

ATMs and Outlets	Required Mbps
Radisson Blu ATM	2 Mbps
Hub - Wilberforce ATM	2 Mbps
UNDP outlet UNDP Wilberforce	2 Mbps
SLRTC Outlet PWD	5 Mbps

Additional Requirements:

- Ø Provision of reliable and high-speed internet connectivity to our Wellington and provincial branches, ensuring uninterrupted service for banking operations.
- Ø Implementation and maintenance of a secure Virtual Private Network (VPN) infrastructure to connect provincial branches and remote ATMs to our bank's central network.
- Ø Compliance with industry-standard security protocols and measures to protect sensitive customer information and ensure data integrity.
- Ø Technical support and monitoring services to ensure optimal network performance and prompt troubleshooting of any connectivity issues.
- Ø Compliance with all regulatory and legal requirements related to internet services and VPN connectivity.

Interested vendors are requested to submit the following information as part of their Expression of Interest:

Company Profile:

- A. Name of the company, address, and contact details.
- B. Overview of the company's experience in providing internet services and VPN connectivity to the banking industry.
- C. List of key clients and relevant projects completed.

Technical Expertise:

- A. Description of the technical infrastructure and resources available to deliver internet services and VPN connectivity.
- B. Details of network architecture and security measures implemented by your organization.
- C. Any certifications or partnerships relevant to internet services and VPN connectivity.

Service Offering:

- A. Description of the proposed internet services, including speed, bandwidth, and redundancy measures.
- B. Overview of the VPN connectivity solution, highlighting its features, scalability, and security.
- C. Any additional value-added services or benefits that your organization can provide.

Only shortlisted firms (agencies) shall be contacted to provide a detailed Technical and Financial Proposals.

Further information can be obtained at the address below between 10:00 am to 4:00 pm from Mondays to Thursdays and from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on Fridays.

Expression of Interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below in person or email ahrlwally@rokelbank.sl and rbbrowne@rokelbank.sl at 2:00 pm on Thursday 1st June 2023.

Rokel Commercial Bank Sierra Leone Ltd
Procurement Unit
39 Wilberforce Street
Freetown

10 key takeaways from Nigeria's new president's inaugural speech

On Monday, Bola Tinubu was sworn in as Nigeria's new president. The shrewd politician succeeds former President Muhammadu Buhari who spent eight years in power and leaves behind a track record of successes as well as shortcomings.

Tinubu had, during his presidential campaigns, consistently promised to improve on his predecessor's achievements. In his inaugural speech, he highlighted a couple of changes that Nigerians should expect to see in the coming weeks.

Here are ten takeaways from his speech.

DEMOCRACY WILL PREVAIL

Tinubu, addressing a throng of spectators at the Eagle Square in Abuja, promised to run an inclusive government — one that would "heal" the country.

"Our administration shall govern on your behalf but never rule over you. We shall consult and dialogue but never dictate. We shall reach out to all but never put down a single person for holding views contrary to our own. We are here to further mend and heal this nation, not tear and injure it."

A REMODELLED ECONOMY

"We shall remodel our economy to bring about growth and development through job creation, food security, and an end to extreme poverty. On the economy, we target a higher GDP growth and to significantly reduce unemployment."

JOB CREATION

Tinubu said his administration "must create meaningful opportunities for Nigeria's youth population.

He pledged to honour his campaign commitment "of one million new jobs in the digitaleconomy".

"Our government also shall work with the national assembly to fashion an omnibus jobs and prosperity bill," an excerpt of the speech reads.

"This bill will give our administration the policy space to embark on labour-intensive infrastructural improvements, encourage light industry, and provide improved social services for the poor, elderly, and vulnerable."

AGRICULTURE

The new president said rural incomes shall be "secured by commodity exchange boards guaranteeing minimal prices for certain crops and animal products".

Tinubu said a nationwide programme for storage, and other facilities, to reduce spoilage and waste will be undertaken.

"Agricultural hubs will be created throughout the nation to increase production and engage in value-added processing. The livestock sector will be introduced to the best modern practices and steps taken to minimise the perennial conflict over land and water resources in this sector," the president said.

"Through these actions, food shall be made more abundant, yet, less costly. Farmers shall earn more while the average Nigerian pays less."

FUEL SUBSIDY

President Tinubu also bemoaned the economic implications of the current subsidy regime and assured Nigerians of its removal.

"We commend the decision of the outgoing administration in phasing out the petrol subsidy regime which has increasingly favoured the rich more than the poor. Subsidy

can no longer justify its ever-increasing costs in the wake of drying resources," he said.

"We shall, instead, re-channel the funds into better investment in public infrastructure, education, health care, and jobs that will materially improve the lives of millions."

IMPROVED SECURITY

"Security shall be the top priority of our administration because neither prosperity nor justice can prevail amidst insecurity and violence.

"To effectively tackle this menace, we shall reform both our security doctrine and its architecture. We shall invest more in our security personnel, and this means more than an increase in number. We shall provide, better training, equipment, pay, and firepower.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

"Given the world in which we reside, please permit a few comments regarding foreign policy. The crisis in Sudan and the turn from democracy by several nations in our immediate neighbourhood are of pressing concern.

"As such, my primary foreign policy objective must be the peace and stability of the West African subregion and the African continent. We shall work with ECOWAS, the AU, and willing partners in the international community to end extant conflicts and resolve new ones.

"As we contain threats to peace, we shall also retool our foreign policy to more actively lead the regional and continental quest for collective prosperity.

THRIVING INFRASTRUCTURE

Last week, Muhammadu Buhari, former president, said his administration "doubled" Nigeria's infrastructure stock to gross domestic product (GDP) to over 40 percent.

"We shall continue the efforts of the Buhari administration on infrastructure," Tinubu said.

"Progress toward national networks of roads, rail, and ports shall get priority attention."

UNITY

"The south must not only seek good for itself but must understand that its interests are served when good comes to the north. The north must see the south likewise.

"Whether from the winding creeks of the Niger Delta, the vastness of the northern savannah, the boardrooms of Lagos, the bustling capital of Abuja, or the busy markets of Onitsha, you are all my people. As your president, I shall serve with prejudice toward none but compassion and amity towards all."

UNIFIED EXCHANGE RATE

On recent policies by the Central Bank of Nigeria, the new president vowed to make adjustments that will favour citizens and businesses.

"Monetary policy needs a thorough housecleaning. The Central Bank must work towards a unified exchange rate. This will direct funds away from arbitrage into meaningful investment in the plant, equipment, and jobs that power the real economy," he said.

"Interest rates need to be reduced to increase investment and consumer purchasing in ways that sustain the economy at a higher level.

"Whatever merits it had in concept, the currency swap was too harshly applied by the CBN given the number of unbanked Nigerians. The policy shall be reviewed. In the meantime, my administration will treat both currencies as legal tender."

Source: The Cable



TROSS E D ⚡ S A

Any day, Anytime

Only with afrimoney



Dial
***161*2#**



NEWS AROUND AFRICA COMPILED BY GABRIEL BENJAMIN

Bola Ahmed Tinubu sworn in as Nigeria's new president



BREAKING NEWS | HAS BEEN SWORN IN AS NIGERIA'S 15TH VICE PRESIDENT AFTER HE TOOK THE OATH | 10:37

Nigeria's Bola Tinubu has been sworn in as president of Africa's most populous country at a period of unprecedented challenges, leaving some citizens hopeful for a better life and others skeptical that his government would perform better than the one he succeeded.

The former governor of Lagos, Nigeria's economic hub, Tinubu, 71, was sworn in as Nigeria's president in Abuja, the capital city, in the presence of thousands of Nigerians and several heads of governments. He succeeds President Muhammadu Buhari to lead a country that by 2050 is forecast to become the third most populous nation in the world, tied with the United States after India and China.

He has promised to build on Buhari's efforts to deliver democratic dividends to citizens in a country where deadly security crises, widespread poverty, and hunger have left many frustrated and angry. And with his election still being contested in court by opposition parties and among many young Nigerians, Tinubu has also pledged to reunite the country.

His manifesto of "renewed hope" prioritizes the creation of sufficient jobs and ramping up of local production of goods, investing in agriculture and public infrastructure, providing economic opportunities for the poorest and most vulnerable as well as creating better national security architecture to tackle all forms of insecurity.

Mountain of challenges

However, Tinubu's ambitious plans could be threatened in his first 100 days in office by a mountain of challenges, from insecurity to a fiscal crisis, poverty, and deepening public discontent with the state, said Mucahid Durmaz, Senior West Africa Analyst at risk intelligence company Verisk Maplecroft.

Some analysts also say the promises made by Tinubu and the hope they bring are reminiscent of when Buhari was first elected president in 2015 as a former military head of state. His priorities were to fight insecurity and build the economy but he ended up failing to meet the expectations of many.

"No Nigerian president has come into office with so much goodwill from citizens as President Buhari but no other president has squandered it as quickly as President Buhari did," said Dr Seun Kolade, a Nigerian development expert and associate professor at De Montfort University, in the U.K. "In terms of expectations and what is possible, this is a very mediocre eight years, to put it mildly."

In Nigeria's capital, Abuja, locals identified economic hardship and insecurity as the biggest challenges they struggled with during Buhari's eight-year rule. "People have really suffered (during) this period. People have been dying because of a lack of money, and I pray and hope we should not experience this kind of thing again under the new president," said Princess Taiwo, a fruit seller.

After Sunday Imoke lost his brother to a bombing in the Nyanya suburb in 2014, the trader joined millions to vote out then-president Goodluck Jonathan in the hope of a more secure country. But his hopes were dashed by the outgoing

president, he said.

"Buhari did not do well"

"Under Buhari, many people died. Buhari did not do well, he did not do anything and he did not have the fear of God," said Imoke.

Long before Buhari came to power in 2015, Nigeria's development has for many years slowed under the weight of poor governance and endemic corruption, making it difficult for citizens to benefit from the country's high earnings as Africa's top oil producer.

Though he has whittled down the power of Islamic extremists in the northeast and has built key infrastructure with the aid of foreign loans, many believe the quality of life and standard of living has reduced under Buhari. They cite widening insecurity in other parts of the country, growing poverty as well as an economy struggling with record unemployment, inflation at an 18-year high of 22.2%, and rising debt.

"When you combine the lack of opportunities in an environment that is disabling with a strong youth population that is frustrated, that is a ticking time bomb and that is the story of Nigeria over the past 50 years and Buhari has made it worse," said development expert Kolade.

Coming from the ruling All Progressives Congress, which has been dogged with allegations of corruption, Tinubu's emergence as Nigeria's president-elect has also drawn concerns about how transparent he would be in office.

Although he has often talked about assembling the best hands to lead Nigeria, the nation's problem has never been about the quality of public officials but about accountability, said Leena Koni Hoffmann-Atar, associate fellow in the Africa program at the Chatham House think tank.

Act quickly and decisively

"What we underestimate is that for state institutions to be strengthened, beyond the character and competence of the individuals, you have to have processes of accountability. And it remains to be seen whether accountability in state institutions will be strengthened under his administration," said Hoffmann-Atar.

Tinubu must also act quickly and decisively to tackle Nigeria's security crises with the country already in a critical situation, analysts said.

"There is already a very substantial loss of confidence in the government as a protector of citizens," said Nnamdi Obasi, senior adviser for Nigeria at the International Crisis Group. "If the new government fails to act very decisively, we would have more people seeking their own self-help and protection."

Among those now contemplating self-protection are villagers in north central Plateau state's Mangu district where gunmen killed more than 100 people in a late-night attack earlier in May. Yapatut Pokyes, one of the survivors, said all that they want from the incoming president is to help them stay alive.

"If he comes, he should give people the security they need," said Pokyes. "We no longer sleep because of fear; we don't know when the attackers will come back."

IMF bailout won't end economic woes - Akwo Addo

President Akwo Addo says the International Monetary Fund relief program will not lessen the economic woes the country is plunged into.

He believes the program will however help to restore confidence and reopen avenues that have been closed to the country in recent years.

Addressing the nation on Sunday, May 28, Akwo Addo acknowledged that the bailout will not immediately restore the ailing economy but its arrival is a positive step to put the country back on track.

"Access to the IMF facility will not spell the immediate end of the difficulties we are in presently, but the fact that we have been able to negotiate such a deal sends a positive message to our trading partners..."

Akwo-Addo said that the IMF deal will help to restore confidence in the Ghanaian economy, which has been battered by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

He said that the deal will also help to reopen avenues that have been closed to Ghana in recent years.

"It should lead to the restoration of confidence and the reopening of avenues that have been closed to us this



Ghana's president, Nana Addo ... - Copyright © africanews Jason DeCrow/AP

past year and a half," Akwo-Addo said adding that it will also "lead to the resumption of infrastructural projects that have stalled".

The President implored the minds of Ghanaians to help support and accelerate the successful implementation of the necessary reforms to make the deal effective.

Senegalese colonial-era soldier savours homecoming

Elegantly clad in an immaculate white gown and matching cap, Yoro Diao, 95, was wreathed in smiles after officiating at the baptism of his brand-new great-grandson.

The ceremony was ripe with emotion for the old man, one of a dwindling band of Senegalese soldiers who fought in France's colonial-era wars.

In the twilight of his life, he was delighted to be back home and among his extended family after years spent in bureaucratic limbo in France.

"It's a huge joy. I never would have thought I would be here at this age close to all my grandchildren," Diao said, beaming.

"When you go home, when you have your children around you, your grandchildren, what else do people need?"

The former soldier served in Indochina and Algeria as one of the "tirailleurs", a legendary unit of infantrymen that the French army recruited in Senegal and trained for attacking the front lines.

Diao had longed to return to Senegal for good, but under French regulations he had to spend half the year in France to continue receiving his 950-euro (\$1,020) monthly pension.

That requirement meant forking out a relative fortune in air fares -- and whatever was left would be eaten up by the higher costs of living in France.

But everything changed this year when the six-months rule was scrapped -- a move that coincided with a blockbuster movie about the tirailleurs starring Omar Sy, one of France's most popular stars.

Diao and nine other veterans have since returned home, without losing a centime of their coveted pension.

- Radiant -

Today, despite his great age, Diao exuded optimism and energy, frolicking from one room to another, voluble, radiant and apparently inexhaustible.

He arrived in Senegal two days before the birth of his great-grandson, Mohamed.

His new life in the quiet little rural town of Passy, where temperatures can reach 40 degrees Celsius (104

Fahrenheit), is a world removed from the gritty Paris suburb of Bondy, where he lived in a tiny 15-square-metre (160-square-feet) flat in a hostel.

Since his return, he says he has spent his time -- apart from ceremonies and tributes -- going for walks in his rice fields and corn fields, and enjoying a spot of sunbathing. Perched on a chair he talked at length about his life, his pride at joining one of Senegal's top regiments and his memories of serving as a nurse and stretcher-bearer in Indochina and Algeria in the 1950s -- as well as the strong camaraderie between the African contingent and their then French colonial masters.

But he regretted that he had had to keep on fighting after his service to be afforded the same rights as his French counterparts.

"They asked us for certificates which were impossible to obtain. And they knew it fully well," he said.

The veterans' victory is owed in large part to a decade-long effort by Aissata Seck, the granddaughter of a tirailleur and head of an NGO that nurtures their legacy.

She was shocked to discover their struggles and the "humiliating" experiences they had endured.

"Better late than never," said Samba Diao, Yoro's eldest son. His dream was to see the families of the tirailleurs likewise granted French nationality.

- Feast -

In the yard, the women, wrapped in brightly coloured wax-print dresses, were cutting vegetables and preparing rice, protected from the sun by an awning.

On the menu was cooked lamb, simmering in large pots heated over a wood-burning stove.

From time to time, a small cart trundled along the street adjoining the house, which the mayor has decided to name in Diao's honour.

Diao "is an example for us. We are very happy he is back," said Khalifa Ababacar Samb, 30, who had ventured over from a spot of shopping across the street.

Nestled among his loved ones, the elderly soldier was savouring the moment.

A group of griots -- musicians and storytellers renowned across West Africa -- twirled around him with abandon, singing his praises: a signal the feast could begin.

Sudan: Makeshift clinics call for volunteers, resources as fighting rages on

A makeshift clinic in a small school in the al-Rashidin district of Omdurman, a northern suburb of the Sudanese capital, doctor Mohammed al-Taher and two local men turned field nurses tend to the wounded and sick. With them are a few boxes of medicines collected by neighbours. A handful of volunteers across the capital are trying to offer the services of the closed hospitals with whatever resources they can find.

"The idea behind these emergency rooms (clinics) is to spread them geographically across all the neighbourhoods, meaning that each area will establish its own emergency clinic. The youths of each neighbourhood have the biggest role (in the operation of these clinics), along with the medical staff that's already present," Mohammed al-Taher, a Sudanese doctor, and volunteer explained.

In East Darfur, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), "some thirty newborn babies have died in a hospital since the fighting began, including six in the same week for lack of oxygen during power cuts".

"We are located on a frontline, most of the injuries are related to the war, like the treatment of wounds. The challenge we face is that most (governmental) clinics are closed and the private sector clinics aren't affordable for the majority. So people come here because they receive treatment for free," says Ashraf Nasreldine, a Sudanese volunteer.

On Monday, fighting raged again across the country where calls to arms are multiplying, on the last day of a week-long truce that has never been respected and that international mediators want to extend.

Residents of Khartoum told AFP that fighting was taking place in the northern suburbs and that artillery fire was being heard in the south of the capital, a city of over five million inhabitants.

Since the beginning of the truce on May 22, some people have managed to get out quickly to buy food and drink, for twice as much as before the war.

But thousands of families are still holed up in their homes, many without running water or electricity, for fear of stray bullets.

The situation is worse in Darfur, a vast region of western

Sudan bordering Chad, already ravaged by war in the 2000s, according to Toby Harward, an official of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

- Newborn babies dead in hospital -

"Sporadic fighting between soldiers and paramilitaries over the past few days in El-Facher, North Darfur, right up to the Abou Chouk IDP camp, has resulted in civilian casualties," he says.

Houses have been looted and tens of thousands of people have been displaced again by the fighting, which is "a flagrant violation of the ceasefire and prevents the distribution of humanitarian aid", he added.

According to the UN, 25 million of Sudan's 45 million people are now dependent on humanitarian aid in one of the world's poorest countries.

Last Monday, the army of General Abdel Fattah al-Burhane, Sudan's de facto ruler, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) of General Mohamed Hamdane Daglo, his deputy and now rival, pledged to cease air raids, artillery fire and street fighting to allow civilians to leave and humanitarian aid to be delivered.

But on the seventh day of the truce, which expires at 19:45 GMT, the few shipments of food and medicines that have reached a few hospitals in Khartoum or in areas spared by the fighting are only a drop in the ocean compared with the needs.

"(We urge) Anyone who has extra medicine at home to bring it to us or to any emergency room (clinic) in their neighbourhood, as most neighbourhoods have operational emergency rooms (clinics). We are in need of all kinds of medicine, doctors and any volunteers who can help our clinic in the al-Rashidin neighbourhood," Maha Mohammed, a Sudanese volunteer said.

Since the start of the war on April 15, more than 1,800 people have been killed, according to the NGO ACLED, which specializes in collecting information in conflict zones, including 18 humanitarians. More than a million others have been forced to move elsewhere in Sudan, and almost 350,000 outside the country, according to the UN.

Credit: Rédaction africanews with AP

Welcome to Ecobank XpressPoint



Visit any of our agent locations to:

1. Deposit Cash
2. Make Withdrawals
3. Transfer Funds
4. Open an Xpress Account
5. Pay Bills
6. Buy Airtime

#EasyBanking
#NoYagba



For all our Xpress Services



Ecobank
The Pan African Bank



**REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE
SIERRA LEONE ROADS AUTHORITY**

**REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE
SIERRA LEONE ROADS AUTHORITY**



**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTANCY SERVICES)**

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTANCY SERVICES)**

**MANO RIVER UNION
ROAD DEVELOPMENT &
TRANSPORT
FACILITATION
PROGRAMME
(MRU/RD/TFP) PHASE III**

**HIV/AIDS, MALARIA, EBOLA, COVID-19 & GENDER
SENSITIZATION
AWARENESS CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

Sector: Transport

**Financing Agreement Reference: ADF Grant No:
2100155041471**

Project ID No.: P-Z1-DB0-143

The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has received funds from the African Development Bank (AfDB) towards the cost of the Upgrading of the Mano River Union Road Development & Transport Facilitation Programme (MRU/RD/TFP) Phase III: Upgrading of Kailahun – Koindu – Guinea - Liberia border Roads Lot I: Kailahun – Buedu 25Km and intends to apply part of the proceeds for payments under the contract for the provision of HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Ebola, COVID-19 & Gender Sensitization Awareness Consultancy Services.

The service will involve the design and implementation of communication and public awareness programs for the prevention and management of HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Ebola, COVID-19 & Gender Sensitization Awareness within the project area throughout the duration of the project. The consultancy is expected to incorporate an awareness campaign strategy that will, motivate and educate Contractor and Consultant Personnel and the local communities and authorities about the need to reduce the risk of (transmission) of HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Ebola, COVID-19 & Gender Sensitization Awareness and to promote early diagnosis, counselling as well as to assist affected individuals to access treatment to recover from the associated diseases listed. The Project components include: (i) Upgrading of Climate Resilience Road and Bridge including new studies; (ii) Integrated Support; (iii) Transport and Trade Facilitation; and (iv) Programme Management. The Project will be implemented for 24 months plus 12 months for defects liability period.

The HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Ebola, COVID-19 & Gender Sensitization Awareness Consultancy Services shall be carried out intermittently over the entire twenty-four (24) months construction period. The assignment has been divided into seven stages: (i) **Inception Report & Baseline Study** (ii) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign **No.1** (iii) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign **No.2** (iv) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign **No.3** (v) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign **No.4** (vi) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign **No.5** (vii) Final Report/ Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign **No.6**. Each phase shall be carried out for a period of eight (8) weeks intermittently along the two (2) road corridors (Kailahun – Buedu) & (Koindu - Yenga i.e., Makona River axis).

Campaign **No.3** (v) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign **No.4** (vi) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign **No.5** and (vii) Final Report/ Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign **No.6**. Each phase shall be carried out for a period of eight (8) weeks intermittently along the two (2) road corridors (Kailahun – Buedu) & (Koindu - Yenga i.e., Makona River axis).

The Sierra Leone Roads Authority now invites eligible local consultants (firms) to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested consultants **must** provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (i) information detailing the company's existence and areas of expertise (ii) list of similar assignments and experience in similar conditions, (iii) list of overall permanent and temporary staff in fields related to the assignment (iv) evidence of past performance (v) any other relevant information. Consultants may constitute joint-ventures to enhance their chances of qualification.

Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short-list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank's "**Procurement Policy and Methodology for Bank Group Funded Operations**" (**BPM**), dated **October 2015**", which is available on the Bank's website at <http://www.afdb.org>. The MPW is under no obligation to shortlist any consultant who expresses interest.

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM GMT.

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by 30th June 2023 at 13:00 GMT and mention "Expression of Interest for HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Ebola, COVID-19 & Gender Sensitization Awareness Consultancy Services for the Mano River Union Road Development & Transport Facilitation Programme (MRU/RD/TFP) Phase III: Upgrading of Regional Integrated Roads Project In Sierra Leone and the Construction of Bridge over Makona River". **Interested consultants have the option to submit their EOIs in PDF format by email.**

Mano River Union Road Development & Transport Facilitation Programme
Attn: Ing. Amara Kanneh, Director General
Sierra Leone Roads Authority
PMB 1324 Kissy
Freetown,
Sierra Leone
Telephone: +
Email: saloneroads@gmail.com and lavallej@yahoo.com

Sector: Transport

Financing Agreement Reference: ADF Loan No:

Project ID No.: P-Z1-DB0-

The Government of Sierra Leone has received funds from the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group, towards the cost of the Upgrading of the Mano River Union Road Development & Transport Facilitation Programme (MRU/RD/TFP) Phase III: Upgrading of Kailahun – Koindu – Guinea – Liberia Border Roads Lot I: Kailahun – Buedu and the Construction of the 276m Bridge over Makona River and intends to apply part of the proceeds for payments under the contract for the provision of Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) consultancy services.

The service will be characterized by firstly to carry out an assessment of the status and operation of the Monitoring and Evaluation and Management Information Systems Department at the Sierra Leone Roads Authority to determine their standard operating procedures. The M&E Department will facilitate the continuation of periodic monitoring and evaluation of activities that would be implemented under the SLRA projects. The Project components include: (i) Upgrading of Climate Resilience Road and Bridge including new studies; (ii) Integrated Support; (iii) Transport and Trade Facilitation; and (iv) Programme Management. The Project will be implemented for 24 months plus 12 months for defects liability period.

The services included under this Consultancy will be for Monitoring & Evaluation Services. The services under this assignment will include by not be limited to: (i) assessing the impact of the ongoing Upgrading of Regional Integrated Roads in Sierra Leone; Kailahun – Koindu – Guinea – Liberia Border Roads Lot I Kailahun – Buedu 25Km and the Construction of 276m Bridge over Makona River at Yenga, and establish the baseline situation/values for MRU/RD/TFP Phase III for the impact indicators of the project such as: traffic volumes, travel time saved, vehicle operating costs, transport costs, rural access index, awareness of road safety and road accidents, among others; (ii) monitor the indicators during project implementation (construction period) and (iii) undertake impact assessment at the end of the project to evaluate the impact of the project on the intended beneficiaries with reference to the identified baseline indicators.

The Monitoring & Evaluation Services shall be carried out intermittently over the entire twenty-four (24) months construction period. The Services will be carried out in four

MONITORING & EVALUATION SERVICES

(4) phases: Phase I: Assessment of M&E Structure and operations at the Sierra Leone Roads Authority (SLRA), and Definition of Survey Methodology, Baseline Survey & Evaluation and Update of the Kailahun – Buedu Road Project 25Km, Phase II: Establishment of Indicators Values for MRU Phase III Mid Term Review (these activities will be done concurrently); Phase III: Capacity Building and M & E Support; Phase IV: Carrying-out Impact Assessment & Endline Survey (Project Completion and Post-Construction Surveys).

The SLRA now invites eligible consultants (firms) to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested consultants **must** provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (i) information detailing the company's existence and areas of expertise (ii) list of similar assignments and experience in similar conditions, (iii) list of overall permanent and temporary staff in fields related to the assignment (iv) evidence of past performance (v) any other relevant information. Consultants may constitute joint-ventures to enhance their chances of qualification.

Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short-list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank's "**Procurement Policy and Methodology for Bank Group Funded Operations**" (**BPM**), dated **October 2015**", which is available on the Bank's website at <http://www.afdb.org>. The SLRA is under no obligation to shortlist any consultant who expresses interest.

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM Monrovia Time.

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by 20th June 2023 at 14:00 GMT and mention "Expression of Interest for Monitoring & Evaluation Services for the Mano River Union Road Development & Transport Facilitation Programme (MRU/RD/TFP) Phase III: Upgrading of Regional Integrated Roads Project in Sierra Leone". **Interested consultants have the option to submit their EOIs in PDF format by email.**

Mano River Union Road Development & Transport Facilitation Programme
Attn: Ing. Amara Kanneh, Director General
Sierra Leone Roads Authority
PMB 1324 Kissy
Freetown,
Sierra Leone
Telephone: +
Email: saloneroads@gmail.com and lavallej@yahoo.com

UNION TRUST BANK LTD

- ◆ No card, Just your Mobile Phone.
- ◆ Send money to any Mobile Number.
- ◆ One-Time password for Cash-out.
- ◆ 24/7 Access

ATM Cardless Transaction

Cardless Withdrawal

Job Detail

Organization: Sierra Leone Lands Administration Project (SLLAP), Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning.

Title: GIS Survey, Land Surveying, Country Planning, Procurement, Financial Management, Housing, Social Works/Rural Development, and ICT Interns.

Posted: 2023-05-30

Application Deadline: June 15, 2023.

Position Description: Internship

Temporary Position: – 12 months (not renewable)

Location: Youyi Building, Freetown, Ministry of Lands Housing and Country Planning.

BACKGROUND

The Government of Sierra Leone with support from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank has commenced the implementation of the Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP). SLLAP is financed through a US\$ 41.1 million grant. The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to establish as efficient and accessible land administration system.

The project will finance the implementation of land administration reforms as outlined in the government's National Land Policy of 2015 and the Customary Land Rights and National Land Commission Acts 2022. Under component 1, the project will support institutional reforms by financing the establishment of a National Land Commission as well as District Land Commissions. The project will finance the required buildings, equipment, operational support and capacity building.

Further, the project will support legal land sector reforms. Component 2 will finance the establishment of a digital Land Management Information System (LMIS), including the design of the system and ICT infrastructure and digitization of paper-based land records. Component 3 will finance the demarcation and recording of customary land rights in rural areas and support the land title transaction system in the Western Area including Freetown. To facilitate the surveying work, the project will also finance a modern geodetic network. Component 4 will finance all project management-related aspects and Component 5 is a Contingency Emergency Response Component.

In August 2022, MLHCP commissioned an assessment to determine training needs and develop training requirements for the land sector. The focus of the study was to identify capacity-building gaps and needs to support and sustain SLLAP implementation. National validation of the assessment and training requirement report was undertaken in November 2022.

Four categories of training requirements were identified in the report. The first category (A) relates to the in-country training program while the second category (B) relates to on-the-job and certified professional training. Category C relates to the internship program and Category D relates to tertiary education training offered overseas and benchmarking visits by senior staff of MLHCP, NLC, and DLC. The total number of trainees under Category A is 1,118 while those under Category B, are 134. Under Category C, the total number of interns to benefit from SLLAP are 120 while the total number of beneficiaries under Category D is 36 including 6 Master's Degree candidates in specializations aligned to land administration. All training activities are scheduled to commence after 1st July 2023 to allow sufficient time to procure the necessary training equipment, computers, software, and other work tools.

To build a pool of human resources that can be utilized to sustain the land administration system in the country. SLLAP is proposing to recruit a total of 20 interns per autumn over a period of six years. Interns will be attached to SLLAP and the various departments of MLHCP. Interns are expected to acquire relevant work experience and technical skills in various disciplines across the land sector.

Therefore, the Sierra Leone Lands Administration Project (SLLAP) wants to recruit the first set of interns into various departments with the Ministry to support the implementation of the Project Development Objectives for a period of One Year (1yr) beginning in the month of July 2023. The following areas had been identified to recruit interns to fill the vacancies.

INTERNSHIP VACANCIES:

Training	Ref. No.	Department/ Placement	No. of Interns	Interns Qualification
GIS & Land Survey	SLLAP/001	MLHCP	6	Degree/National Diploma/Certificate: Geomatics, Cartography, Geographic Information Science, Geo-Information Science, Technology, Engineering other related discipline;
Procurement	SLLAP/002	PCCU/ Procurement Unit	2	Degree/National Diploma in Procurement, Business Administration, Public Administration, or any relevant subject.
Financial Management	SLLAP/003	PCU/ FM Unit	1	Degree/National Diploma: Accounting, Financial Management, Cost & Management Accounting, Public Finance
Urban Planning/ Housing	SLLAP/004	MLHCP/ Housing Directorate	3	Degree/National Diploma: Geomatics, Cartography, Geographic Information Science, Geo -Information Science and Technology;
Safeguards: Social, Environment and M&E	SLLAP/005	PCU/ Safeguards Unit	4	Degree/National Diploma: Social Sciences, Rural Development, and Development Studies.
ICT	SLLAP/006	MLHCP/ICT	1	Degree/National Diploma/Certificate: ICT, Soft and Hard Ware, Networking.
Admin: HR & Records Management	SLLAP/007	PCU/ADM	3	Degree/National Diploma: Social Sciences, Rural Development and Development Studies.

Who are we looking for:

It goes without saying you'll be a top performer and a collaborative thinker. You'll be someone who is focused, ready to learn, hardworking, and most importantly, passionate about working in a fun, fast-paced environment that is constantly evolving. We're also looking for an intern with:

- § Degree qualified or currently completing further study in the areas outlined above or a related field.
- § Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- § Sound analytical and problem-solving skills with high attention to detail.
- § Ability to work independently with minimal supervision and collaboratively as part of a dynamic team.
- § Strong organizational skills including skills in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Internet browsing).
- § Ability to work to tight deadlines.
- § Monitor engagement and inquiries on specific objectives and roles and responsibilities.
- § Keep up-to-date with your mentors and heads of departments/units.
- § Have completed and/or currently completing an HND certificate/degree.

These roles will give you great experiences in the world of Land Administration and the Public Sector environment. You will report directly to the Training Coordinator through the heads of departments/units in the Sierra Leone Lands Administration Project in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning.

Apply by June 30 and while we look at your application, get to know us through our various social media channels! Female candidates are highly encouraged to apply for these roles. Send your applications to joseph.kpakiwa@gmail.com and jayansumana@gmail.com

SWIAG Account

- Savings Account targeted at student at tertiary levels from 18 years and above
- Sum saved can be used to pay exam fees, purchase reading materials or start small scale businesses
- Free SMS alert, Internet banking network of your choice
- Customer has the authority to order his/her priority



CALL 2527 FROM ORANGE II 079 925 921 FROM OTHER NETWORKS



rokelsl@rokelbank.sl

Bank of Choice RC Bank the Caring Bank!

Bake some festive treats this Christmas!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Ready, Steady, Bake!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

"The fondest memories are made when gathered around the table."

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Spaghetti Jollof. You can use Padi items to cook it and it will taste delicious, promise!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

ARE YOU

TEAM KETCHUP OR TEAM MAYO

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Enriched with / Enrichi Vitamin A & D

Proudly made in Sierra Leone

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Padi, sharing is caring

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Mama Mia!

Padi Spaghetti, strands of deliciousness!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Daddy you are my best Padi!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Spread the love!

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

I followed my heart and it led me to the kitchen.

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen

Truly Natural & Healthy

Good Morning Padi Premium Black Tea

Special Ceylon Blend

Padi
You Padi the Kitchen



**CALL FOR PRINCIPAL RECIPIENTS
 FOR THE GLOBAL FUND GRANT CYCLE 7 (GC 7)
 IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD: FROM JULY 1, 2024 TO JUNE 30TH 2027**

Background:

In December 2022, the Global Fund (GF) informed the Country Coordinating Mechanism Sierra Leone (CCM SL) of the Country allocation of US \$ 126,444,674 for HIV, Tuberculosis (TB), Malaria (M) and Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health (RSSH) programs covering the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027.

In addition, Sierra Leone is qualified for other opportunities for funding from The Global Fund beyond the allocation amount including the Matching Fund of US\$9,000,000 for RSSH Innovation and US\$800,000 for scaling up programs to remove human rights and gender related barriers

CCM SL will submit funding applications to the Global Fund and will oversee grants implementation on behalf of the country. As part of this role, the CCM nominates organizations to implement the programs Global Fund support through grants. These organizations are known as Principal Recipients (PRs).

This funding available through GF can be received by one or more PRs to implement grant activities including disbursement of funds to other organizations, who serve as sub-recipients (SRs) or sub-sub-recipients (SSRs) or Service Providers (SPs) in line with Grant Agreements with The Global Fund. The purpose of this, is for financing to effectively cascade to smaller organizations, and for programs to be carried out to reach those populations or groups which may not be otherwise easily reached by government entities.

The primary responsibility of a PR is to ensure positive impact in the fight against HIV, TB, Malaria and the building of systems for health by establishing/maintaining systems in place. The PR is expected to:

- Receive and manage the funds from GF
- Implement the program and manage grant funds prudently to effectively achieve goals and objectives of the proposal
- Enter into a Grant Agreement with each SR with terms and conditions that will enable the PR to meet the requirements of the Grant Agreement signed between the Global Fund and the PR
- Make efficient and effective arrangements for contracting and disbursing funds to SRs and put in place a system to manage the SRs, including the on-going monitoring, evaluation and supervision of sub-recipients.
- Arrange for Procurement and Supply Chain management in compliance with applicable laws of Sierra Leone and GF policies
- Monitor, evaluate and report on the progress made on program objectives to GF and the CCM and request for additional disbursement of funds
- Support CCM SL processes by facilitating communication, interaction and synergies among implementing partners

Implementation Arrangement:

The Global Fund recognizes that comprehensive national programs that are implemented through a multi-sectorial approach (e.g. involving government, non-governmental organizations and In-Country Partners) will increase opportunities to:

- Map high or low burden districts of HIV/TB and Malaria
- Scale-up existing service delivery to a broader range of population groups and high burden districts of HIV/TB and Malaria;
- Raise awareness of service availability, including primary prevention and treatment services at the community levels;
- Move quickly towards the provision of access to prevention, treatment, care, and support to all persons in need, including key populations and people who may not already be included in national disease programming;
- Contribute to sustainability of programmatic interventions over the longer term, through the increased capacity that comes from a broader range of implementing partners.

The CCM SL will take into consideration lessons learnt from Ebola and the COVID-19 epidemics, which shows that there is urgent need to strengthen the Health system through multi-sector engagement by the Ministry of Health and Sanitation.

Principal Recipient (PR) - 1:

A 'PR-1' will be responsible to implement the following interventions under Malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis and RSSH

- Planning, Policy and Monitoring of the GC7 Grant Implementation with respect to and not limited to Testing, Treatment and Prevention in the fight against HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria.
- Ensure implementation of GC7 Interventions in District Hospitals, PHUs, Clinics and Private Hospitals and Schools,
- Responsible for Procurement and Supply Management (PSM) & Last Mile Distribution of medicines and health products,.
- Responsible for Laboratory Services, Health Transportation, Ambulance Services and referral systems
- Ensure Implementation of Health workforce and CHWs interventions
- Implementation of Health Management Information System (HMIS).
- Implementation of Supervisions of National Health Programs, Directorates and DHMTs
- Selection of SPs and SRs/SSRs

Principal Recipient (PR) - 2:

A PR-2 will implement the following interventions under Malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS, and RSSH

- HIV, TB and Malaria programs targeting key and vulnerable population
- HIV and TB active case findings
- Prevention, care services, KPs condom promotion and distribution
- Nutritional Support
- Human Rights & Gender based Prevention activities
- Mitigate barrier to services for KPs
- Legal Services to KPs
- Demand creation for uptake of TB, Malaria and HIV testing Services
- Strengthening Community Systems and support to CHWs
- Strengthening Behavioral Change Platforms at community level
- Behavioral Change Community and Mass media outreach (Print and Electronic)
- Community Led Monitoring and Advocacy at community and National Level.
- Monitoring and Capacity building of CBOs and SRs
- Selection of SPs and SRs/SSRs

Before grant signing, the Global Fund through its Local Fund Agent (LFA), will assess the proposed grant implementation arrangements, the implementers' capacity and compliance with applicable Global Fund

minimum standards, track record and the effectiveness of internal controls and systems. This assessment may include the review of the implementer's budget, work plans, and other grant related documents. More information on GF PR's capacity assessment is available here (https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/12961/lfa_capacity-assessment_guidelines_en.pdf).

PR Selection Criteria and Evaluation Marks:

1. Financial Management and Systems (20%)

Controls and System (10%)

- Accounting and Financial Reporting including Integrated financial management systems;
- Systems in place to mitigate and manage financial fraud, corruption and theft.
- Safeguards GF or other donor funds and assets
- Provide space for acceptable auditing arrangements and provide certified financial audited account.

Proven experience (10%)

- Provide robust financial management and delivery track records;
- Capacity to disburse funds to SRs and suppliers in a timely, transparent and accountable manner;
- Capacity to work and collaborate with District Health Management Teams (DHMT), partners and other donors
- Capacity to manage and improve financial management of Civil Society SRs

2. Governance and Leadership (20%)

Legal status and organizational structure (10%)

- Legal status in Sierra Leone to enter into the grant agreement with the GF (Certificate of registration);
- Effective organizational leadership, management, transparent decision making and accountability systems;
- Internal controls, risk identification, mitigation, and implementation of controls;
- Adequate infrastructure and information systems to support proposal implementation, including the monitoring of performance of SRs and outsourced entities in a timely and accountable manner;
- Adequate Human Resource policies and procedures and clear demonstration on timely recruitment and maintaining qualified staff for effective grant implementation.

Management (10%)

- Adequate human resource capacity including health expertise in one or all areas (Malaria, TB, HIV and RSSH) and cross-functional expertise (finance, procurement, legal, Monitoring & Evaluation);
- Track record for achieving timely implementation and program results in Sierra Leone or in similar complexity environment in region.
- Existing PRs, current grant performance and mitigating measure to be submitted.
- Provide mechanisms to effectively interact with the CCM, national institutions, organizations, directorates, and programs relevant to GF Grants.
- Have minimum overhead costs on regional support to the Country Office in Sierra Leone.
- Experience working /managing GF grants in Sierra Leone or the Region.
- Mechanisms and systems to effectively respond to any issues arising during the grant implementation e.g. those related to performance or management actions linked to audits

3. Procurement and Supply Management Systems (20%)

- System to ensure timely procurement and distribute of health products in accordance with GF procurement policies. See GF Website: www.theglobalfund.org. If the service to be outsourced, provide clear presentation on how the outsourcing would be done and manage.
- Effective procurement procedures, manual and system for timely and transparent procurement of products and services.
- Provide available Procurement Plan for any current program as a reference document.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation arrangements (20%)

- Collect and record programmatic data with appropriate quality control measures.
- Mechanism for use of national reporting systems
- Support the preparation of regular reliable programmatic reports.
- Make data available for the purpose of evaluations and other studies.

KEY DATES, TIMELINES AND APPLICATION METHOD

Call Posted: Friday 26th May 2023 @ 12 mid-day Sierra Leone Time

Call Closed: Monday 12th June 2023 @ 4pm Sierra Leone Time

Apply to: ccmsierraleonesecretariat@yahoo.com

Documents Required with Application:

- Letter of Expression of Interest (EOI)
- Organizational profile
- Past experience implementing Global Fund Grants or any other donors with similar volume of funds.
- Indicate Interested Intervention areas (HIV, TB, Malaria or RSSH) and Location (s)
- Performance in terms of successes and challenges in the implementation of Malaria

TB and HIV in Sierra Leone or any other African Countries.

Note:

- The Global Fund provides various guidelines for successful implementation of the grants such as:
 - 2023-2028 Global Fund Strategy
 - Applicant Handbook
 - Global Fund Information Notes on: HIV; TB; Malaria; Building Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health
 - Global Fund Modular Framework Handbook
 - Global Fund Technical Briefs
 - Guidelines for Grant Budgeting
 - Review Criteria of the Technical Review Panel
 - TRP Observations on the 2020-2022 Allocation Period
 - Operational Policy Note on the Design and Review of Funding Requests
 - Code of Conduct for Recipients of Global Fund Resources
 - Fiduciary Arrangements for Grant Recipients
 - Grant Regulations
 - Guide to Global Fund Policies on Procurement and Supply Management of Health Products
 - Guidelines on Implementers of Global Fund Grants
 - Standard Terms and Conditions for Grants
 - Operational Policy Manual

Further documentation on how GF funds are managed by PR is available online on Global Fund website <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/funding-model/implementation/>

NOTE: This advert can also be acquired by visiting the website of the Country Coordinating Mechanism Sierra Leone at www.ccmsierraleone.org

SUCCESS TO CCM SIERRALEONE IS SUCCESS TO ALL



Sierra Leone Wrestler qualifies for Africa Beach Games 2023

Sierra Leone's wrestler, Mamudu Mohamed Marah, has secured qualification to the African Beach Games in Tunisia.

Marah secured a place in this year's Games and would be competing in the 70 kg fight after his outstanding performance at the just concluded African Wrestling Championship in Tunisia.

The Sierra Leonean wrestler ended up 4th out of 19 participants after losing his semifinal fight against Ya Mouhamed Ndong of Senegal and his bronze medals fight to Gambia's Gibril Chow in the African Beach Wrestling Qualifications in Hammamet, Tunisia which automatically qualifies him for the African Beach Games to be held in Hammamet, Tunisia from 24 to 30 June 2023.

Confirming the wrestler qualification for the World Beach Games, Coordinator and International Relations Slaheddine Boudhina stated: "Following the closing of the African Wrestling Championships, qualifying for the African Beach Games Hammamet 2023, we would like to inform you that your NOC is qualified for the Beach Wrestling Tournament of the African Beach Games which will take place on 28 and 29 June 2023. Please note that your NOC has been selected by the UWW in the following category Men 70Kg."

Marah's qualification was well received by the President of the Sierra Leone Wrestling Association, Prince Sualley who said he was



happy with the outcome of his wrestling performance.

"It is great news for Sierra Leone and we now have two associations; beach volleyball and wrestling who would be competing in the African Beach Games for a place in the 2nd edition of the ANOC World Beach Games in Bali."

"I am delighted to see my wrestler making it and hope he will be ready to face the challenge at the African Games for a place in Bali," the Wrestling Association president who also doubles as the National Olympic Committee Association president said.

Gymnastics Federation eyes 2028 Olympic Games success



training programme which is designed for 50 children between the ages of 10 to 15 years from different schools will be the foundation of her Association going for glory in 2028 Olympic Games.

"I told the President of the NOC-SLE that we will not be participating in the next Olympic Games in Paris 2024, but we will be in the Olympic Games in 2028 and we will not only be participating but competing for medals," she said, and thanked the National

President of the Sierra Leone Gymnastics Federation (SLGF) Hannah Williams is already setting her sight on the 2028 Olympic Games not only as participant but competing for medals against bigger nations.

Madam Williams believes her sport can achieve that success thanks to the ongoing Development of National Sports System (DNSS) program Phase 1 which is sponsored and supported by the Olympic Solidarity through the Federation of International Gymnastics (FIG) in collaboration with the National Olympic

Committee/Commonwealth Games Association of Sierra Leone (NOC/CGA-SLE). The SLGF president believes the week-long

Olympic Committee for making sure that they have the DNSS through FIG with support from the Olympic Solidarity.

With the program running till 1st June 2023, at the Hill Valley Hotel in Freetown, the Sierra Leone Gymnastics Federation President said the first phase is introducing the kids to the sport and training them in basic skills. With the second and third phases coming in July and August this year, they are expected to learn a lot, especially with some of the current gymnasts who are assisting the expert to train them.

Meanwhile, SLGF President confirmed that the second phase will be staged in the Southern Region and will cover both the South and East, while the other will cover the

Taekwondo World Championships: Sierra Leone Edward Holland loses to Brazil Souza

Sierra Leone's Edward Holland has suffered defeat to Brazilian opponent Joao Victor Souza Diniz Diniz in the Men -68kg match at the 26th edition of World Taekwondo Championships in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The two fighters engaged each other on Monday May 29 in Court 4, Round 64 of match 408 and it was the Brazilian who Won by final score PTF-the match is won by a contestant on points after three rounds.

With the ongoing championship been held at the Baku Crystal Hall, a total of 68 men and 57 women competed in the opening ceremony out of the expected 949 taekwondo fighters from 145 countries.

Meanwhile, the World Taekwondo General Assembly was convened exactly 50 years on from its founding meeting to discuss key matters and reaffirm unity among the Taekwondo family.

The General Assembly welcomed Namibia as its 213th Member National Association (MNA) reflecting the significant global growth of Taekwondo from just 17 MNAs when the International Federation was founded 50 years ago.

Addressing delegates, World Taekwondo President Choue said: "It is my great privilege to open the 36th General Assembly on the same date as the founding of World Taekwondo half a century ago. We have come a long way in the past 50 years. We are strongly united as a family, and we have stayed together no matter what kind of challenges we faced. You are my family. This is how I have been feeling all these years and I treasure the moments we have together. Thank you for your friendship and solidarity. Our harmony and togetherness are the foundation of our success. Your solidarity and

North-East and the North-West which will capture all the regions when the programme ends.

In her part, TaTiana LavRenchuk from the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG), who happens to be the IOC's representative and the training facilitator, said she is here to help the Sierra Leone Gymnastics Federation to start the new sports which is the Rhythmic gymnastics.

Rhythmic gymnastics is an Olympic sport in which athletes compete with 5 different apparatuses—hoops, ribbons, balls, ropes, and clubs—as well as in a floor routine. Whether you have dreams of bringing home the gold medal or are simply interested in trying something new, rhythmic gymnastics is a fun and challenging sport that allows you to be both creative and innovative.

"We are starting from scratch wherein they don't know anything about gymnastics so we are going to start from there. I've already eyed a few talented ones who are very interested in



dedication will be the basis for another 50 amazing years of World Taekwondo."

In a special congratulatory message for World Taekwondo's 50th anniversary, IOC President Thomas Bach said: "As you celebrate this great milestone you can look back on 50 years of great progress. Starting with only 17 MNAs 50 years ago you made your Olympic debut at the Olympic Games Sydney 2000. Since then you have not stopped growing and developing your sport. In this context, I would like to in particular highlight the outstanding achievements accomplished under the leadership of your great President Choue. He has made Taekwondo one of the fastest, if not the fastest, growing sports in the world which is now a truly global sport. As your 213 member associations today underline in an impressive way, Taekwondo now enjoys worldwide appeal. In this way you are bringing together people all over the world in peaceful competition, thereby promoting our shared Olympic values."

During the General Assembly there were a number of presentations and reports including the 2022-2023 Operation and Finance Reports, the qualification process for the Olympic Games LA 2028, and the advancement of Virtual Taekwondo which will feature as the only combat sport in the IOC's Olympic Esports Week.

The next General Assembly will be held in Chuncheon in Korea on the occasion of the 2024 World Taekwondo Junior Championships.

the sport. I believe gymnastics starts from discipline, no discipline no achievement. The first important thing in the basic training is to get the kids interested in the sports because you can't force them to like the sport so we want them to like the sports and they will be interested in the training," the Head Coach for the South Africa Gymnastic stated.

She also revealed that this is the first time she is coming to Sierra Leone and she will be here for all three phases, calling on the government to support the Sierra Leone Gymnastics Federation to develop the sport in the Country.

Joanita Abdulai, a 12-year-old Junior Secondary School pupil of the Freetown Secondary School for Girls expressed her happiness to be part of the first set of kids that participated in the training.

She said: "I love this sport and I hope to be part of the second and third phases of the training because I want to follow this sport and represent Sierra Leone in future."