



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

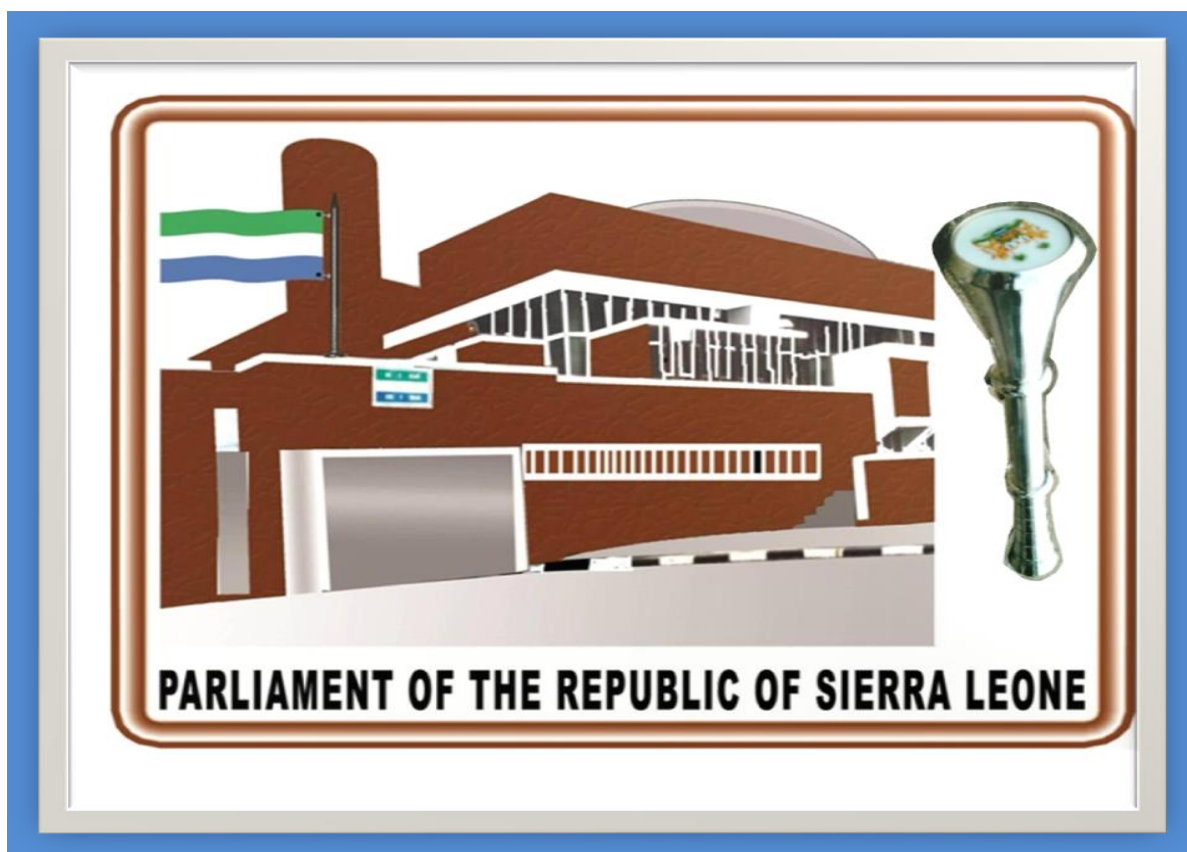
[HANSARD]

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT

FIRST SESSION –FIRST MEETING

THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER, 2023

SESSION – 2023/2024



OAU DRIVE, TOWER HILL, FREETOWN

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[HANSARD]

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First Meeting of the First Session of the Sixth Parliament
of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held Thursday, 14th December, 2023.

CONTENTS

I. PRAYERS

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER, 2023.

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

IV. LAYING OF PAPER

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

PETROLEUM LICENSE AGREEMENT FOR THE EXPLORATION DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION OF G-BLOCKS 53, 54, 55, 71 AND 73 BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND F.A. OIL LIMITED DATED 4TH DECEMBER, 2023.

V. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

[A] AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND SUCFIN AGRICULTURAL COMPANY [SL]. LTD. – A LIABILITY COMPANY ESTABLISHED IN SIERRA LEONE.

VI. BILL

THE APPROPRIATION ACT 2024

COMMITTEE ON SUPPLY – THE MINISTER OF FINANCE



THE

CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Official Hansard Report of the Proceedings of the House

FIRST SESSION – FIRST MEETING OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC

Thursday, 14th December, 2023.

I. PRAYERS

[The Table Clerk, Mrs Bintu Weston, Read the Prayers]

[The House met at 10:10a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown]

[The Deputy Speaker, Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas in the Chair]

The House was called to Order

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, I want to amend the Order Paper. But before that, I also want to suspend a provision in the Standing Orders so that we can accommodate other items on the Order Paper based on the provisions in the Standing Orders.

Mr Speaker, I beg to amend two items on the Order Paper; first I will correct the **OP/6/1/26**
[Interrupted]

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Leader, sorry Sir. Mr Speaker, observation.

THE SPEAKER: Proceed.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, I think we need to do things one after the other because, I have a comment to make in respect of the 1st item. After the relevant **SO** is suspended, you have to put the question and then it is carried; I have a comment to make on that. Upon successful suspension of the relevant SOs, the Leader can now come.

THE SPEAKER: It is alright. Chief Whip, have you got anything to say?

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, I wanted to say something but I think you were in the Well on time, that was why I did not suspend **SO** 5 [2].

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: No, that is not the rule; in fact...

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Chief Whip, I do not think my being in the Well matters really, as far as the **S.O** is concerned.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker if you say so, then I move that we suspend **SO** 5 [2] so that the business of the House may commence.

Suspension of S. O. 5[2]

THE SPEAKER: I can see Members are already in Christmas mood

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: On that note Mr Speaker, for your information, I am pleased to inform you that in this 6th Parliament, there has been some remarkable improvement of which, I would not want this House to deviate from henceforth. If you check the Records of Votes and Proceedings for the past six Sittings, **S.O** 5[2] has never been suspended because of compliance of Parliament commencing at 10:00 O'clock. We have always got a quorum; sometimes we even got more than the quorum [37], which is commendable. So in as much as we are suspending the S.O today, which serves as a break of that chain, I am encouraging Members to stop it today; let us carry on with the tradition we have started for the past 5 or 6 Sittings. At least we have been able to make a quorum, so let us go in line with that because we are the Law Makers. And as Mr

5

Speaker said the last, when you get time wrong, in every aspect of life you will get everything wrong. Even the world was created based on time; '*God created the world in six days and on the seventh day he rested*'; He used time to tailor His activities in creation.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Speaker in that light, I want to also remind the Honourable Member that in respect of the Standing Orders 5 [2], we do not suspend **S.O** 5[2] after 10 o'clock. The fact that we are starting at 10am, we should also know that the Standing Orders says we should end at 3pm. So I also encourage the Honourable Members that at 3pm we should respect the Standing Orders.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I presume you did not hear, so let us proceed.

THE SPEAKER: Proceed, proceed.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to amend the Order Paper. I was about to do it when my colleague on the other side raised moral issues that have to do with attendance. I would continue to comply, and I believe that at 10am the Speaker was in the Chamber; it is a very good standing for us to go by time. The amendment is just below 'Thursday the 14th December, 2023 at 10:00am'.

And this is the correction: Just before that, you will see OP/6/1/2; it should be 26, instead of 25, according to the Clerk's Office.

Mr Speaker, I so move that we amend the Order Paper.

THE SPEAKER: Do you have any other amendment?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: It is not an amendment; it is a suspension, but after the amendment, I would now come for the suspension of the provision.

THE SPEAKER: I am seeing '*First Allotted Day*' here.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Yes, that is the amendment I want to make, but I have to suspend the provision from the Standing Orders before we can accommodate those other items.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: I so second Mr Speaker

Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To

[Motion moved by the Leader of Government Business has been carried]

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, before the Votes and Proceedings, I want to stand on **S.O** 82 to suspend **S.O** 63 [iv].

Mr Speaker, the last time I discussed with my colleagues on the other side and I did say with humility that yes, I have the right to stand and suspend the provisions of the Standing Orders, but I need to talk to him to understand that Budget is so important for the workings of Parliament and the running of the State. So I have to stand on **S.O** 82 to suspend the provision expressly stated in S.O 63[iv]. For us to discuss any other matter as provided by that provision as expressly stated, we should make sure that we suspend that provision. So Mr Speaker, in consultation with my colleague from the other side, I so move that **S.O** 63[iv] be suspended.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: I so second, Mr Speaker.

Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To

[Motion moved by the Leader of Government Business has been carried.]

II. RECORD OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY SITTING HELD ON TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER, 2023.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, Record of Votes and Proceedings. Pages 1 to 4?, Page 5?, Page 6?, Page 7?, Page 8?, Page 9? Can a Member please move for the adoption of the Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday 28th November, 2023?

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: I so move, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any Seconder?

HON. FATMATA SERAH SOUKANEH: I so second, Mr Speaker.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[Record of Votes and Proceedings for Tuesday 28th November, 2023 has been adopted]

III. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER: There was no communication

IV. PAPER LAID

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE

THE SPEAKER: Leader of Government Business

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Speaker, sorry, I was just on the phone with the Attorney General [AG], I think I have to lay the Paper for him.

Mr Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table of this House; The Petroleum License Agreement for the Exploration, Development and Production of G-Blocks 53, 54, 55, 71 and 73, between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and F. A. Oil Limited, Dated 4th December, 2023.

V. GOVERNMENT MOTION

THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY -*[Mr Alpha Ibrahim Sesay]*

MR. ALPHA IBRAHIM SESAY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday 7th November, 2023:

[A] AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND SOCFIN AGRICULTURAL COMPANY[SL]. LTD. – A LIABILITY COMPANY ESTABLISHED IN SIERRA LEONE.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, SOCFIN Agricultural Company [SL]. Ltd. is a liability company established and registered under the Laws of Sierra Leone with a Company's Certificate of Incorporation; with its registered office at 7 Gougi Estate, Beach Road, Aberdeen, Freetown - Sierra Leone.

This Company has implemented and built oil plantation of twelve thousand two hundred and fifty-two [12,252] Hectares, installed a 60 Ton per hour processing Mill in Malen Chiefdom, Pujehun District - Southern Province; and invested **\$171Mln** by the end of 2020. The investment currently employs about one thousand five hundred and fifty-four [1,554] permanent staff and up to two thousand six hundred [2,600] seasoned staff, as well as outsources other services to Third Party Contractors which employs over nine hundred [900] workers in plantation, security and other services.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, the Company intends to sell an appreciable quantity of its Palm-oil production to Lead Markets in Sierra Leone and to export some abroad in order to capitalise its investment in Sierra Leone; and to enhance Foreign Exchange earnings for both its commercial activities and economic growth.

The Company will continue to market its Palm-oil production in bulk to two local companies in Sierra Leone; Kissy Industry Company and Jolax Manufacturing Company Limited, serving as a

source for supply of raw materials to their production of vegetable oil. This has largely enhanced Sierra Leone to be a net Exporter of vegetable oil in West Africa.

The plantation now has twelve thousand two hundred and forty-two [12,242] Hectares of High bred Oil Palm-Trees, together with a Processing Mill, Workshops and multiple sites. It also has Employee Quarters, Offices, Stores and other infrastructures making up the project.

With this Agreement, the Company seeks to expand its current Mill capacity processing from 30 to 60 Tons of Fresh Fruits Bunches per hour, with an additional investment of **\$18Mln** over the period of 2021 to 2023. This will include investment in Civil Works, new machinery for improved Oil extraction and Equipment, Holly Trucks, Tractors and Trailers, Storage Tanks and additional effluent Ponds, Irrigation Piping and Pumps, centralisation of Electrical Power supply and distribution, as well as supporting the logistical equipment to convey the FFB and Palm-Oil.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Government recognises that this Company is a prime example of an Agricultural Foreign Direct Investment [FDI] in Sierra Leone that contributes to employment, a stable source of income, infrastructural development through Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR] implementation, among others. It also recognises the investments which include: job creation, training of employees, knowledge and technological transfer, value addition from the country's local raw materials. The Ministry firmly believes that the Company's Investment Portfolio meets government's Investment and Private Sector Development Policy Objectives and recognises the expected benefits and investment it will bring in terms of job creation, training of employees, knowledge and technology transfer and value addition from our local raw materials.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament,

Be it resolved that this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday 7th November, 2023:

[A] AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND SOCFIN AGRICULTURAL COMPANY [SL]. LTD.

[Question Proposed]

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we have a very long day today; I crave your kind indulgence for us to take two from either side of the aisle, so that we can proceed to other items on the Agenda; on the Order Paper today. Can we start with the Chairman? Is the Chairman in? Okay, proceed. Let us take two from either side, please. Yes, proceed.

HON. ALICE J. KUMABEH: Mr Speaker, thank you very much. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today, we are going to examine another Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and SOCFIN Agricultural Company.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the content of this Agreement is expected to boost the financial and human capacity of Malen Chiefdom and the country at large. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Company has cultivated 12,342 Hectares of Oil-Palm Plantation from its inception since 2012 in Malen Chiefdom, Pujehun District. It has also built a Processing Plant with the capacity of processing 60 Tons of oil per hour; both of these ventures attracted **\$171Mln** as at 2020.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in terms of employment, SOCFIN has created permanent jobs for **1,554** Sierra Leoneans; seasonal employment of up to **2,600**, and indirect contracts of up to **900** people- all of these are either in the Plantation, Processing Plant, Administration, Construction or Security Sectors.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this plantation was disrupted by the Ebola virus in 2014 and the Covid-19 in 2019 respectively. As it stands, the Company has further invested **\$48Mln** in order to purchase Oil Extraction Machines, Trucks, embark on Civil Works, among others.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you can agree with me that the Palm and its related products are of much value to the people of Sierra Leone as the following are derived from it:

- Oil-palm
- Vegetable Oil
- Nut-Oil
- Fuel for domestic and industrial use
- Soap
- Mayonnaise
- Biscuits
- Butter etc.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these products are of high demand at both local and international levels; however, premium must be laid on the local level. The chain of production and supply will lead to the availability of the product, which in turn will create more jobs and livelihoods.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Jolax and Kissy Industries are Institutions created by this House, and they are currently benefiting from the crude oil produced by the SOCFIN Company. At the International level, SOCFIN will also attract Forex and help build reputation for the country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have also done due diligence to this document in respect of the obligations of the Company, such as: Local Content Policy, Tax obligations, Employment and then health and social assessments.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I can authoritatively say here that the company is in conformity with the existing laws and policies of this land, and they stand to benefit Sierra Leoneans. This resonates with the President's aspiration in revamping Agriculture through the cultivation and processing of Oil-Palm in Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me at this point draw the attention of the Representatives here to the oversight role of Parliament and its Committees. The Committee on Trade and Industry will conduct oversights on SOCFIN Company to ascertain that all the issues written in this document are fully complied with.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having said this, I am kindly calling on my colleague Honourable Members to quickly ratify this Agreement, as it is in the best interest of this country, I thank you all.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara. After Honourable AKK, Honourable Tawa and Honourable Fofanah. Okay, proceed.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Speaker, I wish the Honourable Member from Pujehun who is a direct beneficiary of this project was here; I am talking about the Honourable Member who was representing that Constituency in the last Parliament - Honourable Shiaka Sama, so that he would give us a direct report on the lives of the people of Sahn Malen.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are ratifying an Agreement of this nature at a time when the focus of the President is on 'Agriculture'. This means, we are doing the right thing as a Parliament to support the President's Agenda in the area of Agriculture. When I listened to the Minister, and the summary done by the Deputy Chairman of the Trade Committee, it is clear that this project has employed over **2,000** direct workers and **900** Sierra Leoneans under the subsidiary Companies who have been given contracts by SOCFIN [SL] Ltd. It also helps us to understand that SOCFIN is helping the other Oil Factories in Sierra Leone to have good production.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when you look at the direct investment and what government seeks to get as tax, it gives us the more reason why we should ratify a document of this nature *[Applause]*. But it would be very much unfair if we stand here today to ratify this document and we fail to understand the root of this document.

The Honourable Member told us that there was a stumbling-block in this project during the Ebola period. It tells me that as Politicians and as Leaders, we must put aside the petty things that divide us and work for the interest of our nation. What you do today is built on in the future for the benefit of Sierra Leoneans; that was why I was wishing for the Honourable Member that was directly representing the people of Sahn Malen to be here. One of the Agricultural Projects that have had public criticisms in this country is this **SOCFIN** that is located in Sahn Malen. Everything has been said about it, including politicising it that the APC was punishing the people of Sahn Malen. The Honourable Member was here saying that he was imprisoned by the APC because of this project. Today, we are having the project before us; additional agreement to show that the action of the President then, His Excellency, Former President Ernest Bai Koroma was right. And a man of that nature who has developed this nation would not at any time wish this nation bad *[Applause]*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am saying this because we have to understand that when we pass Agreements of this nature, when we pass Agreements that benefit our people, no matter which part of the aisle you are, you should not oppose the Agreement because our people stand to benefit. Over **3,000** Sierra Leoneans are being employed, that is a plus to the families, that is a plus to this nation; having direct investment in terms of foreign reserve coming into our country because they are exporting, that is a plus to us as a country. There is no way anybody can criticise this document, but in all fairness, if you say I should not say this, you have an option – not to either listen, or you go to the Canteen and eat; but I want to thank President Ernest Bai Koroma for giving Sierra Leoneans SOCFIN today.

Mr Speaker, this brings to mind *[Undertones] well*, for those who are not comfortable, let me say the Former President, His Excellency Ernest Bai Koroma. You know, we would continue to name him because such projects were not common before he came. During his regime, Sierra Leone can boast of many of these kinds of projects, and one that is also in critical situation and that needs the attention of this government because it is directly involved in different sectors in the economy- therefore we need to boost them up. Today, if you look at the Energy Sector, and you look at how the Agricultural Sector used to boost the Energy Sector, that linkage is no more. So

we need to look at some of those projects and Agreements, and as a government, to see how we can boost them up. This is because, the more Foreign Direct Investments we have; the more we have Companies that export the more we help the financial stability of our nation. I have visited SOCFIN whilst I was in the Agriculture Committee, and when you see what they have done in terms of investment, and you see the direct investment of Gold Tree and other Companies in the area of Agriculture Sector in Sierra Leone, Mr Speaker you would not have an Agreement of this nature and you want us to take more than an hour in this Well because it is a plus to us.

Mr Speaker, let me end by saying; I thank the Minister who has brought this document; and I want to thank His Excellency the President, Julius Maada Bio for according us, Members of Parliament the respect of approving a document that was once laid by His Excellency, Former President Ernest Bai Koroma.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Tawa.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me start my submission by saying that we, as a Committee [the Agriculture Committee] are annoyed. We are angry, and we did not like the fact that an Agricultural Agreement is coming to this House, presented by the Minister of Trade and the Agriculture Committee is not recognised. What we do as Committees is that we provide oversights; and our oversight responsibility is not limited to Ministries, Departments and Agencies, but it extends to the fact that if it is of public interest, it has to be covered by the Committee. Accordingly, I would ask the Leader of Government Business to take due note that those of us in the Agriculture Committee would want the needful to be done so that the Minister knows that this is an Agricultural Agreement *[Laughing]*.

HON. DANIEL B. KOROMA: Mr Speaker, for the records. Mr Speaker, we do not want the new MPs to misconstrued this thing. Mr Speaker, this is an investment document that is geared towards boosting the economy of this country. Investment can take various forms – Mining, Agriculture or whatsoever. But I believe that the Leadership of Parliament; the Business Committee of this House is not wrong in allowing the Minister of Trade to table this Agreement. He is not wrong; it cannot be Agriculture Minister, in fact it has never been so before.

So Honourable Member from Western Area, please, what the Business Committee did is consistent even with the Parent Agreement that was here during the Fourth Parliament. So it is not wrong Sir. But for the oversight, definitely it would bother on the Agriculture Committee

whenever you listen to the concerns of the people. And by the time we wrap up here, you will hear from my Leader, for your attention.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Thank you very much Mr Leader, I would not react to that; I would continue.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I can say what my boss; the Whip of the Opposition has submitted is very good; the fact that we seek to enjoy continuity in governance, it is good. But when it comes to continuity on this side, if it is good, they are happy to continue, if it is bad, 'oh you should have fixed it, you have taken five years in the system, why did you not fix it?'

It is continuity; continuity is continuity. And as for the Agreement for SOCFIN, what was signed and approved by the Fourth Parliament, I would tell you with authority, was not what the SOCFIN Company implemented in full. But however, it is good for Sierra Leone, it is good for investment and it is good for our people that are working at SOCFIN.

Mr Minister, I would want you to take note of Article 17; Exchange Control and Investment Promotion Act. Firstly, I know the Act is still in force, but the Act was repealed by the National Investment Board Act, and that gives right for investment of this nature to go under the portfolio of the National Investment Board. And quite recently, this Parliament, we have authorised through the Finance Act of 2024, the repatriation of **30%** of proceeds for export on various categories, including Agriculture. This Agreement should take due note of that because we are going to change the dynamics from what it were in the First Agreement. The first Agreement said principally, that they should sell **80%** or more of their produce in-country. Now because of the consumption need, Sierra Leone consumption can only accommodate **40%** of the total production, hence the reason for reviewing the consumption or sales pattern to 60-40; **60%** Export and **40%** to meet local consumption.

Thankfully, like the Honourable Member, the Deputy Chairman for the Committee on Trade said, we have Jolax and Kissy Industries that are off-takers willing to take the produce of SOCFIN, Gold Tree and a number of other Agricultural Companies that deal in Palm-Kennel.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want also to draw your attention to the fact that SOCFIN has done so much, and the period for which the extension is given, in my opinion, I think we should have considered a longer period. This is because, if we are looking for consistent investment; investment security, an investment moving on a scale from 10 years to 5 years is a reduction and it does not prove or show consistency in the investment pattern- the curve is deepening. You

cannot come from 10 years, having invested **\$171Mln**, and you are promising to invest additional funds and you come to 5 years; that is an abnormal curve. We should look at it because, if we are granting concessions or we are giving reliefs on Corporate Tax, Withholding Taxes and other Tax reliefs, we should be assured that the timeframe or span of the Agreement should cover our losses in the Tax reliefs and the Tax breaks we are giving, hence the reason I think, in as much as this Parliament is going to pass this Agreement, the Ministries of Trade, Agriculture and Finance and the National Investment Board should engage SOCFIN so as to see how we can come up with an addendum to this Agreement for an extension of the period which would give us and our people that are working for SOCFIN the comfort that their employment is sustained.

I do not think, like my boss said, it is controversial though there are issues that we have to pay attention to as a Committee; both community and investment wise, but I think it is good for Sierra Leone and it is the continuity that we seek because as a government, we have to continue those things that are good for the people of this country. And as a government, we are going to build on investments like these that would attract other Foreign Direct Investment; because to attract Foreign Direct Investment you need a benchmark. And for Sierra Leone, we have seen what SOCFIN has done; the benchmark that SOCFIN has laid in this country has given rise to the coming of MIRO, Gold-Tree and a number of other Agricultural Investments.

Mr Minister, Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, that confidence is good for Sierra Leone and it would attract more investments, particularly when the key item on the Big Five Agenda is **Agriculture**, and we cannot develop Agriculture on a mere budget of **6 to 10%**; we need additional Foreign Direct Investment, both Donor Grant, Donor Support and Foreign Direct Capital into Sierra Leone that would expand the agricultural space. Thankfully, I have seen in the Agreement that SOCFIN would go beyond Palm-Kennel and they can now invest in Rice, which is also good, which is also a plus for Sierra Leone and it is a plus for investment.

On that note, I want to thank the Minister, and I want to encourage my colleagues to speedily ratify this Agreement so that SCOFIN can continue, and the issues raised by Members of Parliament can be looked into, thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER: Sorry, Honourable Fofanah, I have just been accustomed by your Leader, the Chief Whip that he wants to say something so by my special leave, I would allow him and you exercise some patience; and he is going to be the last, thank you very much. Yes, proceed.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, indeed like other speakers have said about this Agreement, of course this is an Agreement that is non-controversial; an Agreement that is geared towards strengthening or boosting the production of capacity of SOCFIN. Of course it is a step in the right direction.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, SOCFIN is a product of the 2011 Investment Conference held by the previous Ernest Bai Koroma led-government in UK. When that Conference was held, many Companies were brought into this country; we saw **SOCFIN** in the South, we saw **Sierra Tropical** in the South, Lugbu Chiefdom which is doing very well, we also saw **MIRO** in Mile 91, Yoni Chiefdom, we also had **Gold-Tree** and **Natural Habitat** in Kailahun, Daru and we had **Ned Oil Den** in Yele, and of course the super Company that also came into this country after that Conference was the **Adax Bio Energy**. These are among many Companies that were brought into this country within that period.

Mr Speaker, I am very pleased with the Agreement we are about to ratify here today as per the 2018 Budget. According to the Minister of Finance, *'the total value of Exports for the period January to June 2018 is estimated at \$515.8Mln. The sharp increase in Export is accounted for primarily by export of Oil-Palm by SOCFIN Agricultural Company'*.

Mr Speaker, when you do a disaggregation of that export, just what SOCFIN contributed to that **\$515.8Mln** Export Earnings in that year was about **\$197.6Mln**. That year, even the so-called Almighty Cocoa Industry only contributed around **\$10Mln**.

So Mr Speaker, having an Agreement of such a nature, I am pleased to say that whatever concession government is proposing to give to this Company, even if to it is to take effect tomorrow, we would endorse it because it is a product of the previous government and we on this side of the House believe that government is continuity.

The then President used investments to demonstrate national inclusion. He did not say because SOCFIN is in the South, the company should not be supported to operate. The Company is in the South but it does not only benefit the people in the South but the people of Sierra Leone. We have Sierra Tropical that is also benefitting hundreds and hundreds of Sierra Leoneans in Lugbu Chiefdom. We similarly have Gold-Tree in Daru that is also benefitting thousands and thousands of Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, another issue I would want to bring to the attention of the House is that of **Adax Bio-Energy**, which is now called **Sunbird**. Mr Speaker, if you visit that

Company, you would realise that the Factory in that Company is the biggest Biomass factory you can find in Africa. That Company has the capacity to produce **30mw** of energy supply, Mr Speaker. And today, the government has resulted in using what was meant to be temporal for permanent. Kar-Power Ship was brought in by the previous government as a temporary measure to solving the energy crisis we were faced with.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even when you look at the cost per kilowatt hour, SOCFIN has the capacity and has offered a relatively lower cost per kilowatt hour than what the Kar-Power Ship is providing. Mr Speaker, when you look at the financial records, just in 2019 government lost about **Le28Bln** in concession. And just in 2023 between January to September, government lost about **Le16.76Bln** again as concession to Kar-Power. You have **Sunbird** which is providing employment from the harvesting of Biomass for Rural Farmers. Even at the production level, they have boosted our employment rating.

So Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the issue of **Adax** has to be treated seriously. That project is not just a project for the people of Bombali District; it is a project that is meant to promote Energy and increase our employment rate in this country. Imagine, having a project that would empower our local farmers to trade in Biomass, even this Bamboo Grass would be harvested and sold to **Sunbird**. That alone in itself is a means of job creation. At Factory level, **Sunbird** is employing over one thousand employees. So, if government is contracting them for taking what they are giving, it will go a long way to boosting these Companies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like I said, this Agreement ought not to be critique because it contains nothing of controversy. Whatever concession that is being provided here, like I said, if government wants it to take effect tomorrow, we on this side will support it because we believe **SOCFIN**, like **Gold-Tree**, like **Sierra Tropical**, like **MIRO** and other Companies came into this country under the APC government. So whatever thing that has to do with empowering these Companies Mr Speaker, I think it is but fitting that as Sierra Leoneans, we will continue to support this Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on that note, I want to lastly conclude that the Ministry of Energy considers the situation of **Sunbird Bio Energy** which has the ability to offer at a more reasonable cost per kilowatts hour of energy to the Government of Sierra Leone than what Kar-Power is providing. Although Kar-Power is using bio-fuel, the government is giving so much concession; just in 2023 the government has lost over **Le67Bln** on concession. So Mr Speaker, if you have a Company like **Sunbird**, government would not be giving them concession. So I want

to implore Government to consider the re-engagement of this particular Company so that they can start to take energy from them, thereby creating a sustainable energy supply for our people, thank you very much *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Chief Whip

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity. I have just hang heads with Honourable Fofanah who was supposed to speak before me; I do not want to bully him so I want to give him the opportunity to speak, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Honourable Chief Whip. Honourable Fofanah, proceed.

HON. MUSA FOFANAH: Thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the Leaders and other colleagues who have taken the Floor before us, and I also want to thank the Minister of Trade for a very good Agreement. This Agreement is not controversial at all; we just want to look at the area of the oversight.

Mr Minister, you will agree with me that some of us are coming from a Pining Community or District, even though Agriculture is also doing very well. So whenever we see something that has to do with Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR], we are very critical around that. We just want to ask the Ministry to also collaborate with the Committee on Agriculture in this Well to see how best they would do a joint oversight to make sure that all what SOCFIN has put into this Agreement are clearly followed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if you go to Page 18, Article 12, it is talking about Export Revenue. Mr Speaker, the reason we want to appreciate the Ministry of Trade and SOCFIN is because the issue around forestry in this country is very difficult to control. But in this Agreement, with your leave Mr Speaker, it is saying:

*'Notwithstanding any other law like contrary to the Exporter of produce such as Coffee, Cocoa, Cashew Nuts etc., Fisheries and Forestry products shall from the first day of April 2021 repatriate from the Commercial Banking System a minimum of **30%** of its export proceeds to Sierra Leone'.*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think this is something we have been craving for our Banks to pay attention to. So for a government to put pressure on this particular aspect on our financial system, I think will help the issue of dollarization in this country. My Leader on the minority side was making reference to the Member of Parliament that is benefitting more from this project than all of us, even though the Honourable Member is not here. Looking at the Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR] aspect in this document, we see that the document is talking about

empowering Entrepreneurs. We appreciate the fact that local Companies are benefiting through contract from SOCFIN. So to also see the indigenes, for example, the people of Pujehun and Bo benefiting from their entrepreneurship will also add lot of value to the Local Content aspect.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this document is also talking about skills transfer. I think we would agree with SOCFIN that if we do not have the Expert we need we can bring an Expert from outside. But I just want to say that it is also good for Sierra Leoneans to be trained in some of those critical or technical aspects of their operations. The simple reason for this is that the more we have Sierra Leoneans taking ownership of their own investments, the more we would benefit as a country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is my contribution to this document, and I believe this document is not controversial. I want to thank the Minister of Trade, the Ministry of Finance and all other colleagues who took the Floor before me. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition.

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me commend Members who have debated on this Agreement, and who have significantly established the fact relating to the root of the Agreement.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to hastily join colleagues to say that this Agreement is not controversial and as a matter of fact, the hectares of land that is being utilized in this Agreement, and the amount of monies spent are all geared towards promoting businesses in Sierra Leone. We have always said that one way we could influence the Exchange Rate is to promote Foreign Direct Investment [FDI]; is to see how we could influence business people to come and invest in our country. We cannot do it any other way without encouraging business people. Like I always say, the confidence business people have in government goes a very long way in allaying the fears of those who have not come to invest to come on board. So as Opposition Members of Parliament, I have always reiterated that we are not opponent to the development of this nation [*Undertone*]; yes, we are proponent to the development of this nation. So whatever agreement that is geared towards promoting the interest of our people, and promoting the daily bread of our people, we would expeditiously approve.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, amidst the difficulties we are having with employment in this country, just this Agreement with SOCFIN, we have over **1,554** Sierra Leoneans who are employed by this Company. So if it were not for this Company, where would all of them have

been? That would have added to the financial burden of our own State. So to us, a Company that is promoting Sierra Leoneans by employment and indirectly promoting government because these Sierra Leoneans have to pay taxes to government, we as Opposition would expeditiously support.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the employment is not just limited to the **1,554** Staff; they have what they called '*Seasonal Employment*' during the rains, the dries or during harvest season when they would employ additional **2,600** Staff. To us as Opposition, we want to appeal to our colleagues on the other side to see how best we can expeditiously pass this Agreement.

But Mr Speaker, I have always said that in as much as we want to support government, we also want to pick on critical issues that would affect the ordinary Sierra Leonean. When you go to the Local Content on the Agreement on Page 8, which is precipitated by what is agreed on Article [IV];

'Granting of Concession and Rights', the Government has made it essentially clear through this Agreement that, *'no unhealthy competition and protection from foreign competition to support the Local Content Policy, and government shall apply all reasonable endeavours to provide conducive environment to support the Company's effort especially protection from unhealthy competition with foreign dumped products through some appropriate measures'*.

So if government has decided to ensure that we protect SOCFIN Company, there has to be some level of reciprocity in the level of protection. By this I am saying, when you get to the Local Content Policy on Page 8, you would agree with me that there is nothing substantial on the Local Content Policy. One thing I believe is that, the essence of having some of these Companies is to ensure that we transfer knowledge to our own Sierra Leonean brothers and sisters in the shortest possible time. You would see an expatriate coming, and the expatriate would work for over ten, fifteen, twenty years without transfer of skills to our own local brothers. It would interest you to go and see the job done by expatriates without exchange of knowledge. So I want to believe that we, I mean the government of Sierra Leone should ensure that emphasis are laid on the transfer of skills and knowledge; let there be programmes and trainings for our local Sierra Leonean brothers and sisters so that in the near future they would be able to accelerate or ascend to high positions in the Company.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me also say that in this Agreement, SOCFIN is expected to give half-yearly report to government. Basically, Agreements are ratified by Parliament but Reports are made to government through the Executive; through Cabinet. I want to suggest that when these Reports are taken to Cabinet, copies of those Reports are presented to this

Parliament so that we are updated with the activities of the Company; we are updated with development in the Company and if there are necessary challenges the Company is faced with, Parliament can be able through Legislation, to make it very easy for them. So I would not want Parliament to be in the dark on issues relating to the Half-Yearly Report that this Company presents to Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, even on the domestic sales of products, I have also come to realize through this Agreement that sales are not done to private companies. We want to make it very clear that we should not constrict the business atmosphere in our nation, it should be opened; everybody should have equal opportunity to do business in our country, so we should not constrict it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like I said, this is one of the best things that happened to Sierra Leone years ago, and we are working on it in ensuring that it is being improved.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want to talk on the Foreign Tax. Most of those who are working here do pay Taxes in their home countries, and I believe that affect us also as Sierra Leoneans. We should ensure that the Expatriates who are here pay PAYE Tax to the government of Sierra Leone and ensure that government makes money through the taxes they pay. All the Concessions, the Grants extended to SOCFIN are well appreciated by us on this side. And we want to reiterate that we would always join the government to ensure that things are very easy for SOCFIN as a company.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like the Speaker began his statement, we have so many things to discuss today, and because of that, I would not want to monopolize this debate. I therefore call on Members on this side and Members on the other side of the aisle to expeditiously pass this Agreement because it geared towards the betterment of our only country, Sierra Leone, I thank you.

THE SPEAKER: Mr Leader

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you very much Colleagues for your numerous contributions and the positivity you have given in this particular debate. In line with the Agreement we have, and the comments you have raised concerning what we think should be better for an Agreement of this nature, we are fully aware that there is no perfect Agreement. That is why we give duration for the Agreement to come back for review. So we do not have perfect laws anywhere in

the world. We are fully aware that we make Laws or Agreement in the interest of people and our communities so that they can benefit from what we are doing as Law Makers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the recital of this Agreement, Mr Minister made it categorically clear that we talking about over **12,000** hectares of land to be cultivated. If I could borrow the words of the Minister of Lands, *'the value of Land is only enhanced when it is fully utilized'*. If the Land is not utilized, you can gain nothing from it. So we are fully aware of the acreage of Land that we want to utilize so that we can do more for our people in terms of positive Agreement. We are not seeing the Honourable Shiaka Sama from Sahn Malen here today because he is a Member of the ECOWAS Parliament, so he is not around. We have waited for him to make his contributions, and explain to the people of this country and the Parliament to understand that we have gone too far in trying to address some of these issues.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Agreement is a People-centred Agreement. What we have done so far about this Agreement is that, I have led a delegation comprising the Minister sitting here, Honourable Shiaka Sama, the Resident Minister [South], and the Company representatives. We held a meeting in the Barray at Sahn Malen Chieftdom and we outlined and discussed some of these issues. I do not think we have ever argued about the previous, nor the present Agreement that we want to pass. We have not had problem with the Agreement at all. The problem we have had with Sahn Malen which we are trying to solve has to do with transparency and accountability. We have never been transparent with the people who own the land regarding other benefits that due them.

So basically, the people did not discuss what has been the agreement with the previous Administration, or what is going to be in the agreement with the present Administration. What we discussed was about transparency. Just as what we are doing in the Mining Sector, if you have to take my land for investment, I should be compensated adequately. And the Company has not been able to do that for the people who have given their land for oil production and also used them for labour. So the people have raised concerns that no, we are not talking about the Agreement because we do not have problem with it. It is the level of transparency we are concern about; if you pay me for my land, I should know how much you are paying me, what is the acreage and where is my money going? For example, the surface rent that we are paying is very transparent. So even though the Honourable Member is not here with excuse; he has an International assignment, we have agreed and discussions are on-going, the people do not really have issues pertaining the previous Agreement and the one we are about to ratify. Mr Speaker, I

do not think we need to politicise what we are doing; that has been the elementary aspect of our investment. Our investment should be People-centred. I remember in my Elementary Economics, I read what we called *'Location and Localization of Industry'*. We do not look at tribe but region, we do what we called **Survey**, and if we think the investment is to go to Kambia or Bombali, so be it. We do not need to be particular about, **S.O** [2] *'na yanda we dae go'*, for me I do not see it that way. What is in the mind of every Sierra Leonean is to articulate the issues of investment.

So Mr Minister, I think I told you about this same context of the recital language that which talks about, *'we are going to employ over **1,500** Sierra Leoneans, or we are going to employ **300** Sierra Leoneans'*. Mr Minister, it is high time we started looking at those figures as to whether they are realistic.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we do not even know whether some of the Factories we have given concessions have provided up to **1,500** jobs yet. I told the Minister of Labour that we should now go after the Agreements and review them to know if they are actually practice what is in them or not.

So let me now put it to you, Mr Minister; you said the investment is **\$71Mln**, and the first investment is talking about **\$30Mln**, and in fact, you have invested that amount at the start of this whole project. But between 2021 and 2023, there was going to be two sets of investments: Firstly, we talked about the **\$30Mln** that has to do with machinery and others; the second investments that has to do with **\$18Mln** for 2021 to 2022 has to do with haulage and trailers – purely transportation, it is stated in the recital.

Mr Minister, the figures are beautiful, but how do we practicalise some of these things that we have said? It is clearly stated in Article [IV] that there is going to be periodic visits; whether it is going to be an oversight or a visit from the Ministry, a visitation has to be done. One of those visits is mentioned in Article [IV] and one in Article [V]. The one in Article [V], which Honourable Abdul Kargbo mentioned is talking about a half-yearly visit. Which means, you, the governing side have to do visitation twice a year. We also have another visit in Article [IV] that has to do with conducting monitoring visit; purely about oversight. So that is why we talk about having the Agriculture Committee coming in to see what types of agricultural activities are implemented. If you look at Paragraph 8 in the first recital in [2], we are talking about the production of rice, wherein the 'Feed Salon' project can come in. So it is clear in our minds that we are looking for two things. It is the responsibility of government to provide job creation and livelihood of the

people. It is stated in your recital and that is what government should do; providing job for our people.

Also, there is another key point that is talking about giving the policy; what are the policies we are giving to Investors? The Investors are looking for an environment where they have good policies for them to invest, and the government should create an environment for jobs for its citizens. So that is the reason we are talking about job creation. The first job to be created directly is **1,554** permanent jobs; that is what is said in the Recital. There is another portion that talks about **900** jobs, and there is one that talks about **2,600** seasonal jobs. I am quoting the figures because I have not done monitoring but these are the figures that we have. That is why I said we have two sets of visits; one half-yearly, and the other is for monitoring.

So if we are doing visitation or oversight functions from different Committees, we should take this into account because the government said we have to provide **500,000** jobs in five years, which means **100,000** jobs a year.

Mr Minister, let me put it to you directly that we have passed series of Agreements, all of them talking about thousand jobs; but is it reflective of what is happening on the ground? Mr Minister, this is your first Agreement brought to us, and right across the aisle, we have praised the Agreement; talking about Seasonal Jobs for **2,600**. We have not proven that one but we give you the benefit of the doubt if that one is true. So your responsibility is to prove to us whether the **2,600** jobs are really practical. There is another area talking about giving service to Local Contractors who will provide jobs for **900** people.

So Mr Minister, all of these are stated in the Recital of this Agreement for you to do. Those are the indicators that tie with what you said about making visits, and also what is the responsibility of the government viz-a-viz, the Company providing services and space for employment.

Mr Minister, there is another key issue talked about by my colleagues; giving a lot of Tax waivers. Article [VI] in this Agreement is talks about Tax Regime. What you have done in the Agreement is unique; you have not given a blanket tax regime. For the Corporate tax, that is where I go in line with Honourable Tawa; I want you to review the term limit. The time given for the Investment is small, it is not realistic, to be very honest with you. That is the area I give applause to the Company, they are genuine investors. If you look at the five years given to the investment platform and project that to the Corporate Tax they are giving, the limitation for the Corporate Tax is 5 years. But now you are saying we can extend it to 10 years, so for us, we are saying yes, it is good to have this tax concession.

In my opening statement, I said a Land is valued when it is purely utilized. Even if you have the land, it is not value if people are not making use of it; it will just be there doing nothing. If on the other hand it is utilized, so many things will come on board just like what SOCFIN is doing; they have construction and they have employed lots of Sierra Leoneans. So for us to get to what he said, we need to think about another review in order to have an expansion of the years of investment from 5 to 10. So in this tax regime submitted, you have given limitations. Also looking further into the concessions you gave, all of the exemptions given are tied to years. You said if machinery is coming in, you will give the company 3 years concession and after that they will revert to the 2000 Tax Law. So in actual sense, they have not been given a blanket tax waiver. In fact for the Duty Waivers, you have also asked them to present a list to the Ministry of Trade and Industry- that is also in the tax regime. So for a company to be given a Duty Waiver, it must present the list.

Mr Minister, in Section **110** of the Constitution gives us the right to give Tax Exemptions, and that is what we are purely ratifying here. We cannot question you about the list, but you have to be fair in looking at this Agreement in line with Section **110** of the Constitution to say, *'I need to call on the Finance Committee to inform them that this concession has been agreed upon and Tax Waiver is given'*.

Of course Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh talked about repatriation; that if you export more, **30%** of that will come back through the Commercial Bank as stated in Article [12], so all of these are within our tax regime concession given. I just want to join my colleagues to say that is a meaningful contribution towards having a very good Agreement and people have highlighted that one and it is very clear in the Agreement that you have done that already. So if you export your goods after you have done your sales, you should be able to do repatriation of **30%** of those proceeds back into the Sierra Leone through the Commercial Banks so that we can have this foreign exchange reserve within our system.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I have heard about Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR] from my colleague on the other side. CRS is embedded in two Articles of this Agreement. Let us first of all look at the Corporate Social Responsibilities in Article [V] which is talking about Health and Safety.

Mr Speaker, in as much as we are talking about the safety and employment of our people, this Agreement is also putting premium on the safety of the employees. Mr Speaker please permit me to read the provision that talks about Corporate Social Responsibility. But before that, let me just

say this; I enjoyed my colleague talking about Adax, I was here when the current Opposition passed the **Adax** Agreement and I remember I told them that this Company will fold up one day. There were unlimited waivers given; household furniture for example was given unlimited waiver. It was not done as it is in this Agreement, wherein you have to certify the waiver is given in the Tax Regime. We who were in Opposition then had to tell them that they can go ahead and ratify the Agreement, but that the Company was going to collapse one day. So also I did for the London Mining Agreement; I told them that the London Mining was going to collapse too and indeed, it happened. So it is not just about giving a general concession, but you have to monitor and tailor it the way it should be given. So for us, our Tax Regimes are giving concessions but we have to tailor the concessions into years that cannot be exceeded.

Mr Minister if you want to succeed, you must work differently from the likes of **Adax** of yester years who has now changed its name because of bad administration, and because they were given unlimited tax-waivers. For God's sake, how can you bring in household furniture as part of your investment? It should be machineries or you should be talking about jobs.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my Colleague also raised issues about energy for which we all agreed, but the survival of the Company was under question and at the end of the day the Company collapsed. Before 2018, there was no more **Adax**; it disappeared. So we do not want to talk about some names like **Sunbird** because these are just semantics.

Mr Speaker, the reason why I have brought in this one is to draw your attention to the Corporate Social Responsibility. So permit me now to read Page 9, under the rubric **Health** and **Safety** [5.6]; *'The Company shall ensure conformity to hygiene and safety regulations whether sub-contracted or with designated Agents working on site. The Company shall continue to develop its Corporate Social Responsibilities [CSR] plan based on the assessment of Community needs'*.

Mr Minister, please take note of this, and if possible underline it. Do you know why I am saying this? People have designed Corporate Social Responsibility to benefit some stakeholders within the Communities and some ill-motivated Politicians. Most of these people do not think about the people, they only think about themselves, which is the reason they always skew the Corporate Social Responsibility to benefit selfish stakeholders and ill-motivated Politicians.

If you look at what you have done together with what this Administration is doing, you would notice that we are talking about Corporate Social Responsibility in its strictest term as captured in this Agreement. That is to say, develop each Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR] plan based on

assessment of Community needs in collaboration with Local Government Officials, including Paramount Chiefs.

The reason why we at times have crisis within our system is because we do not go in-depth in looking at some of these Agreements; we overlook those who are traditional rulers. It is not by mistake that we have our Paramount Chiefs; it is for them to guide us. But most times we use our powers because we are in charge of resources to bully the Paramount Chiefs and others. And if we bully the Paramount Chiefs, it means it is not an investment for the people. We do not need any form of intimidation.

Mr Minister, you know what we did when we went to Sahn Malen Chiefdom; we held a public meeting, though the Paramount Chief is now deceased, but the Chiefdom Speaker was there and we discussed the issues. These issues are embedded in this particular provision we are about to ratify. So it is not about selves, it is about the people. So Mr Minister take note that in the CSR, when you talk about Paramount Chief you go to the next cadre; Representatives of Chiefdom and the community representative which includes the MPs.

Mr Minister, the difference between us and a lot of other things that happened in this country is that Members of both the 5th and 6th Parliament are very progressive. Even as we are trying to ratify this Agreement, you see Members of Parliament talking for their Constituents. That is why the last time the Minister talked about **\$50,000** for Scholarships. My Colleagues on the other side were celebrating over the information because there was no **\$50,000** for scholarship in the initial Agreement. So they were celebrating because the Agreement is a People's-Centred Agreement. These are the areas we look out for; how do we really help our people? That is why we must also focus on community-based assessment. So Mr Minister, take note of that also.

To the Paramount Chiefs, what we are now talking might not affect you directly but you can educate your colleague Paramount Chiefs; that is why you are representing them; tell them what is exactly happening.

Mr Minister, let me draw your attention back to Domestic Tax; I know you have dealt with that one, including so many other things around the Ministry of Finance. Article [5.5] which has to do with '*Domestic Sales*', somebody in his contribution said, if you do sales out, you must make sure you satisfy the local consumption. Well, that is why you have to monitor. We are giving this concession so that our people can benefit.

Therefore, when you produce you should ensure that Sierra Leoneans are satisfied before you talk about export. You have already identified two Infant Industries, right? So we would live by that.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as my Colleagues on the other side, sometimes it is not good for you to just erode Tax concessions like that. In this Agreement, we maintain the ECOWAS levy on import duties; they are not given as concessions under the Tax Regime. What we did in fighting the food crises in the world, we completely remove the **5%** taxation for the importation of rice. And today, when we want to include the **5%** and have another which is a **10%** people have started crying foul. If you look at the Sub-Region, there is nowhere you can get **0%** importation of rice; we were the only ones who did it. And when we are about to reinstate the **5%**; starting with it as minimum they said no, we should not do it. At times it is good to maintain threshold level; you do not give Zero Tax. As I said, we are also crying about paying taxes because we fought the Hut Tax War and that is the menace in our society. I am bringing these points to you to show that I am very proud of you. I do not know maybe it is because you are coming from a Sector that is more development driven in terms of standards. You seem to be hugely-minded because, everything they have mentioned is embedded in this Agreement. We are talking about the need to be careful about Tax Regimes, and what you have done in that regard is that you have tailored the tax regimes by giving duration; not a blanket one. You came again we said no, I can give concession but the ECOWAS levy is going to remain the same. Of course the Infant Industry is protected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when my colleague mentioned about the Local Content, it is clearly stated that you should not disadvantage the Infant Industry as against foreign companies that just come and dump their products here. So I am really happy that Honourable Abdul Kargbo mentioned that; he really emphasised on it, in fact, he tried to water it down so that you can do more for the Local Content and protect the Infant Industries.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Colleagues, I will end with Article [7.1], where we have to talk about employment and training. But before I go to Article [7.1], let me read [1], which has to do with employment, Mr Minister, for your attention. It says; *'The Company must submit on annual basis its audited Balance Sheet and Income Statement prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards [IFRS], as well as any required national standard to the relevant Stakeholders, including the Ministry of Trade.'*

I am saying this because we have given a lot of concessions to people who are making profit outside, but they will come again to us to say they are suffering from so many issues around the

communities, investment or in production. So the only way we can argue them should be by the dictate of this text. It has happened with a company that we gave concession; they went abroad and declared a huge profit, but they came back to the Minister of Finance to say that they were not making profit. The Company actually thought we were not following on them abroad. Having looked at the analysis and the Financial Statement submitted abroad, the Minister said no, we are even going to conduct a review because you made huge profit and now you are telling us to give you another concession. So Mr Minister, for you to look at some of these Investments, let them present to you their Balance Sheets, their Audited Report as best internationally practice demands. Of course I do not want to overstate what my colleague from the Agricultural Sector said. If we are talking about '**Feed Salon**', there is a whole section in Articles 4. [2.5] that talks about rice production. In as much as we are investing in Oil Palm production, we are also encouraging the people to grow rice and other essential food stuffs.

When we went to Sahn Malen, the people were talking about the possibility of embarking on other agricultural activities in-between the Palm-Kennel Plantations to enhance their livelihood. What you are going to do is for you to look at the dictate of it. You have given provisions that they should be involved in other agricultural activities to enhance their livelihood which is clearly stated in Articles 3, 4 and 5.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Colleagues, finally under Article [7.1] which is talking about training, Mr Minister, there is no way we are going to change the lives of our people if we do not train them. Today we are all sitting here; we have the Minister of Finance, we have Mr Speaker sitting there and all other Members because we are educated. We are trained in some form of education, and there is no way we are going to change the lives of our people without education. So if you say we want to invest in our districts and communities, even if you fulfil all your Corporate Social Responsibilities by enabling the people to have huge money and housing facilities as stated, we are also looking forward to seeing you provide training for the people and capacitate them. In fact, there is limitation given to expatriates; you cannot have expatriates forever. So you must see to it that our locals are trained and are qualified to operate certain machinery or be taken to professional level in this particular investment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, permit me to read for the edification of the House:

'For the purpose of the above, vocational trainings and other measures necessary and reasonable to achieve its employment objectives, the Company shall use reasonable efforts and resources to provide training for its Sierra Leonean employees with a view to qualifying them for the position

described above and as required by the company's operations under this Agreement. The Company shall continue to provide local empowerment by outsourcing and using competent and experienced Sierra Leoneans who are contractors to carry out some agricultural and transportation activities within the plantation'

Mr Minister, you can well agree that this is stated in the Agreement; we need to empower the people through education by giving them more training. We also need to look at the wage – what are the levels of enhancement in terms of their practical involvement in terms of the investment at that particular Community.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Colleagues, there is so much in this Agreement that ensure that our people benefit from this company. I just decided to highlight some of these issues so that we can understand exactly where we are going. We are investing in Sierra Leone; we are not taking a specific Chiefdom or Region, our interest is based on where we deem necessary to do investment. We can even shift investment from the East to the North or to the West whenever we notice that an investment is not making sense in a particular locality.

So our idea is predicated on:

1. That location and localization of industry is key; it is not about politics. Our own drive in the New Direction is to make sure that our investment is people-centred. That is the reason when we have issues that have to do with communities we go there and try as much as we can to settle them. We are not perfect Administration, but we know how to handle situations.

On that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Colleagues and Mr Minister, I beg that the Honourable House ratify this Agreement which we agreed to be noncontroversial. May the Lord bless us all
[Applause].

THE SPEAKER: Yes Mr Minister, your response.

THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of Parliament, let me take this opportunity to thank you all for the comments and the issues you have raised. One thing is clear; to collectively agree with the details of the Agreement but with caution in order to make sure that some of the key elements of this Agreement are truly implemented. And this cannot be achieved if we do not provide oversight, and that oversight does not only rest with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, but Parliament has a key role. As all of us are aware, this whole Agreement strongly contributes to His Excellency's **Feed Salone** Programme. It goes beyond the

production and export of Palm Oil, as it is also the intent of the Company to make sure they diversify their investment in this country, particularly in rice.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am also impressed by the contributions of Members of this House regarding the good aspects of the Agreement, especially those relating to Local Content, Tax Obligation, Environment and Social Safeguards issues, Employment and Wages and Salaries. I must say that these are fully taken into consideration and I would make sure we always provide adequate information to this House whenever necessary.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also take note of the observation of one of the Honourable Members of Parliament pertaining the absence of Honourable Sharka Sama. Like the Leader of Government Business rightly said, a few weeks ago, we paid a visit to Sahn Malan where we co-chaired a meeting with the Community. For the first time we were able to mediate a peaceful dialogue between the Community and the Company itself. A set of actions, including the next steps were agreed on. Like the Honourable Leader of Government Business said, most of the issues were centred on Transparency and Accountability. We made sure we commenced the process of addressing those issues, and we made sure we pursue them to the fullest. We allowed the Community to express their concerns and observations and that was eloquently done. We have now created a forum where the Community and the Company are meeting. We would serve as Facilitators and Observers to guide the entire process. We would keep this House posted on any development in that direction.

Again, I also welcome and note clearly the role of the Agricultural Committee; this is well noted. We would make sure that this Committee is fully involved in all oversights, and I would also recommend from our side, for there to be a joint oversight for both the Trade and Agriculture Committees so as to monitor some of the core elements of this Agreement.

Again, Honourable Speaker, Members of this House, a key aspect of this Agreement which is also consistent with the Finance Act of 2024 is the repatriation of whatever revenues they are generating. As all of us are aware, the advent of Covid and the increasing cost of Energy across the globe in recent years have serious implications on our Foreign Exchange Reserve. So this is a key element and we would continue to monitor it together with the National Revenue Authority, the Bank of Sierra Leone and the Ministry of Finance to make sure that we receive those repatriations.

On the allocation on the consumption side, I think that is very good because again, it tells you the progress we have made so far as a country. The fact that we are Net Exporters of Vegetable Oil

means we are making enormous progress and we can continue to do that. Again, that helps us to benefit from the African Free Trade Continental Agreement as well as the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme because these are Agreements that directly benefit countries that specialize in specific commodity and also have comparative advantage. And with this, it gives us that advantage to be able to export to other countries.

Again, I agree with Honourable Members who agreed with me that such an Agreement is also good not only to attract Foreign Direct Investment [FDI], but it also boosts Investment confidence. One of the difficult things to do as we compete for Foreign Direct Investment is to sell what we have. This is because we are also competing with other countries in Africa, particularly West Africa that have the same conditions. But when you hear about a Company investing this amount of money, it boosts and increases Investor's confidence.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, again, I agree with this House that the timeline of investment in this Agreement must be looked at. Let me promise here that I will engage the Company as soon as we can to make sure we review that, and whatever necessary actions we take collectively with the Company, we would inform this House accordingly, and if there is need to do an addendum, we would surely do it. And the advantage is, once you increase a timeline, it ensures economic stability; people are assured of their jobs, they are assured of their contracts- this is fully noted.

I also note the contributions that you have on **Adax**. I will pay a visit there myself and I will engage my colleague Minister of Energy to have a look at **Adax**, this is well noted.

On the issue of Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR], this has been a very thorny issue when it comes to Companies- whether Mining or Agricultural Companies. Like the Leader of Government Business said, many people have utilised those resources for personal gains, or they have been inserted there but never implemented. I would like to implore this House to support the Ministry of Trade to provide adequate Oversight. For anytime you pay visit, let us make sure that whatever details you have relating to Corporate Social Responsibilities are implemented to the letter, and if there are any defaults, let us bring the Company to book. I would support this House to do that because that is the only way the Communities would benefit from whatever investment we have.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, again, I strongly note the concern about investment figures given; not only what we have in this Agreement, but in other Agreements across the board. Let me emphasise that coincidentally and interestingly, the Local Content Agency is seated under the

32

Ministry of Trade; we provide Oversight. I would use that outfit to make sure that we adequately monitor and supervise. We would start with this Company to make sure that the figures that are given are very consistent, so that all other Companies, based on what we have in their Agreements can also adhere to the letter.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also agree with the Honourable Member who strongly pointed out that when many of these Companies want concessions or Tax Breaks, these are some of the things that they insert in the Contracts. But I would make sure this time round that we monitor all of these adequately to ensure that whatever figures or numbers they have in their Agreement are proven to be achieved.

Also, as a government, some of the policies to support this Company include Tax Breaks and Concessions, and these are all consistent with the 2024 Finance Act which makes sure that whatever revenues that are due to Government to implement for its development and social programmes are collected.

On the area of Employment and International Financial requirements, I would like to say that one of the advantages of brining Agreements to this Parliament is to make sure we avoid those fly-by-night Companies or Industries. As we know in the world today, people use all sorts of methods to see how they can siphon or get funds. But I want to assure this House that for a Company of this nature, we would make sure we request for all their Audits Reports– Internal and External, including their Balance Sheet to clearly ascertain whether there are any discrepancies or they are implementing consistent with the Global Financial Laws and the Financial Act of this country.

Again, there is no way we can grow as a country if we do not train our citizens, and the only way we can benefit from training is to diversify that training. No matter the kind of employment a Company provides, or the kind of International Staff it brings, that Company must ensure that we are able to train our locals so that they would be able to perform these jobs in the future. I would use the Local Content Agency to make sure that we develop a strategy and a plan to execute this activity.

On the wages and salaries, we would make sure that they are consistent with what government is providing, and the minimum threshold in terms of our laws.

On that note Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, be it resolved that: this Honourable House hereby ratifies the following Agreement which was laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday 7th November, 2023:

[A] AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AND SOCFIN AGRICULTURAL COMPANY [SL] LIMITED.

Thank you *[Applause]*.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr Minister.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[Government Motion by the Minister of Trade and Industry has been ratified]

THE SPEAKER: Thank you very much Mr Minister, you may leave.

V. BILL

THE APPROPRIATION ACT 2024

COMMITTEE ON SUPPLY – THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

[THE HOUSE RESOLVES INTO COMMITTEE]

HON. IBRAHIM TAWA CONTEH: Mr Chairman, Point of Order before pronouncing the Vote Heads. Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I stand on **S.O** 26.

Mr Chairman, this House deserves the right like any other MDA to have a Public Investment Programme. Mr Chairman, look at our House, look at our seats, this is the only Parliament you would enter and do not have mikes, you do not have headsets that would translate into other languages. Mr Chairman, look at the Press Gallery, if you go to other Parliaments you would find a several nicely built cubicles where you will have foreign Press Men coming into that House and they can sit and translate what they are saying in other languages.

Mr Chairman, we are struggling for UPS. If there is power outage now there would be serious challenge in terms of collecting the Data. Hence the reason, if you go for Hansard, you would not get it. The Record in Parliament is bad because our capacity is low. Mr Chairman, this is the House that people know to have the 'Power of the Purse'. But where is the purse? We have the power and the purse is elsewhere.

Mr Chairman, I therefore move that the Budget of Parliament be extracted from this Budget so that we would have a Parliament befitting the status of Parliamentarians. The Parliament Budget is determined under Sub-section [4] of Section 74.

Mr Chairman, it will sadden you to note that some new MPs that came in were expected to come in and have Offices. As we speak, their offices are at the Canteen and at Members' Lounge; we do not have places to sit *[Applause]*. The Bible says; '*for the Foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head*'; that is where we find ourselves, Mr Chairman. We cannot be like that, and we cannot continue to pass Budgets in this House that would give Public Investment Programmes to Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs] and Parliament does not have Office and we do not have a Public Investment Programmes. That will not happen this term and that will not happen with this particular Budget.

So Mr Chairman, I move that we extract the Parliament Budget *[Applause]*, and we determine our Budget under Sub-section [4] of Section 74 and advice accordingly to the Ministry of Finance *[Applause]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let me hear the Leader of Government Business on this.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, can I call the Leader of Government Business?

THE CHAIRMAN: You should be on your toes, Mr Leader

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: The Leader of Government Business just went out; can you give me one minute to call the Leader of Government Business?

THE CHAIRMAN: You are the Deputy Leader of Government Business.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Definitely, in the absence of the Leader of Government Business, I would be able to react. But today, the Leader of Government Business is here, he has just gone out, so can you give me one minute to call him?

THE CHAIRMAN: I give you two minutes.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Thank you *[The Leader of Government Business returned to the Well shortly]*

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Leader, can I listen to you on this?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Honourable Ibrahim Tawa, do the needful.

HON. DICKSON ROGERS: Mr Chairman, I am not sure that is a bad Motion. Now that the Minister of Finance is here, can we ask him to react to that Motion to hear his view?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, sometimes I do not want to hold any entity responsible for what we are supposed to do but we did not. I do not want you to explain, but I

have been in touch with my Colleagues on the other side on serious issues pertaining to us. The Honourable Member knows very well that these ones are not much pressing. But we have been given timeline on how we are going to address the issue next week. So for me, I want to talk to my colleague, who happens to be the second Whip on the ruling bench and he is supposed to review that of his Motion.

So Honourable Tawa, for further consideration, can you review your Motion please so that we can discuss it later in the Chamber?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, before Honourable Tawa does, let me make my position very clear on this; as a matter of fact Honourable Members, I am a very strong advocate for the Independence - both Administrative and Financial Independence of Parliament [*Applause*]. I am a very strong advocate on that, and I think I strongly believe that the Motion of Honourable Tawa is in place and it is very powerful. It is only that I am not in support of this Parliament holding to ransom other Institutions because of our Budget. But I strongly believe that Parliament must be independent financially.

Honourable Tawa, I would crave your kind indulgence to ensure that you withdraw this one, but when the time comes, because I think Parliament is under a particular group, when we deal with the group where Parliament is, I would advise the Leader of Government Business that we treat Parliament as a special case. This is where your Motion would become extremely relevant. I hope you will agree with me, Honourable Tawa?

HON. IBRAHIM TAWA CONTEH: Thank you Mr Chairman...

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Honourable Tawa, take your seat. For me, I know what I am saying. I am also a very strong advocate for the welfare of Members of Parliament; I have never reneged on what I have said about our privileges here. Even when people were bashing us that I do not have the right to talk about our privileges, I continuously reminded people that we have the right to talk about our privileges. So I will continue to do so.

Mr Chairman, we have self-responsibility to carry. I do not want to go into the Nitti-gritty of the implications. I would want to say that we have reneged to take certain steps. We do not need to hold the Ministry of Finance responsible for what we are going through. So, Honourable Ibrahim Tawa Conteh's Motion is in place, but if we go into the Nitti-gritty of assessing that Motion, I will definitely exonerate the Ministry of Finance.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, no, certainly we are saying the same thing, Honourable Leader of Government Business.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I just want to emphasise on what you have said. So we do not want to hold them to ransom for things that have to do with us.

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: So far, they have cooperated

THE CHAIRMAN: When the time comes....

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Let me just say this sir; we have agreed on a timetable and we have not reneged on that. They have asked us for a document that is more important than the timetable itself, which has to do with the staff and the livelihood of Parliament, so we are waiting.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is alright. And of course, I do not have the slightest doubt in the current establishment of the Ministry of Finance, they have done extremely well. That I can state without scruple, that they have done extremely well, but as a Parliament, we need to do more; we need to reach out to the Ministry of Finance even more and state our case. This is a branch of government, this is not a department of government, this is not an Agency of Government, we are a branch – a whole branch of government and this House should be treated as such.

As a matter of fact, we would continue to push the limit until we get our brothers to understand what our position actually is. Thank you very much Honourable Ibrahim Tawa for bringing us alive again with that particular benign fact. So you can proceed now to withdraw your Motion, if you so wish.

HON. IBRAHIM TAWA CONTEH: Mr Chairman, considering the fact that, as the Deputy Leader [1] rightly puts it, it is a Notice, and you have said when the group that covers Parliament presents, I should reactivate my Notice and if need be, put in a formal Notice. What I was asking this House to do was not to stop the Budget process but to remove or to extract Parliament from the entire Budget process so that we will fulfil the provisions in Section 35 of the Public Financial Management [PFM] Act so that we would have a public investment programme assigned to Parliament which would help in the implementation of the improvement of this Parliament. But however, with the submissions so rightly made by the Chairman and the Leader of Government Business, I put this submission in abeyance, and I hope the Ministry of Finance knows that we are covered by the Constitution and we are aware of our powers in the Public Financial Management

Act, and for the first time in 2023 whilst approving the 2024 Budget, we would seek to utilize those powers, thank you Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, this is just a note of caution; you know at one point in time we nearly as a House gave you an award for being the best friend of Parliament, continue in that line. Thank you very much. Let us proceed.

PRONOUNCEMENT OF VOTE HEADS AND CORRESPONDING ESTIMATES

MR SHEKU FANTAMADI BANGURA *[The Minister of Finance]*: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I move that the following Vote Heads stand part of the schedule

Table 1: BUDGET HEADS AND SUB- HEADS: 2023			
VOTE	DIVISION	VOTE DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SUM VOTED LE
132	01	Accountant General Department	39,849,100.00
409	01	Ministry of Trade and Industry	6,958,700.00
124	04	Sierra Leone Law School	1,558,000.00
318	01	Ministry of Environment	9,696,300.00
409	02	Sierra Leone Standards Bureau	4,866,000.00
110	08	Law Reform Commission	2,031,700.00
300	01	Ministry of Technical & Higher Education	62,237,120.00
117	01	Cabinet Secretariat	6,400,000.00
402	01	Ministry of Fisheries & Marine Resources	23,756,300.00
305	01	Ministry of Social Welfare	17,871,400.00
409	05	Sierra Leone Producing Monitoring Board	3,621,200.00
422	01	Sierra Leone Metrological Agency	5,963,300.00
409	06	Consumer Protection Commission	1,405,300.00
701	02	Kailahun District Council	13,802,906.00

701	10	Koinadugu District Council	8,695, 237.00
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*Suspension of **S.O** 5[2]*

*[THE FOLLOWING VOTE HEADS AND CORRESPONDING ESTIMATES AS PRONOUNCED BY THE
MINISTER OF FINANCE STAND PART OF THE SCHEDULE].*

Report of the sectorial Committee under consideration by the Chairman of Group 5

APPROPRIATION ACT

GROUP 5 REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGE NO.
Cover Page	
Table Of Contents	1
Introduction	2
Procedure	3
Membership of the Committee	3
General Observations and Recommendations	4
Specific Observations and Findings	4 -26
Accountant General Department	4-6
Ministry of Trade and Industry	6-7
Sierra Leone Law School	7-9
Ministry of Environment & Climate Change	9-10
Sierra Leone Standards Bureau	11-12
Law Reform Commission	13 -14

Ministry of Technical & Higher Education	14 -15
Cabinet Secretariat	15-16
Ministry of Fisheries & Marine Resources	17-18
Ministry of Social Welfare	18-19
Sierra Leone Producing Monitoring Board	20-21
Sierra Leone Metrological Agency	21-22
Consumer Protection Commission	22-24
Kailahun District Council	24-25
Koinadugu District Council	25-26
Conclusion	27

1. INTRODUCTION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in exercise of the powers enshrined in Section 112, Sub-section 6 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No.6 of 1991, and Standing Order [S.O] 66[1], Parliament is mandated to examine the various budgetary heads for the Bill entitled, **'the Appropriation Act 2024'**, as committed to the Appropriation Sub-Committee or Committee of Supply 5.

The said Bill seeks to consolidate efforts aimed at restoring fiscal discipline in the management of the economy under the major theme **'Restoring Micro Economic Stability Whilst Protecting the Poor and Vulnerable'**.

The Report, hereby presented is in line with the Government's Big Five Game Changer Policy after thorough scrutiny of budgetary allocations of the under-mentioned Ministry Department and Agencies [MDA] and Local Councils from the **30th November to 7th December, 2023**.

The under-mentioned MDAs and Local Councils and their proposed 2023 budget estimates read as follow:

Table 1: BUDGET HEADS AND SUB- HEADS: 2023			
VOTE	DIVISION	VOTE DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SUM VOTED LE

132	01	Accountant General Department	39,849,100.00
409	01	Ministry of Trade and Industry	6,958,700.00
124	04	Sierra Leone Law School	1,558,000.00
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305	01	Ministry of Social Welfare	17,871,400.00
409	05	Sierra Leone Producing Monitoring Board	3,621,200.00
422	01	Sierra Leone Metrological Agency	5,963,300.00
409	06	Consumer Protection Commission	1,405,300.00
701	02	Kailahun District Council	13,802,906.00
701	10	Koinadugu District Council	8,695, 237.00

2. PROCEDURE

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, correspondences were sent to all Vote Controllers requesting their physical presence along with their core staff members. In line with S.O 66[1], the questionnaire requested Vote Controllers, Senior Officials and Accountants to respond to questions relating to their Budgetary Allocations, state their challenges and provide explanation on how they have been carrying out their mandate. This was meant to determine the efficient and effective use of financial resources.

During the course of the exercise, the Committee observed traditionally established Parliamentary procedures. For instance, reading the relevant provisions in the Constitution and the Standing Orders to emphasise the Committee's legal standing, and putting witnesses on oath to ascertain the veracity and accuracy of their responses to the Committee, as provided in Section 93, Sub-section 6[a] of the 1991 Constitution.

3. COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Sub Appropriation Committee - 5 comprised the following Members:

HONOURABLE MEMBERS

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1) Hon. Nenneh Lebbie | - Chairman |
| 2) Hon. Wuyata Bernadette Songa | - Deputy Chairman |
| 3) Hon. Haja Miatta Amara | |
| 4) Hon. Ibrahim Aziz Bangura | |
| 5) Hon. Daniel Amadu Bangura | |
| 6) Hon. Daniel Fofana | |
| 7) Hon. Kemokai Abu | |
| 8) Hon. Mohamed Kanneh | |
| 9) Hon. Rugiatu Kamara | |
| 10) Hon. Brima Mansaray | |
| 11) Hon. Mohamed Sheriff Rahman - Coker | |
| 12) Hon. Musa Lahai | |
| 13) Hon. Musa Peter Moigua | |

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

1. Kemoh Marrah - Lead Clerk
2. Mary J. Thomas - Koroma
3. Georgiana A. Walker
4. Philip George
5. Augustine Samba

4. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the following recommendations will do us good for the entire MDAs under the Committee's purview:

- During thorough scrutiny, the Committee observed that 90% of the MDAs received an average increment of 34.4 % budgetary allocation between FY 2023 – FY 2024 from the Ministry of Finance.

According to the Committee, this trend is encouraging, but also emphasised on key priorities and timely disbursement which had been the usual case with some MDAs that did

not receive their 3rd & 4th Quarter allocations to implement deliverable services. This also affects productivity and overall service delivery. The Committee recommends for timely disbursement;

- It was also observed that the increase in the general budgetary allocations between FY 2023 and FY 2024 accounted for Le 7. 3 billion Leones. This increase is as a result of the general increase in prices of essential goods and services, expenditure patterns in general administrative costs, fuel cost, travel cost, contracts etc. The Ministry of Finance should consider the general increase in prices for allocations to meet deliverable targets;
- Members of the Committee observed inconsistencies in the opening and closing balances of some MDAs. This makes it difficult to balance their bank statements. The Committee urged the Finance Officers to update their financial statements in a financially prudent and transparent order;
- As a result of the limited time frame of notification, a good number of MDAs could not submit their Questionnaires or attend the hearing session as scheduled. During the course of the exercise Members noticed that some MDAs were unable to provide relevant supporting documents relating to actualizing deliverables. This affected Committee hearing schedules by Sub- Appropriation Committees. The Leadership of Parliament should emphasise on meeting the financial calendar as enshrined in the Constitution.

5. SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, below are the specific observations and findings on the MDAs and Local Councils assigned to Committee 5:

VOTE (132-00) ACCOUNTANT GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Accountant-General's Department is headed by the Accountant-General who is the Chief Accounting Officer of the Government. The Department's vision is to develop quality accounting class and the promotion of efficient accounting system with the budgetary agencies, accurate and comprehensive public accounts. Its mission is to receive all public moneys payable into the consolidated fund, provide custody of such moneys, management and control of public sector finances and keeping and publishing public accounts as required by law.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Department Key approved deliverables and Budget Expenditure:

NAME OF DELIVERABLE	BUDGET EXPENDITURE [LE]	TOTAL ACTUAL EXPENDITURE [LE]
Administrative and Operational Cost	11,000,000.00	9,524,535.00
Development Quality Accounting Class	4,000,000.00	903,566.49
Development of Quality accounting Class	3,500,000.00	1,939,549.00
IFMIS Application	11,416,000.00	19,003,063.00
IFMIS ICT Infrastructure	84,000.00	50,400.00
GRAND TOTAL	30,000,000.00	20,591,230.40

Mr Chairman Hon. Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Department's budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved (Total)	30,000,000.00
2	Amount Allocated	45,586,489.00
3	Actual Budget disbursed (Q1 to Q3)	29,545,615.00
4	Actual Expenditure	20,591,230.40

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament Approved the sum of **Le30,000,000.00** to the Accountant General department. The Committee noted an increased in the Department's approved budget from **Le30,000,000.00** to the budget allocated of **Le45,586,489.00** in 2023, and registering **34.19%** increased.

For the F.Y 2023, the Department did not undertake any capital expenditure or project.

For the F.Y 2024, the table below show the Department Key approved deliverables and Budget Expenditure:

NAME OF DELIVERABLE	BUDGET EXPENDITURE LE
Administrative and Operational Cost	14,599,120.00

Development Quality Accounting Class	9,680,486.00
Development of Quality accounting Class	22,877,940.00
IFMIS Application	3,736,603.00
GRAND TOTAL	50,894,149.00

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised by MoF	39,849,100.00
2	Budget Submissions	50,894,149.00
3	Budget to be Approved	39,849,100.00

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, **For 2024 FY**, the Department submitted a budget of **Le50,894,149.00** but the sum of **Le39,849,100.00** is to be approved by Parliament. According to the Vote Controller, the **21.61%** decrease would affect the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS).

Key findings during the hearing

- The Committee observed that the Department had MOU with the Ministry of Finance to support some workers that had been working before the establishment of NaSSIT with 2.5% NaSSIT contribution; and that would end by 2024;
- The Department also undertook repatriation venture for Financial Attaches
- The Department has been investing to build skills in employees such Chartered Accountants and also catering to retain core and professional staff.

VOTE (409 – 01) MINISTRY OF TRADE & INDUSTRY

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, the Ministry of Trade's mandate is to implement National Trade and Industrial policies, provides policy guidance and supervises the nine (9) Departments and Agencies under its purview for efficient and effective service delivery to the citizens of Sierra Leone. The Ministry's vision is to envisage a private sector-led economy which will ensure that

socio-economic needs of the citizens are met through private sector development, job and wealth creation.

For the F.Y 2023, the Ministry Key approved deliverables was Administrative cost of which the Ministry actually spent the sum of **Le6,232,880.09**

Mr Chairman Hon. Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Ministry's budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Total Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved	3,940,000.00
2	Amount Allocated	5,241,060.49
3	Actual Budget received (Q1 to Q3) including Donation/Grant received from UNDP	6,232,880.09
4	Actual Expenditure from GoSL Regular Budget(Q1 to Q3) including supplementary budget	5,315,936.45

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament Approved the sum of **Le3,940,000.00** to the Ministry. The Committee noted an increase in the Ministry's approved budget from **Le3,940,000.00** to the actual budget received from Q1 to Q3 of **Le5,241,060.49** in 2023, and registering **24.82%** increased.

With regards revenue generation, the Ministry collected revenue of **Le35,482,957.00 in 2023**. Revenue is not projected by the Ministry.

For the F.Y 2023, the Ministry did not undertake any capital expenditure or project.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Total Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised by MoF	6,958,700.00
2	Budget Submissions	11,885,000.00
3	Budget to be Approved	6,958,700.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **for 2024 FY**, the Ministry submitted a budget of **Le11,885,000.00** but the sum of **Le6,958,700.00** was to be approved by Parliament, registered **41.45%** increase. According to the Permanent Secretary the decrease in the Ministry original budget submitted will affect priority areas such as; Private sector Development, Statutory Oversee Travelling, Stationary, Computer Running Cost, Electricity, Fuel, and Water etc.

The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Trade and Industry should enhance the revenue generation role of Standard Bureau especial the **15%** inspection fees which was suspended.

VOTE (124 – 04) SIERRA LEONE LAW SCHOOL

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members, the Sierra Leone Law School provides professional legal training and conducts final examinations for those persons seeking to become members of the legal profession in Sierra Leone. Since 1990 the Law school has been enrolling graduates holding Honours Degree in law awarded by the University of Sierra Leone or holding any other degree in Law from a recognized University or any other institution of higher learning of a commonwealth country approved by the Council of Legal Education.

Mr Chairman Honourable Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Law School's budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Total Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved	1,200, 000.00
2	Amount Allocated	N/A
3	Actual Budget received (Q1 to Q3) including Donation/Grant received from UNDP	N/A
4	Actual Expenditure from GoSL Regular Budget(Q1 to Q3) including supplementary budget	N/A

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament Approved the sum of **Le1,200,000.00** for the Sierra Leone Law School. The Committee noted with dismay that, since the start of the first quarter of FY2022 to date the institution has not received allocation from the Government Regular budget and also did not undertake any capital and recurrent expenditure.

The School registered an opening balance of **Le1, 390,357.52** as a rollover with a closing balance of **Le1, 321,012.30** as at 30th September, 2023.

With regards revenue generation, the Institution collected revenue of **Le7,750, 650.00** in **2023**, thereby exceeds its original target of **Le7,500,000.00**. The increase, according to the Director, was due to the increment in fees. In this regard, the School's revenue target for the **FY 2024** is **Le9, 000,000.00**

For the F.Y 2023, the School did not undertake any capital expenditure or project.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Total Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised by MoF	1,358,000.00
2	Budget Submissions	1,358,000.00
3	Budget to be Approved	1,200,000.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **for 2024 FY**, the Institution submitted a budget proposal of **Le1,358,000.00** but the sum of **Le1,200,000.00** is to be approved by Parliament, hence registered **11.63%** decrease. According to the Director of the Institution, there is a decrease in the School original budget submitted and this will affect priority areas such as; Administrative cost and the operations of the School.

Key Findings

- During the probing, the Sierra Leone Law School reported that the Administration only received allocation for the 1st Quarter of FY 2022 and since then nothing have been received. This affected deliverable targets as planned and also increase their debts obligations since they now depend on fees to support some staff and administrative running costs. The Committee therefore urged the Ministry of Finance to speedily look in to the administrative challenge of the Institution in respect to budgetary allocations and on timely basis;

VOTE (318-01) MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members, the Ministry of Environment is responsible for a range of government policies related to the protection and management of the environment and its natural resources. The Ministry is charged with the responsibility of supervising government agencies in addressing different environmental issues.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Ministry Key approved deliverables and Actual Budget Expenditures:

No.	Name of Deliverable	Budgeted Expenditure (NLe)	Total Actual Expenditure (NLe)
1	Institutional Strengthening and capacity Building	2,000,000.00	
2	Rehabilitation and Alternative Livelihood for Degraded Communities	2,000,000.00	
3	Strengthening institutional Capacity of the Ministry and Day to Day operational cost	4,150,000.00	3,722,500.00
4	Natural Resources Management (UNDP)	3,920,200.00	1,915,910.00
5	National Tree Planting, Reforestation & Afforestation Project	25,728,705.40	11,167,500.00
	GRAND TOTAL	37,798,905.40	16,805,910.00

Mr Chairman Hon. Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Ministry's budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved	4,150,000.00
2	Amount Allocated	3,722,500.00
3	Actual Budget received (Q1 to Q3)	7,385,725.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le4, 150,000.00** for the Ministry. The Committee noted a decrease in the Ministry's approved budget from **Le3,722,500.00** to the actual budget received (Q1 to Q3) of **Le7,385,725.00** in 2023, and registering a **49.60%** dropped. There was an opening balance of **Le1, 140,921.63** as a rollover with a closing balance of **Le2, 846,027.46** as at 30th September, 2023.

With regards revenue generation, the Ministry collected revenue of **Le6, 000,000.00** in **2023** and did not meet its original target of **Le5,600,000.00**. The decrease, according to the Executive Director, was due to the following; Porous border crossing point, bottlenecks in the enforcement of legislations, Poor inter-ministerial, and collaboration. In this regard, the Ministry revenue target for the **FY 2024** is **Le7, 050,000.00**.

For the F.Y 2023, the Ministry did not undertake any capital expenditure or project.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Total Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	9,696,300.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	11,119,700.00
3	Budget Approved	9,696,300.00

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, **For 2024 FY**, the Ministry submitted a budget of **Le11,119,700.00** but the sum of **Le9,696,300.00** is to be approved by Parliament, registering **2.80%** decrease. According to the Permanent Secretary the decrease in the Ministry original budget submitted will affect priority areas such as:

- Institutional Strengthening – establishment of provincial offices, adequate working equipment and tools, vehicles, motorbikes, capacity building and participation of staff in local and international meetings.
- Alternative livelihood project; land transformative Project
- Strengthening of legislation and the legislative framework – Review of outdated Laws; ratification of conventions and statutory instruments/covenants.

- National Tree Planting Project
- Environmental education/Dissemination of Environmental Information – Massive environmental awareness raising programs – Electronic and print media, meet the people campaign, other engagements with local communities, countrywide.

Considering environmental challenges at global level the Committee urges the Ministry of Finance to critical look into the budgetary allocation of the Ministry of Environment to achieve their deliverable target.

VOTE [409-02] SIERRA LEONE STANDARDS BUREAU

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau (SLSB) was created by the Standards Act of 1996, with the responsibility to coordinate standardisation and quality management activities in Sierra Leone. In addition, the Bureau is mandated by the Weight and Measures Act of 2010 to authorise and validate the use of metric system of measurement in the entire country. **For the F.Y 2023**, the table below shows the Bureau Key approved deliverables and Actual Budget Expenditure:

NAME OF DELIVERABLE	BUDGET EXPENDITURE [LE]	TOTAL ACTUAL EXPENDITURE [LE]
Administrative Cost	1,508,840.00	787,727.00
Testing of Products	1,465,000.00	680,500.00
Statutory Verification of Weighing and Measuring Instruments	350,000.00	335,284.00
Market Surveillance	250,000.00	210,000.00
GRAND TOTAL	3,573,840.00	2,013,511.00

Mr Chairman Honourable Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Bureau's budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved	4,363,000.00

2	Amount Allocated	1,295,000.00
3	Actual Budget disbursed (Q1 to Q3)	1,295,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure	2,013,511.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le4, 363,000.00** for the Bureau. The Committee noted a decrease in the Bureau's approved budget from **Le4, 363,000.00** to the budget allocation of **Le1,295,000.00** in 2023, and registering **70.32%** dropped. And there was an opening balance of **Le 197,886.55** as a rollover with a closing balance of **Le3, 250.50** as at 30th September, 2023. With regards revenue generation, the Bureau collected revenue of **Le2, 418,565.19** in **2023**, and did not meet its original target of **Le17, 097,500.00**. The decrease, according to the Executive Director, was largely due to the following;

- i. Destination Inspection (DI) fees collected by the Ministry of Finance
- ii. Low percentage of fees charged for services provided by the Bureau
- iii. Lack of Vehicle and adequate personnel to effectively monitor compliance with mandatory conformity testing of products prior to marketing and export
- iv. Testing laboratories not yet accredited to International standards
- v. Limited test scopes/parameters due to lack of laboratory resources, especially analytical equipment and standby generator. In this regard, the Bureau revenue target for **FY 2024** is **Le 17,295,000.00**.

For the F.Y 2023, the Bureau did not undertake any capital expenditure or project.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised	4,866,000.00
2	Budget Submissions	8,000,000.00
3	Budget to be Approved	4,866,000.00

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, **For 2024 FY**, the Bureau submitted a budget of **Le8,000,000.00** but the sum of **Le4,866,000.00** is to be approved by Parliament. According to the Executive Director, the **39.18%** decrease would affect the following;

- i. Poor inspection, market surveillance, calibration and verification of weights and weighting instruments, unsatisfactory turn – around times for laboratory testing.
- ii. Inadequate laboratory equipment
- iii. Inability to perform some laboratory tests
- iv. Logistics – Vehicles, office equipment etc.
- v. Decentralisation and establishment of Regional Offices
- vi. Payment of Subscriptions to International Standards Organisation
- vii. Overseas traveling – conferences / seminars

Key Finding

- During the hearing process the Committee observed that Standard Bureau had challenge in receiving its 15% for inspection fees. This affected its revenue generation stream under the Ministry of Trade. The Committee recommends that the 15% for inspection fees be reinstated to Standard Bureau for its revenue collection.

VOTE (110 – 08) LAW REFORM COMMISSION

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, the Law Reform Commission was established as an Agency of Government under the Law Reform Commission Decree in 1994 and as amended in 1999. The Commission has a statutory mandate to review the Laws of Sierra Leone for the purpose of the need for reforms, consolidation and codification.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below shows the Commission Key approved deliverables and Actual Budget Expenditure:

NAME OF DELIVERABLE	BUDGET EXPENDITURE [LE]	TOTAL ACTUAL EXPENDITURE [LE]
Administrative Cost		
Generation Administration and Operating Cost	650,000.00	439,340.00
Research Planning and Report Writing	200,000.00	54,591.00
Review and development of Legislation	150,000.00	245,746.00
GRAND TOTAL	1,000,000.00	739,677.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Commission's budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved	1,000,000.00
2	Amount Allocated	1,000,000.00
3	Actual Budget disbursed (Q1 to Q3) including other revenue	854,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure	739,677.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, the Commission presents an opening balance of **Le115, 684.89** as a rollover with a closing balance of **Le265, 709.02** as at 30th September, 2023. **For the F.Y 2023**, the Commission did not undertake any capital expenditure or project.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised	1,131,600.00
2	Budget Submissions	3,278,400.00
3	Budget to be Approved	2,031,700.00

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, **For 2024 FY**, the Commission submitted a budget of **Le3,278,400.00**, but the sum of **Le2,031,700** is to be approved by Parliament. According to the Secretary to the Commission, there is a **38.03%** decrease and such would precipitate bottlenecks in the delivery of their services; hence low productive outcome in the reform and update of the law in Sierra Leone.

The Commission revealed that they have challenged with inadequate government allocation to implement key deliverables as per their mandates and they also faced with inadequate number of staff for service delivery nationwide. The Committee recommends for timely interventions to support the Commission.

VOTE [300-01] MINISTRY OF TECHNICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Mr. Chairman, Hon. Members, the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education was established to provide opportunities for Sierra Leoneans to acquire knowledge and skills in tertiary institutions and nurture good attitudes and values for economic growth and self-reliance.

Mr Chairman Hon. Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Ministry's budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved	179,780,000.00
2	Amount Allocated	132,568,600.00
3	Actual Budget received (Q1 to Q3) (including other Revenue)	62,436,404.86
4	Actual Expenditure from GoSL Regular Budget(Q1 to Q3) (including Supplementary budgets)	57,045,182.86

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament Approved the sum of **Le179, 780,000.00** to the Ministry. The Committee noted a decrease in the Ministry's approved budget from **Le179,780,000.00** to the actual budget received between (Q1 to Q3) in the sum of **Le62,436,404.86** in 2023, and registering **65.27%** decreased. And there was an opening balance of **Le56, 379.74** as a rollover with a closing balance of **Le22, 091.36** as at 30th September, 2023.

With regards revenue generation, the Ministry collected revenue of **Le62,436,404.86** in **2023**, according to the Permanent Secretary there is no Revenue Target set for the FY 2023 and 2024 respectively. Therefore, there is no reason for exceeding or not meeting their revenue target.

For the F.Y 2023, the Ministry did not undertake any capital expenditure or project.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised	187,488,300.00
2	Budget Submissions	256,749,900.00
3	Budget to be Approved	62,237,120.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the Ministry submitted a budget of **Le256,749,900.00** but the sum of **Le62,237,120.00** is to be approved by Parliament, registered **75.76%** decrease. According to the Permanent Secretary the decrease in the Ministry's original budget submission **for FY 2024** will affect the following;

- Public Tertiary Institutions

- Polytechnics
- TVET Centres
- Government Technical Institutes nationwide
- Teacher Training Colleges

The Ministry of Technical and Higher Education reported to the Committee that they have little or no control over the revenue generation and expenditure of universities as a supervisory Ministry.

Therefore, the Committee recommends an investigation into extra charges levied by some Universities on students, which are not reported to the Ministry. The Committee also recommends that the Ministry should take full responsibility as a supervisory body.

VOTE (117 - 01) CABINET SECRETARIAT

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Cabinet Secretariat is a pivotal state institution with a unique constitutional mandate to support the decision making function of the Cabinet. The head is both the Secretary to the Cabinet and the Head of Civil Service. This dual authority makes the cabinet Secretariat an important part of Government. Its core function includes organising the business of Cabinet, as well as coordinating and supervising administrative and professional heads of MDAs. The Secretariat draws its legal mandate from Section 59[1] of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone which spells out the creation of this Secretariat and Section 68 [1, 2 & 3] which talks about the appointment of the Secretary to the Cabinet by the President in consultation with the Public Service Commission. The crucial role of the Cabinet in decision making process therefore requires a capable Secretariat to facilitate the smooth running of the Cabinet.

Mr Chairman Hon. Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Secretariat budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved	3,146,981.60
2	Amount Allocated	1,184,500.00
3	Actual Budget received (Q1 to Q3) including supplementary budget	2,647,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GoSL Regular Budget(Q1 only)	1,936,000.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le3,146,981.60** for the Secretariat. The Committee noted a decrease in the Secretariat's approved budget from **Le3,146,981.60** to the actual budget received of **Le2,647,000.00** in 2023, and registering **15.89%** decreased. During probing the Committee observed that there was an opening balance of **Le50, 650.40** as a rollover with a closing balance of **Le2,117.23** as at 30th September, 2023. The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised	3,147,000.00
2	Budget Submissions	6,593,100.00
3	Budget to be Approved	6,400,000.00

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, **For 2024 FY**, the Secretariat submitted a budget of **Le6,593,100.00** but the sum of **Le6,400,000.00** is to be approved by Parliament. According to the Vote Controller, **2.93%** decrease will affect the following areas;

- Coordination of Cabinet Affairs
- Evidence Inform Policy Making
- Regional and Global Partnerships
- Facilitate the Development of service delivery charter
- Establishment of Public Service Academy
- Administrative and Support Service
- Performance Management for Senior Civil Servants
- Monitor the implementation of Cabinet Decisions

VOTE (402 – 01) MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources is playing a great role in resource mobilisation for the Government and also is one of the ministries identified by this Government to diversify the current economy. Its core mandate is to formulate policies, coordinate and supervise the management of fisheries and Marine Resources in the country.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for the FY 2023, the Ministry key approved deliverables and annual budget expenditures incurred sum up to Le 6, 785,011.50

Mr Chairman Hon. Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Ministry's budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved	17,900,000.00
2	Amount Allocated	18,122,500.00
3	Actual Budget received (Q1 to Q3)	11,746,250.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GoSL Regular Budget(Q1 to Q3)	11,746,250.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le17, 900,000.00** for the Ministry. The Committee noted a decrease in the Ministry's approved budget from **Le17,900,000.00** to the actual budget received (Q1 to Q3) of **Le11,746,250.00** in 2023, and registering **34%** dropped. There was an opening balance of **Le381, 165.40** as a rollover with a closing balance of **Le2, 776,981.40** as at 30th September, 2023.

With regards revenue generation, the Ministry collected the sum of **Le82, 923,492.00** in FY **2023**, and did not meet its original target of **Le110, 000,000.00**. The decrease, according to the Executive Director, was due to the following;

- i. Some Fishing Companies have been unable to pay debts for fines and have requested waiver of debts.
- ii. The Ukraine / Russia war caused fuel likes and increased fish prices and decline revenue.
- iii. The current Palestine / Israel war may further increase fuel price affect fisheries investment. In this regard, the Ministry revenue target for the **FY 2024** is **Le120, 000,000.00**.

For the F.Y 2023, the Ministry did not undertake any capital expenditure or project.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised	23,181,000.00
2	Budget Submissions	23,181,000.00
3	Budget to be Approved	23,756,300.00

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, **For 2024 FY**, the Ministry submitted a budget of **Le23,181,000.00** but the sum of **Le23,756,300.00** is to be approved by Parliament, registering **2.48%** increase.

VOTE [305- 01] MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Vision and Mission of this Ministry among other things, is to “protect and promote the rights of women, children, elderly, people with disabilities and other marginalized groups through development, review, implementation and monitoring of favourable laws and policies.

The Ministry in 2019 was separated into two the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Children’s affairs. Over the years, the government has made numerous efforts to develop and enact a range of laws, policies and strategies at the National level and International level to tackle gender inequality and discrimination. This included the passage of the three “Gender Justice Laws” which respectively addressed domestic violence, improve women’s access to land through inheritance, and strengthen women’s rights in marriage and divorce through a registration process.

Consistent with its mission and vision, the Ministry has over the years made strides to achieve several objectives including, but not limited to, the review of the National Gender Strategic Plan, formulation of the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Policy, provide capacity building support.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Ministry Key approved deliverables and Budget Expenditure:

NAME OF DELIVERABLE	TOTAL ACTUAL EXPENDITURE [LE]
General Administrative and support services	1,800,000.00
Mid-Term Review and End – Year Evaluation	250,000.00
Review MSW Strategic Plan	250,000.00
Undertake pilot Research on Persons with disability and destitute street Beggars	250,000.00
Quarterly monitoring of MSW and Partners activities	250,000.00

Provide GoSL support to Muslim Pilgrims	6,000,000.00
Provide reintegration and psychosocial support to returning migrants	200,000.00
Roll-Out the Revised national action Plan against Trafficking persons	1,000,000.00
Provide Grants to key welfare Institutions and other Vulnerable groups	2,300,000.00
Provision of Diets and Sundry items to Promote Welfare of Vulnerable Persons	1,300,000.00
Observe annual advocacy Events to Promote Welfare of Vulnerable Persons	100,000.00
Provide Seed Money for the Establishment of SORIHAT Fund	700,000.00
GRAND TOTAL	14,400,000.00

Mr Chairman Honourable Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Ministry's budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved (Total)	14,700,000.00
2	Amount Allocated	12,230,000.00
3	Grant Received	3,666,712.80
	Actual Amount Received GoSL Regular Budget	9,049,832.98
4	Actual Expenditure	11,845,529.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le14, 700,000.00** for the Ministry of Social Welfare. The Committee noted a decrease in the Ministry's approved budget from **Le14, 700,000.00** to the budget allocated of **Le12, 230,000.00** in 2023 FY and registering **16.80%** drop. There was an opening balance of **Le2, 312,424.00** as a rollover with a closing balance of **Le2, 703,745.00** as at 30th September, 2023.

For the F.Y 2023, the Ministry did not undertake any capital expenditure or projects.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised	19,806,300.00
2	Budget Submissions	45,317,245.00
3	Budget to be Approved	17,871,400.00

For 2024 FY, the Ministry submitted a budget of **Le45, 317,245.00** but the sum of **Le17, 871,400.00** is to be approved by Parliament.

According to the Vote Controller, the **60.56%** decrease will affect the following areas:

- i. General Administration and support Services
- ii. Diets for Approved Schools and Remand Homes
- iii. Grants to Welfare Institutions
- iv. Hajj Activities
- v. Planning programmes

VOTE (409 – 05) SIERRA LEONE PRODUCE MONITORING BOARD [SLPMB]

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, the Sierra Leone Produce Monitoring Board was set up by an Act of Parliament in 2013 to promote production, processing, and marketing of high quality produce, particularly cocoa, coffee, palm products, cashew nut, cassava, ginger, Bennie seed, rubber, piassava, rice, among others. As provided in the 2013 Act, the Board is also responsible:

- ❖ to regulate, promote and improve the marketing of produce in order to optimise the export earning of farmers;
- ❖ to encourage the production of quality produce in order to meet international standards; and
- ❖ to ensure that farmers are paid fair prices for their produce by periodically announcing the indicating prices.

Mr Chairman Hon. Members, **for 2023 FY**, the Boards budget analysis is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Approved	3,200,000.00
2	Amount Allocated	480,000.00
3	Actual Budget received (Q1 only)	480,000.00

4	Actual Expenditure from GoSL Regular Budget(Q1 only)	480,000.00
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Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le3, 200,000.00** for the Board. The Committee noted a decrease in the Board's approved budget from **Le3,200,000.00** to the actual budget received of **Le480,000.00** in 2023, and registering **85%** decreased.

With regards revenue generation, the Board collected revenue of **Le13, 878,462** in **2023**, thereby exceeding its original target of **Le10, 550,920.69**. In this regard, the Board revenue target for the **FY 2024** is **Le 17,865,271.60**

For the F.Y 2023, the Board did not undertake any capital expenditure or project.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceilings Advised	3,621,200.00
2	Budget Submissions	3,621,199.90
3	Budget to be Approved	3,621,200.00

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, **For 2024 FY**, the Board submitted a budget of **Le3,621,199.90** but the sum of **Le3, 621,200.00** is to be approved by Parliament.

VOTE [422 – 01] SIERRA LEONE METEOROLOGICAL AGENCY

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency was an Agency under the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, but now under the Ministry of Environment, with the mandate to provide cost effective weather and climate services by collecting, processing, archiving and disseminating meteorological and climatological information to support end-users and thus contributing to the management of Sierra Leone environment.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Agency key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No.	Name of Deliverable	Budget Expenditure (Le)	Actual Expenditure (Le)
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1.	Administrative Cost Enhanced Logistical support service delivery	3,000,000.00	600.00
2	Improved quality of forecasts, advisories and early warning (Aviation, Marine, Hydro-met and Agro-met)	2,000,000.00	500.00
3	More users have the ability to integrate weather and climate information into decision making to enhance their resilience to climate change	1,200,000.00	300.00
4	More stakeholders are involved in the development of user – oriented services, resource mobilization and in providing feedback	600,000.00	219.30
5	QMS in line with World meteorology organization standards to meet international standard.	1,200,000.00	300.00
	TOTAL	8,000,000.00	1,919.30

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	1,919,300.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	1,919,300.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3) (including other revenue and Donation / Grant / Loan	6,547,270.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3) including supplementary, donation and other revenues	1,392,658.53

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le1, 919,300.00** for the Agency. The Committee noted an increase in the Agency's approved budget from **Le1,919,300.00** to the actual budget received of **Le6,547,270.00** in 2023, and registering **70.69%** increased due to the another revenue received from Donation / Grant / Loan amongst others.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
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1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	5,963,000.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	8,591,870.00
3	Budget to be Approved	5,963,300.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget to be approved by parliament is **Le5, 963,000.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Agency original budget submission from **Le8, 591,870.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le5, 963,300.00**. In 2024, registering **30.59%** drop.

According to the Director General the decrease in the original budget submitted will affect the following;

- Aviation meteorological operations
- International climate change domestication
- Agro-met operations
- Expansion of early warning system for the safety of people
- Marine meteorology on weather climate change related activities
- Public engagement on weather climate change related activities
- Internal and external training of meteorological Technicians
- Procurement of weather stations
- Regional monitoring and administrative operations
- Climate Change domestication

The Committee acknowledged the important role of the Metrological Department in providing timely, accurate and reliable weather observations, data , forecasts and early warnings for protecting life and property etc., but from the scrutiny process the Committee observed that the Agency's operations are purely cantered on providing data and metrological pro-bono service. The Committee therefore recommends for a cost recovery revenue regulation of this Agency, in light of service delivery to meets its deliverable targets.

VOTE (409 - 06) NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMISSION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the National Consumer Protection Commission is responsible for monitoring the operation of consumer markets in Sierra Leone and consider how they may be improved for the long – term interests of consumers and also conduct research on consumer protection policies, enactments and improve on them, investigate allegations of non – compliance

with this Act and take action to ensure that appropriate remedies are imposed. The Commission recognizes consumer bodies duly registered under any enactment as the proper bodies, in their area of operation, to represent consumer disseminate information to enable consumers to acquire knowledge of consumer rights and obligations.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For the F.Y 2023**, the Ministry Key approved deliverables were Administrative cost and Procurement of ICT and other equipment to conclude setting up of the NCPC, which the Commission actually spent the total sum of **Le412,992.77**.

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	3,500,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	3,500,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 & Q2)	1,050,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)(including supplementary budget)	1,076,036.62

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le3, 500,000.00** for the Commission. The Committee noted a decrease in the Commission's approved budget from **Le3,500,000.00** to the actual budget received of **Le1,050,000.00** in 2023, and registering **70%** decreased. And there was an opening balance of **Le482, 332.95** rollover with a closing balance of **Le351,826.95** as at 30th September, 2023.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	2024 (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	3,433,150.00
2	Original Budget submitted to MoF	3,433,600.00
3	Budget Approved	4,210,700.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget to be approved by Parliament is **Le4, 210,700.00**. The Committee noted an increase in the Commission's original budget submission from **Le3, 433,600.00** to the actual budget to be approved in the sum of **Le4, 210,700.00**. In 2024, registering **18.46%** increase. According to the Secretary, the decrease in the Commission's original budget submitted would affect the following areas;

- The number of intended recruitment for the year 2024.
- Confirmation & Promotion of Civil Servants

- Human Resource Audit in Public Service entities

The Commission revealed that they have challenged with inadequate government allocation to implement key deliverables as per their mandates and they also faced with inadequate number of staff for service delivery nationwide. **The Committee recommends for timely interventions to support the Commission.**

VOTE (701-02) KAILAHUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, Kailahun District Council is one of the 22 Local Councils in Sierra Leone. From the review of documents and the discussions with Management, the Committee observed the following:

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	
3	Actual Budget Received GoSL Regular Budget (Q1 & Q2) including Other Revenue	2,363,163.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)	2,205,000.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le5, 274,508.00** for the Council. The Committee noted an increase in the Council's approved budget from **Le5, 274,508.00** to the actual budget received of **Le6, 549,309.56** in 2023, and registering **19.47%** increase due to other revenue received.

With regards revenue generation, the Council collected revenue of **Le663, 498.00** in **2023** thereby reduced its original target of **Le2, 478,978,600.00**. The decrease, according to the Chief Administrator, was due to the following;

- Some areas are hard to go, because of the rough roads
- Still having difficulties with the Paramount Chiefs in respect of revenue collection

- Tax payers are still not complying
- Some Fees and Charges and taxes are to be shared by the Chiefdom Authorities. In this regard, the Council revenue target for **FY 2024** is **Le2, 378,668.00**.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	15,513,010.01
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	28,438,678.35
3	Budget to be Approved	13, 802, 906.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget to be approved by Parliament is **Le13,802,906.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Council's original budget submission from **Le28, 438,678.35** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le13, 802,906.00**, in 2024, registering **51.46%** drop. According to the Chief Administrator the decrease in the original budget submitted will affect administrative cost and operation of the Council. The Committee still emphasises on Council's meeting their revenue target by instituting robust action plan in their localities, and also emphasises that annual development work plan should be presented for assessment.

VOTE (701-10) KOINADUGU DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, Koinadugu District Council is one of the 22 Local Councils in Sierra Leone. From the review of documents and the discussions with Management, the Committee observed the following:

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	5,274,508.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	5,274,508.00
3	Actual Budget Received GoSL Regular Budget (Q1 & Q2) (including school bus, Donation/Grant/Loan received RMFA, NACSA, Own Source Revenue and AGBSDP)	6,549,309.56
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)	6,041,137.33

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le5, 274,508.00** to the Council. The Committee noted an increase in the Council's approved budget from **Le5, 274,508.00** to the actual budget received of **Le6, 549,309.56** in 2023, and registering **19.47%** increase due to other revenue received.

With regards revenue generation, the Council collected revenue of **Le 1,370,988.00** in **2023** thereby reduced its original target of **Le1, 680,542.00**. The decrease, according to the Chief Administrator, was due to the following;

- i. Major revenue sources were closed by Government (Forest Product)
- ii. Low compliance with our national laws
- iii. High level of illiteracy among business people
- iv. Political interference
- v. Poor road network
- vi. Inadequate logistics for revenue collectors
- vii. Under staffing in the revenue department
- viii. Conflict between the local council and the Chieftdom Council in the area of revenue collection. In this regard, the Council revenue target for **FY 2024** is **Le2, 405,000.00**.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No.	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	8,668,176.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	8,668,176.00
3	Budget to be Approved	8,695, 237.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget to be approved by parliament is **Le8,695,237.00** The Committee noted an increase in the Council original budget submission from **Le8,668,176.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le8,695,237.00** in FY 2024, registering **0.31%** increase. According to the Chief Administrator a decrease in the original budget submitted would have affected administrative cost and operation of the Council.

The Committee still emphasizes on Council meeting their revenue target by instituting robust action plan in their localities, and also emphasizes that annual development work plan should be presented for assessment.

6. CONCLUSION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, pursuant to Section [111] Sub-section [3]1, and Standing Orders 66[1&2], the Committee unanimously recommends that the entire budget Heads, including the sub- Heads listed below with its recommendations stand part of the schedule.

The Committee further recommends that the Ministry of Finance should provide resources to MDAs on timely basis as stipulated in the budget to avoid accumulating public debts, and also enhancing effective service delivery.

Table 1: BUDGET HEADS AND SUB- HEADS: 2023			
VOTE	DIVISION	VOTE DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SUM VOTED [LE]
132	01	Accountant General's Department	39,849,100.00
409	01	Ministry of Trade and Industry	6,958,700.00
124	04	Sierra Leone Law School	1,558,000.00
318	01	Ministry of Environment	9,696,300.00
409	02	Sierra Leone Standards Bureau	4,866,000.00
110	08	Law Reform Commission	2,031,700.00
300	01	Ministry of Technical & Higher Education	62,237,120.00
117	01	Cabinet Secretariat	6,400,000.00
402	01	Ministry of Fisheries & Marine Resources	23,756,300.00
305	01	Ministry of Social Welfare	17,871,400.00
409	05	Sierra Leone Producing Monitoring Board	3,621,200.00
422	01	Sierra Leone Metrological Agency	5,963,300.00
409	06	Consumer Protection Commission	1,405,300.00
701	02	Kailahun District Council	13, 802,906.00
701	10	Koinadugu District Council	8,695, 237.00

.....

Hon. Neneh Lebbie, Chairman

Sub - Appropriation Committee – 5.

I thank you *[Applause]*.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, if you have contributions, but please limit your contributions to the MDAs presented in the report; if you have contributions Honourable Members, otherwise we proceed.

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Yes Mr Chairman, maybe for just one MDA – the Standards Bureau. Mr Chairman, I want to say a very big thank you to the Chairperson for Committee 5, the Honourable Neneh Lebbie for presenting her report.

Mr Chairman, the position or the condition of the Standards Bureau is of high concern. The Standards Bureau is under what we call a '*Life Supporting Machine*'. And Mr Chairman, as Sierra Leoneans we have to be very honest with our consciences, and we should be very honest with our hearts and minds to look into the issues of the Standards Bureau and give them machines that will stand the test of time. The oxygen they are using now is not even functioning. Mr Chairman, even the test kits that the Standards Bureau uses to test the quality of our water are substandard. So we are having a very big problem with Standards Bureau. Somebody was making fun and was asking whether Coco Samba Drink is under their purview. Their response was that Coco Samba is medicinal, and so it is not under their purview; it is under the Pharmacy Board. But as Sierra Leoneans, our food stuffs need to be looked into by the Standards Bureau. So I want to join the Chairperson of Committee Five to call on the Ministry of Finance...

THE CHAIRMAN: Please, what is Coco Samba? [*Laughter*]

HON. CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY: Mr Chairman, Coco Samba is the famous medicinal drink that has won the 2023 men's award prize [*Undertone*] yes, I am very sure. It is all over in Freetown – Coco Samba is sold at **Le20, 000**. So I keep on asking my guys in the Well of Parliament that what is Koko Samba? And my brother Honourable Tawa from Lumley said; Coco Samba is one of the medicinal herbs that is very good for pain it is helping men greatly [*laughter*]

So Mr Chairman, as I end my plea for the Standards Bureau, I am asking the Ministry of Finance to please do the needful for Standards Bureau to be given what they need, especially the Test Kits for the benefit of every Sierra Leonean. Mr Minister, this is a gentle man's plea because we want Standards Bureau to match up to standards.

Mr Chairman, you know that during the last Parliament we brought them here and locked them up for failing to live up to expectations. But when we went to their Standards Bureau Office to inspect them, there was nothing to write home about. It was the Chairman himself who asked for

them to be released. So we are please asking you, Mr Minister to look into their Budget and help them to get the needful for the benefit of Sierra Leoneans, I thank you all.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Honourable Member for your contribution. Yes, Honourable AKK.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Chairman, in the last Parliament [the Fifth Parliament], there was an Agreement dealing with Food Supplement; breast feeding. I stood in this Well, knowing the current condition of Standards Bureau at that time, outlining their challenges and even brought to the notice of this House that they do not even have a vehicle to carry test materials. After that plea I did on their behalf, I wish I knew this matter was coming up today, I would have brought the Letter that Standards Bureau wrote me through the Speaker, saying that their Institution was okay, functional and had no problem. They wrote to me personally, and in fact, they published it in the newspapers saying that all the claims I made about them for not having equipment and vehicles to carry test materials were not true.

So Mr Chairman, the plea my colleague Honourable Lady is making is not tenable as far as I am concerned. Owing to that fact I have, the Standards Bureau I know, are okay; they are good and they are functional. When I was doing that research, I noticed that they are supposed to do test at the Quay but they do not have the equipment to conduct tests at the Quay, they do not have the equipment at the office, and they do not even have the test materials they need. I stood in this Well appealing on their behalf and they wrote me a five-page Letter to say they are okay. So who is saying they need help? They do not *[Interruptions]*. No, Mr Leader, they do not *[Undertones]* No, I agree, I agree.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable AKK, don't you think it was your mode of presentation?

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Chairman that was not the reason. Mr Chairman, what I did was that before the presentation, I met with them in their offices and had an enquiry with the head at the time.

Mr Chairman, if you look at the fuel we use in Sierra Leone, you would notice that every year we see three or four different colours of our fuel. I brought it up to their notice and I told this House that Standards Bureau was on life support, they wrote me a five-page letter. I would present the Letter for the Leader to see. So if you are saying they need help today, I do not know what has changed overnight.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Leader.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, I believe Standards Bureau needs help. Whatever they tell us, I believe Sierra Leoneans are the greatest losers of their situation. Mr Chairman, go to the Pharmacies, go to the shops and Supermarkets, you would see lots of expired goods...

THE CHAIRMAN: We actually need standards.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Minister, Mr Financial Secretary [FS], Standards Bureau is very very important for our livelihood. You would agree with me that the amount of substandard goods that come to Sierra Leone can hardly be compared to any other country in the Sub Region. If you go to Ghana and other places, you would realised that **S.O** [2] '*butu pick*' or '*buy no test*' cannot be seen in those countries. Go to the Water Quay, go over to other places and see Containers full of those '*buy no test*' goods from dustbins in America and other Western countries that are brought here; they are all over the place.

THE CHAIRMAN: And they call it 'Container Goods'

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: They are all over the place; expired goods

THE CHAIRMAN: They bring garbages here

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: They are not even worth to be brought here. I don't know what is happening.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Chairman, they call them Barrel Goods. If you call them 'Container Goods' they would be confused, so they will say Barrel Goods, which means Original.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: So Mr Minister, they are all over; go to Kissy Road, go to Goderich; the road leading to No. 2 River, go to Old or New Road you will see them all over.

THE CHAIRMAN: Leader, I totally agree with you.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: All of these expired goods coming to this place. So we need to empower Standards Bureau. Honourable Member, whatever letter they have written to you, we know the fact.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I agree with you, Honourable Leader. Mr Chairman, let me also just say this.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, ignore that Letter.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Chairman, it is not just in terms of machinery, the staff capacity of the entire Standards Bureau is just 90. I told them that they need more than 90 staff to check

the goods that are coming in and out of Bamoi Luma in Kambia District alone. The work of Standards Bureau is so huge that even when you talk about the addition of chemicals to Palm-Oil, it falls under their purview. So I was appealing in the last Budget that when it comes to issue of the staff they needed to be empowered. Imagine 90 staff for the entire country; you cannot make do of that and you cannot risk our lives.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Leader, I totally agree with you. I would only urge the Minister of Finance to respectfully call them to a meeting. Mr Minister, please call them to a meeting let them tell you what their problems are, because as a nation, we need standards; we actually need standards in everything we consume please, Honourable Minister *[Undertones]*. No, no, Honourable, you know where the problem is? Of course, I think Standards Bureau falls under the Committee on Trade, not so? But let me tell you where the problem is. Even if we do Oversight and we recommend, it is for the Ministry of Finance to take action

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Chairman, let me also say; one of the issues they are having is, whilst they were at Water Quay functionally operational, they used to generate income for themselves through the tests they were doing. Certain quota of the amount generated was left to the Standards Bureau to run the Institution. What they ended up doing was that the testing equipment and the Standards Bureau staff that were at the Quay were privatized to another company. Standards Bureau was therefore deprived of the much needed revenue that they were generating. Had it not been for that situation, Standards Bureau would have been well up and running. Not that they did not have the equipment, but they could not run those equipment based on the budgetary allocation that was done for them. These are some of the issues, and until you get them back to run in those border areas where they would do effective test and also raise revenue for the country. They are also a revenue generating Institution if empowered- but they say they do not have a problem, how can we cry for an Institution that does not have a problem?

THE CHAIRMAN: No, no, ignore their Letter.

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: Mr Chairman, we have spoken to the Mr Minister; this Parliament has spoken loud. We want to see the development that would happen at the Standards Bureau for the next one year. Mr Minister, if we do not see an improvement with Standards Bureau, the Budget will face a lot of difficulties.

THE CHAIRMAN: I saw the Minister taking notes

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: If you look at the types of Baby Food and Pampas that are brought to this country you will be disappointed. Go to our villages, look at the Pampas and Baby Food they use you would realise there is no standards to maintain.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think it is well noted now. Is there any other point apart from Standards Bureau?

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Chairman, although my point emanates from the conversations around the Standards Bureau in the House, we should also note with seriousness that you cannot give what you do not have. Mr Chairman, it is a serious budgetary issue and I am sure, when the Committees would be presenting their Reports, the most common issue that would appear in all of the Reports is that Ministries, Departments and Agencies [MDAs] are allocated a certain amount but they receive less throughout the four Quarters. The challenge is, *'the Resource Envelope'*. In as much as we all in this House are craving for more monies to be allocated to Standards Bureau, there are also other issues in the country that are critical. And if we are to allocate more monies to the Standards Bureau, the implication is not just allocating monies to Standards Bureau, but it would also increase the overall expenditure; and when it increases the overall expenditure, it becomes an issue of government spending beyond its limits.

So Mr Chairman, for me, what we have to do as we go along as a Parliament is to continuously remind the Ministry of Finance to let the budget stay as realistic as possible; what they know they can disburse is what they should allocate to MDAs. So at the end of the budgetary period, what they have allocated to MDAs in the beginning as either their Budget Ceiling or their Approved Budget is what they actually received for the implementation of their programs. If you allocate or read a Budget in the House, and as Standards Bureau for example, and I am allocated **LE4Bln** because I have designed a program throughout the budget presentation and budget hearing for **LE4Bln**, and now I receive **LE200Mln**, how am I going to implement my programmes? There is nothing I can do because what you have given me is to cover my Administrative and Operational Cost; and there are other costs, other budgetary lines allocated to Standards Bureau. All of that lumped together; let it be realistic so that what they expect is what they have designed their programs against. I think that would help a whole lot in terms of the implementation of budget itineraries or indicators throughout the budgetary period.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I in particular, I am not asking the Ministry of Finance to say we need to add more allocation to Standards Bureau. Let us go back to Standards Bureau and know what the issue is, the issues are very clear; they used to generate income for themselves and for

the State. This aspect has been taken away from them. So it is not a situation of saying give them more money, give them more allocation. They have been taken off Quay and border postings where they used to have most of their resources to run the Institution.

Mr Chairman, one of the things we must acknowledge is that these are areas we ought to spend as a government to save lives and maintain standards. Even when it comes to the things we produce in Sierra Leone, if you want to export them there must be a verification of standards being taken. This is not the situation we talk about where government is spending huge money. If it costs for this reason alone to save the lives of Sierra Leoneans, so be it. Even when you talk about medicinal products, Pharmacy Board is in charge but they depend on Standards Bureau to do the testing for them. So if Standards Bureau is not working, in terms of food we are at risk, in terms of medication we are at risk and even in terms of exporting our local goods from Sierra Leone, all we do is just to give certificates without testing. So when you take our products out, they do not have the value they are supposed to have. If for this reason we should spend more, I think the Honourable from Lumley, let us spend more as a country.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, we have several other reports to deal with. For that reason, the Whip is going to be the last.

HON. DICKSON M. ROGERS: Mr Chairman, it is just a point of clarification; Mr Chairman, I want this House to know that budget is projection. The reason I am raising this is because I heard my brother over there saying if the Ministry of Finance allocates an amount to any MDA it should provide that stated amount to that MDA. Let us know that Budget is just a projection; the Ministry of Finance will say okay, I will give you **Le100Mln**, and that projection can only be met provided they collect or generate enough monies. So I am not sure if we should be holding the Ministry of Finance to ransom if they are not meeting their targets. So I think that is what the Ministry of Finance is grappling with; it is all about availability of money. It is not possible sometimes to give all the monies they are allocating to MDAs, so let us bear with them.

THE CHAIRMAN: Leader of the Opposition, do you have anything to say?

HON. ABDUL KARGBO: Not actually, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Leader of Government Business, have you got anything more to say?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: This is a budget and we have listened to it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have anything more?

HON. BASHIRU SILIKIE: No, I am fine.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr Minister.

MR SHEKU FANTAMADI BANGURA: Thank you Mr Chairman. Honourable Members, thank you very much to the Committee, Group 5 for the Report. I listened very keenly to the readout and do take notes of the observations, the findings and also the recommendations across all the Vote Heads under consideration. I particularly note in the report and I will point to them:

First - Law School, I have had discussions with them recently, we did provide up to half year allocation and I had discussions with them, we are processing the rest of their allocations for the rest of the year. We were also monitoring the resources they collect from Fees and we wanted to know exactly how those are being deployed, because I think accountability is required as well. They are charging very high fees for Law School and so we balance that out with the resources that we provide for them. So it is that balancing act that we were doing.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I very much listened to the passionate discussions around Standards Bureau and the value that the House places on their services that they rendering the country. And I really do take note of the concerns of Honourable Abdul Karim Kamara and even the recommendation of the Committee around the **15%** Inspection Fee. That is just one of the numerous services that Standards Bureau would provide; for assuring us of the quality of goods and equipment that are brought into the country. It is clear that the Bureau needs to be capacitated with Laboratory equipment, but also beyond Laboratory equipment, the accompany reagents or those other issues that are required. The model can be enhanced in a way that we can get it right. Several of these services can be, but if the Bureau itself is not properly capacitated both in persons or personnel that are well qualified but also does not immediately have access to the equipment, these days you can do joint ventures with private sector to be able to deliver your services. Yes, and then when you do that, the Fees are effectively collected and then you can share those. That is the way for the Bureau itself; its services bring money to the State. That is really my own concern here; their services that they render must bring money to the State. And then the way you do this is being smart about how you structure and deliver services. These days we are doing a lot of Public Private Partnerships with enhanced capabilities from Private Sector to make the Public Sector more efficient. So I believe that is what we provide for them in the budget as has been really said, the budget is limited, and there are many Institutions out there. We give them the seed money, we find grant money to enhance their

capacity, but they have to be re-engineer as well as an entity. They have to re-engineer their own ways of delivering their services. Let me give you an example:

For Fisheries, they have the responsibility to be able to test the quality of the fish that are caught and those that are exported, or even those that are put into the market. To do that, there is a specialised way of testing that fish. If you are not able to do it locally, there are Agencies that know how to do this- enter into joint venture with them. So I have heard very clearly the debates around Standards Bureau but I think we need to sit with them to actually let them re-engineer the way they want to render their services– so valuable services that is being accorded to them by Law, by this House.

So that is the approach and I take leaf from Mr Chairman around engaging them from the Ministry of Finance – engage them with the Ministry of Trade and let us discuss the model of them delivering their service. The Inspection Fee is just one that is being done by others, but when the resources came to the Ministry of Finance, we are using it to allocate to them and then support the budget as well. But I think there are several other services for which... testing is not for free; when you bring in the goods you are testing, you are going to pay. The people or Industries that are asking you to test their goods should pay. Every Industry that is producing the goods that are manufactured in country would require a Standards Bureau's testing service to vet their goods; it is not for free. So they have to re-engineer their approach to mobilize money, the budget is just seed money for them; they generate the money from the services that they render. But we would take note of these concerns genuinely, and we commit to engage them very early in the year, both with the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Finance and the Bureau itself and other partners to see exactly how we re-engineer the way they deliver their services.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, there are several other issues that I do take note of. In the Report of the Law Reform Commission for example, you did note issues around staffing and you did note issues around their budget. I had discussions with Yada Williams who is currently the Chairman of the Commission, and they have made their requests, the Budget provides for them to look into hiring of Lawyers – very resourceful Lawyers and I think the Budget Proposal is around that and we told them and they have brought their request. Once this Budget is approved, we would give them the relevant support for them to hire the required persons.

I also do take note of your concerns around the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education; concerns into their extra charges, and we would further looked into it; we would engage the Minister to look deep into this. We have been holding serious discussions with the Ministry as well

around several other issues pertaining to the effectiveness of them delivering services in the Sector.

So Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the concerns and recommendations are well noted from the Committee of Group 5 under the Vote Heads that have been considered. I would therefore now move that the Vote Heads and corresponding estimates stand part of the Schedule.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[The following Vote Heads and Corresponding Estimates as pronounced by the Minister, form part of the Schedule].

APPROPRIATION - GROUP 2 REPORT

[Vote Heads and corresponding estimates for Group II were pronounced to stand part of the Schedule].

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Chairman, I want to draw your attention to **S.O** 66 [4].

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, proceed.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, this one is an instructive S.O that talks directly about the Clerk of Parliament, not the Table Clerk. It has been a practice in this Parliament that when we go through such process, it has always been the Table Clerks that are doing the job of the Clerk of Parliament. I want to call on your kind office, today might be a day you are overseeing this but for other subsequent days, it is instructive and this is what the Standing Order says: '*The Clerk sits, whilst we discuss the budget*', thank you Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Except we tend to insist, but that the Clerk himself is here...

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Well, except we amend the Standing Orders

THE CHAIRMAN: The Table Clerks are here representing the Clerk just as the Minister is here representing His Excellency the President.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: I agree, but this is a different situation; here, it is specific – '*The Clerk of Parliament*', we can have his Deputy.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, the Table Clerks represents the Clerk,

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: The S.O is not saying so, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, the S.O will not say so; the S.O will not go into details; it will not go into the minute details.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Chairman I agree, your ruling is final. But in this situation if you read the S.O, it is specific that the Clerk of Parliament, not the Table Clerks.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable AKK, accept that you are wrong *[Laughter]*

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Except for your ruling, on your ruling, I would.

THE CHAIRMAN: I so ruled. Proceed.

MR SHEKU FANTAMADI BANGURA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I pronounce the following Vote Heads and Corresponding estimates for Group 2 to stand part of the Schedule. I therefore move that the following Vote Heads stand part of the Schedule:

Table Containing Recommended Vote Heads for Approval			
Vote	Division	Vote Description	Total Sum Voted NLe
134	01	Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone	159,216,000
205	01	Ministry of Internal Affairs	5,139,700
412	01	National Tele Communication Authority (NaTCA)	365,107,400
135	01	Ministry of Communication Technology and Innovation	5,000,000
126	01	Independent Police Complaint Board	1,584,300
208	01	National Fire Authority	12,808,300
143	01	Justice and Legal Service Commission	1,065,800
131	01	Revenue Appellate Board	1,131,600
112	05	National Early Warning and Response Mechanism Centre	5,394,900
309	01	Dental and Medical Board	792,100
110	08	Sierra Leone Insurance Commission	2,263,300
144	01	Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone	4,994,900
140	01	Mass Media Services	4,926,800
212	01	National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency	2,075,100
701		Koidu New Sembehun City Council	7,402,650
701		Moyamba District Council	7,068,790

[Question Proposed]

[The following Vote Heads and corresponding estimates as pronounced by the Minister of Finance form part of the Schedule].

***Report of the Sectorial Committee under consideration by the Chairman of
GROUP 2***

HON. BOSTON MUNDA: First Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone

Reports of the Sub-Appropriation Committee II, on the review of the current development Budget Estimates for Ministries, Departments, Agencies that were under examination for the Financial Year [FY] 2024.

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman, Honourable Members, in conformity with **Section 112 (6) of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone (Act No. 6 of 1991)**, and the **Revised Standing Orders (S.O) of the Sierra Leone Parliament Standing, (S.O) 64 (3) and 66 (1)**, I hereby, on behalf of Honourable Members of Sub-Appropriation Committee 2, most graciously present the Report of the said Committee, on its budget scrutiny of the recurrent and development expenditure estimates of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) that were under its purview for the **Financial Year (FY) 2024**.

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee comprises of the following Honourable Members:

1. Hon. Boston Munda.....Chairman
2. Hon. Ambrose Maada Lebby.....Deputy Chairman
3. Hon. Rosemarie Bangura
4. Hon. Mohamed Conteh
5. Hon. Bai Shebora Gberek III
6. Hon. Yusuf Mackery
7. Hon P.C Alie Balansama III
8. Hon. Zinabu Timbo
9. Hon. Alie Bayoh
10. Hon. P.C Cyril Foday Gondor
11. Hon. Margret Feima Johnson

12. Hon. Abdul Kamara
13. Hon Mariama Ella Goba
14. Hon Kemokoh Conteh

SUPPORT STAFF

To achieve its objectives, the Committee was supported by the following staff:

1. Mr Ibrahim Jalloh – Principal Clerk of Committees
2. Mariama Jalloh – Clerk of Committees
3. Christiana Kanneh – Assistant Clerk of Committees.

Table Containing Recommended Vote Heads for Approval			
Vote	Division	Vote Description	Total Sum Voted NLe
134	01	Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone	159,216,000
205	01	Ministry of Internal Affairs	5,139,700
412	01	National Tele Communication Authority (NaTCA)	365,107,400
135	01	Ministry of Communication Technology and Innovation	5,000,000
126	01	Independent Police Complaint Board	1,584,300
208	01	National Fire Authority	12,808,300
143	01	Justice and Legal Service Commission	1,065,800
131	01	Revenue Appellate Board	1,131,600
112	05	National Early Warning and Response Mechanism Centre	5,394,900
309	01	Dental and Medical Board	792,100
110	08	Sierra Leone Insurance Commission	2,263,300
144	01	Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone	4,994,900
140	01	Mass Media Services	4,926,800
212	01	National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency	2,075,100
701		Koidu New Sembehun City Council	7,402,650
701		Moyamba District Council	7,068,790

II. PROCEDURE

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in line with Parliamentary practices and procedure, questionnaires was distributed among the various MDAs that were scheduled under the Committee for the purpose of performing its function as specified in the aforesaid Constitutional and Statutory Provision.

Consistent with **S.O** 66 [1], the Committee also requested vote controllers of MDAs that were under its scrutiny to appear alongside their Accounting Officers, among others, including all relevant documents pertaining to their expenditure of public resources placed under their control. In addition to the above, the Committee's deliberations were further guided by the relevant provisions contained in the appropriate statutes that seek to promote accountability including, but not limited to, the Government Budgeting and Accountability Act, 2005; the Financial Administration Regulations of 1998; the Public Financial Management [PFM] Act, 2016 and the Fiscal Management Control Act, 2017.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE EXERCISE

Mr Chairman Honourable Members, in line with the overall objectives of the entire exercise, the Committee performed its function bearing in mind the following key objectives:

- i. to ensure that vote controllers account for all public resources that were under their control and management during the large part of the Financial Year (FY) under review;
- ii. to enable vote controllers to provide convincing and reasonable justification for their intentions to judiciously expend proposed allocations for the Financial Year, 2024.
- iii. to assess and ascertain the realistic and justifiable nature of budget submissions by MDAs in tandem with the development aspirations of the Government; and
- iv. to strengthen the culture of transparency and accountability in the control and management of public resources channelled to vote controllers for national development.

IV. GENERAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in the course of its hearings, the Committee took note of key observations and hereby recommends as follow:

- i. That the performance of the majority of MDAs that were examined by the Committee was adversely undermined by the late and inadequate disbursement of funds/allocations by the Ministry of Finance. The attention of this House has been drawn to this perennial challenge by several Appropriation Committees but little or nothing has been done by the Ministry of Finance [MoF] to remedy the situation. The Committee therefore recommends that going forward; Parliament through the appropriate Committee monitors the implementation of the national budget on a quarterly basis.
- ii. That the mobilization of revenue including own source revenue for most revenue generating MDAs and the Local Councils remain a challenge. This was evident in the reports of MDAs that are concerned. Therefore, the Committee recommends that the capacity of revenue generating entities be strengthened in order to enable them undertake effective revenue mobilisation.

V. SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, below are the specific observations and findings on the MDAs and Local Councils that were assigned to Committee 2.

134- 01 Electoral Commission Sierra Leone [ECSL]

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone is the national institution that is constitutionally mandated to conduct and supervise voter registration and to conduct all public elections and referenda in Sierra Leone.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Commission is not a revenue generating institution. However, it admitted receipt of nomination fees for presidential, parliamentary, mayor/chairperson and councillor elections for 2023 amounting to NLe5, 649,600.00 of which the Commission has transferred NLe468, 000.00 to the Consolidated Revenue Fund [CRF] as required by law.

The remaining transfer, according to the Commission, would be made in December, 2023.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, below is a table containing budget analysis of the Commission with respect budget approved on its behalf by Parliament for the current fiscal year, its actual budgetary allocation for the period, quarters 1-3, 2023 actual budget received for same period, funds received from donor partners [if any] and any other source of revenue received [if any]

Budget analysis For the Financial Year 2023

No	Details	Amount (NLe)	Total
1	Budget Approved by Parliament	395,000,000.00	395,000,000.00
2	Actual budget Allocated (Q1 to Q3)	349,500,000.00	349,500,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3)	303,964,000.00	303,964,000.00
4	Revenue Generated	5,649,600.00	5,649,600.00
5	Total Recurrent Expenditures	329,144,000.00	329,144,000.00

Key Findings

It was observed that the Commission expended far more than what it received. Accounting for the excess, the Commission said that the excess was as a result of salaries.

The Committee further observed that the Commission's initial budget for the printing and distribution of voter cards for the 2023 general elections was **NLe35,518,460** but it expended **NLe94,633,658**. However, the Committee's findings revealed that the increase in the Commission's expenditure was as a result of high inflation rate in the procurement process.

It was further observed that the Commission has a public debt to the tune of **NLe208, 781,533.35**. A part payment of **NLe121, 941,049.32** of that amount has been made so far. With regards the remaining, the Commission promised to pay in the course of the 2024 financial year.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, to enable the Commission to achieve its objectives in the year ahead, the Ministry of Finance has proposed a budgetary allocation of **NLe159,216,000.00** for the 2024 fiscal year.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee considers the 2024 proposed Budget allocation to the Commission as adequate and recommends its approval by the House.

205- 01 Ministry of Internal Affairs

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is primarily charged with the responsibility providing and ensuring internal security in Sierra Leone. It provides supervisory role to the Sierra Leone Police, Correctional Centre, National Fire Force, Immigration, etc.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee critically reviewed the Ministry's financial transactions for the fiscal year 2023, as illustrated in the table below and took note of key observations.

Budget analysis For the Financial Year 2023

No	Details	Amount (NLe)	Total
1	Budget Approved by Parliament	4,100,000.00	4,100,000.00
2	Actual budget Allocated (Q1 to Q3)	4,100,000.00	4,100,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3)	5,202,000.70	5,202,700.00
5	Total Recurrent Expenditures	5,202,700.00	5,202,700.00

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee observed that the Ministry's actual budget receipt was beyond its actual budget allocation. Probing further the Committee observed that the excess to the tune of **NLe1,102,700.00** was used as security imprest which include intelligence gathering, monitoring of security crossing points across the sixteen districts, presidential visits, etc.

It was also observed that the Ministry has a serious challenge with mobility facility such as vehicles and motorbikes to enable it conduct effective monitoring over its supervisory institutions.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for 2024 Financial Year, the Ministry has been allocated the sum of **NLe5,139,700.00** subject to the approval of Parliament. Having regard to the

broad mandate of the Ministry, the Committee recommends that its 2024 budgetary allocation be approved.

412- 01 National Telecommunications Authority (NaTCA)

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the **National Telecommunications Authority (NaTCA)** is a self-generated revenue Institution. Unlike other MDAs, this Institution is not directly funded from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Apparently, their activities and operations are funded through a waiver given to it to use a certain percentage of its total revenue generated as prescribed by law.

For the period under review, the Authority generated NLe 211,235,747.27. Of this amount, the Authority retained and expended the sum of NLe 104,908,277.30 to meet its operational cost and other related expenditures.

In line with revenue anticipated to be generated by the Authority in 2024, the Ministry of Finance has proposed a budgetary allocation of NLe 365,107,400.00 to the Authority subject to the approval of Parliament.

135- 01 Ministry of Communication Technology and Innovation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the aforementioned Ministry is the primary custodian of the Government's communication technology and innovation policies and has the responsibility to oversee the development, review and implement the digital transformation agenda of the Government.

The financial analysis of the Ministry under the various budget heads is hereby presented in the table below.

The Ministry's budget analysis for 2023 FY is shown in the table below.

No	Details	Total (NLe)
1	GoSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)	4,080,215.00
2	GoSL Supplementary Budget	N/A
4	Other revenue received	N/A
	Total Receipts	4,080,215.00

Key Findings

The Committee's findings revealed that the Ministry received an additional **NLe211, 000.00** as grant from the People's Republic of China through its Embassy in Freetown.

Further probing revealed that the Ministry expended **NLe7, 553,960.00** in 2023, apparently showing an excess in its expenditure as against its total revenue received. However, detailed scrutiny further revealed that the Ministry undertook huge expenditure on foreign travels, fuel and other related expenditure.

Commenting on its challenges, the Ministry pointed the following: inadequate and untimely budgetary allocations, inadequate working tools and equipment, lack of mobility for effective monitoring and supervision, etc. The Committee therefore urges the appropriate Committees to look into this situation bearing in mind the above mentioned functions of the Ministry.

To enhance service delivery by the Ministry, the sum of **NLe5, 000,000.00** has been allocated by the Ministry of Finance subject to Parliamentary approval.

The Committee considered this proposed allocation as adequate and recommends its approval by this Honourable House.

Vote: 126- 01 Independent Police Compliant Board

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Independent Police Complaints Board was established by an Act of Parliament in 2013. Among its primary responsibility is to instil discipline among senior police officers. This is ensured by creating the enabling environment for the receipt of complaints from the public and investigates same against any senior officer believed to have violated certain code of conduct. By so doing, it enhances public confidence in policing. In summary, the Board serves as an oversight organ over the police body with a national scope and responsibility. However, the Act is silent about the cooperation of the Sierra Leone Police in investigations.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, below is a table containing a budget analysis of the Board for 2023 FY.

The Board's budget analysis for 2023 FY is shown in the table below.

No	Details	Total (NLe)
1	Budget Approved (Total)	1,400,000
2	Actual budget Allocated (Q1 to Q3)	1,200,000
3	Actual Budget disbursement (Q1 to 3)	1,200,000

Key Findings

Probe into the Board's for The FY 2023 revealed that the bulk of the expenditure included, but not limited to, the rollout of its reviewed Regulations, Management of Complaints, Public and Stakeholder Engagement, etc. However, it was also observed that the Board was challenged with its regulation and intends to amend same in the near future.

For FY 2024 the sum of **NLe1, 584,300** has been allocated to the Board subject to the approval of Parliament.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, the Committee views the 2024 proposed Budget Allocation to the Board as adequate and recommends its approval by the House.

Vote 208- 01 National Fire Force Authority

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, the National Fire Authority has a mandate to enhance effective management, protection, and swift response to fire and other natural disaster within Sierra Leone. As part of its commitment to make the country fire free, the Authority has constructed several sub-fire stations in certain locations such as in Koinadugu, Pujehun, Kailahun and Freetown. It disclosed on-going efforts to intensify the construction of more sub-stations in other parts of the country. Reports from the Authority revealed that there was significant drop in fire incidences in the last one year. To achieve more, the Authority therefore requested Government's support for more personnel in its fight against fire disasters.

In 2023 FY, the Fire Force Authority received Le 18,498,598 which was in excess of its original amount of **NLe6, 900,000** initially approved by parliament. The excess amount, according to the Authority, was allocated for the procurement of five fire engines amounting

to **NLe13, 214,998**. In addition, the Authority confirmed receipt of **NLe550, 000** for MACP operations and other related operations.

The Authority's budget analysis for 2023 FY is shown in the table below.

No	Details	Total (NLe)
1	Budget Approved (Total)	6,900,000
2	Actual budget Allocated (Q1 to Q3)	18,498,598
3	Actual Budget disbursement (Q1 to 3)	18,498,598
4	Donor Funding	N/A

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for the Financial Year 2024, the Authority made a budget submission of **NLe12, 808,300** and it was duly approved by MoF.

Recommendation

The Committee considers the said budgetary allocation as adequate and recommends its approval by the House.

143- 01 Justice and Legal Service Commission

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, although the above mentioned Office was initially scheduled to appear under Sub-Appropriation Committee 2, in the course of the Committee's scrutiny it was revealed that the Institution is one of the subsidiary institutions to the Sierra Leone Judiciary. The latter was scheduled to appear under Sub-Appropriation Committee 6. Consequently, the Justice and Legal Service Commission was constrained to appear before our Committee. Apparently, the Committee is constrained to provide any detailed report pertaining to same.

131- 01 Revenue Appellate Board

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, pursuant to the Income Tax Act, 2000, and the Goods and Services Tax Act, 2009, the Board serves as the primary administrative appeal body through which tax payers can seek redress for alleged unfair deductions or calculation of their taxes. It therefore plays a crucial role in fostering tax accountability and fairness.

Against that backdrop, the Ministry of Finance allocated the sum of **NLe1, 000,000.4** for the fiscal year 2023 following Parliamentary approval. However, during scrutiny the Board

admitted receipt of **NLe850, 000.00** of its approved allocation thereby undermining the Board's ability to achieve its objectives in 2023.

For the fiscal year, 2024, the Board submitted a budget of **NLe1, 131,600.00** to the Ministry of Finance. After a meticulous review, the Ministry recognized the importance of adequately supporting the Board's operational costs and allocated the full requested amount.

Looking ahead to the fiscal year 2024, the Committee deems the proposed budgetary allocation to the Board as appropriate and sufficient and recommends its approval by the House. The Committee's recommendation of the said allocation is predicated on the imperative to ensure that the Board can perform its functions effectively.

Vote: 112- 05 National Early Warning and Response Mechanism Centre

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the above mentioned Institution was established through an Executive Order signed by the President in June 2020 as a fulfilment of the Communiqué signed by the Authority of the Heads of State and Government during their 45th Ordinary Session, as well as the council of Ministers at its 75th Ordinary Session held in Abuja 2015.

For the Financial Year under review, the table below illustrates the Institution's financial analysis with respect its approved budget, actual allocation and actual budget disburse for the same period.

The Board's budget analysis for 2023 FY is shown in the table below.

No	Details	Total (NLe)
1	Budget Approved (Total)	3,000,000
2	Actual budget Allocated (Q1 to Q3)	1,700,000
3	Actual Budget disbursement (Q1 to 3)	1,700,000

For FY 2024, the sum of **NLe5, 394,900** has been allocated to the Institution subject to the approval of Parliament.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, having due regard to the operational needs of the Institution, the Committee considers its proposed budgetary allocation as adequate and recommends its approval.

309- 01 Dental and Medical Board

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the aforementioned Board is responsible to register and regulate doctors and medical practitioners to ensure that they perform their functions in line with acceptable international standards. It also monitors and inspects all health facilities nationwide.

With regards its financial transactions for the financial year under review, the Committee hereby reports as illustrated in the table below.

Budget analysis For the Financial Year 2023

No	Details	Amount (NLe)	Total
1	Budget Approved by Parliament	700,000.00	700,000.00
2	Actual budget Allocated (Q1 to Q3)	700,000.00	700,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3)	105,000.00	105,000.00
4	Revenue Generated	3,291,411.66	3,291,411.66
5	Total Recurrent Expenditures		

Key Findings

It was proven that in addition to its Government Regular Budget, the Board generated revenue amounting to **NLe3, 291,411.66** through other sources such as registration and renewal of licenses for doctors and medical practitioners, Certificate of Good Standing, the sale of forms, etc.

Probing further, it was noted that the Board's total expenditure for the period under review amounted to **NLe2, 311,004.24**. Prominent among key activities that were expended on included nationwide sensitisation using both the radio and television, inspection and monitoring of health care facilities across the country, joint assessment of house officers after horsemanship training programme, etc.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Ministry of Finance has allocated **NLe792, 100.00** for the Financial Year, 2024, subject to its approval by Parliament.

Recommendation

Having duly reviewed the 2023 budget expenditure of the Board, it is the considered view of the Committee that its 2024 proposed budgetary allocation is adequate and recommends its approval.

Vote 110- 08 Sierra Leone Insurance Commission (SLICOM)

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Sierra Leone Insurance Commission has a mission to ensure effective administration, supervision, regulation and monitoring of the insurance industry in Sierra Leone. Its vision is to lead Sierra Leone insurance industry to the stage where it is largely self-regulatory, operate independently and to develop within itself strong forces for its growth and prosperity.

As a revenue generating institution, the Commission collected 1% from all insurance institutions and paid a total of **NLe1, 890,000** into the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF). As such, for the period January – September 2023 FY, the Commission generated **NLe1, 950,000**.

The Commission budgeted a revenue line of **NLe2, 800,000** but was only able to achieve **NLe1, 950,000** for FY 2023.

For FY 2023 the Commission received from the regular budget the sum of **NLe1, 000** as against the approved amount of **NLe2, 000** which was judiciously utilized on administrative expenditure. For FY 2024 the Commission has submitted a budget of **NLe2, 312,000** awaiting parliamentary approval.

The Commission's budget analysis for 2023 FY is shown in the table below.

No	Details	Total (NLe)
1	Budget Approved (Total)	2,000,000
2	Actual budget Allocated (Q1 to Q3)	1,500,000
3	Actual Budget disbursement (Q1 to 3)	1,000,000

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee considers the 2024 proposed Budget allocation to the Commission as adequate and recommends its approval by the House.

Vote 144- 01 Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL)

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) was established in 2000 through an Act of Parliament. Its establishment was however, highly influenced by the recommendations of the Lome Peace Agreement of 1999 and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as contained in its Report.

In 2023 FY the sum of **NLe3, 851** was the original budget submission to Ministry of Finance. Following review by MoF, the sum of **NLe3, 000** was allocated to the Commission. In the course of the financial year, the commission admitted receipt of **NLe1, 500** from the Government regular budget, which was judiciously utilized. For the same period under review, the Commission received and utilized a total supplementary budget of **NLe1, 300,000**. For FY 2024, the Commission submitted an original budget to the tune of **NLe3, 894**. After reviewed by MoF, it was increased to **NLe4, 994**.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, regarding the Commission's financial status for the period under review under the various sources is hereby presented in the table below.

Budget analysis For the Financial Year 2023

No	Details	Amount (NLe)	Total Receipts as of September 23
1	Budget Approved by Parliament	3,000,000	1,500,000
2	GoSL Supplementary Budget (Q2)	1,300,000	1,300,000
3	Other revenue	459,408	459,408
5	Total Receipt		3,259,408

Recommendation

Having duly considered the Corporation's proposed allocation for the Financial Year, 2024, the Committee remains satisfied and recommends its approval.

140 01 Mass Media Services

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Mass Media Services also known as the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation [SLBC] is the only state owned broadcaster that was established through an Act of Parliament.

In addition to funding provided by the Government, the broadcaster also generates revenue through the following sources: birthday advertisements, memorial and obituary announcements, public notices & programmes, adverts & outside broadcasting, colocation, etc.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, regarding the Corporation's financial status for the period under review under the various sources is hereby presented in the table below.

Budget analysis For the Financial Year 2023

No	Details	Amount (NLe)	Total Receipts
1	Budget Approved by Parliament	400,000,000	400,000,000
2	Actual budget Allocated (Q1 to Q3)	400,000,000	400,000,000
3	Actual Budget Received (Q2 & 3)	1,000,000	1,000,000
4	Other revenue (elections)	2,000,000	2,000,000
5	Total Receipt		3,000,000

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for the Financial Year 2023, the Corporation made a revenue projection of **NLe5,000,000.00** of which **NLe3,750,000.00** was generated. Accounting for the shortfall in its initial target, the Management of the Corporation highlighted the following: limitation by the Corporation's current Act, limitation in their operation mandate, micro-economic factors, etc.

To improve on its revenue mobilisation, the Corporation recommended the following: review of the existing Act of the Corporation, signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with state owned institutions, review of the Corporation's Price List, design workable marketing strategies, etc.

Detailed probing revealed that the Corporation expended **NLe3, 000,000.00** as against its budgeted expenditure at the tune of **NLe5, 576,060.00**.

With regards transfers to the CRF, the Corporation said that it was below the threshold of revenue generating institutions. As such, it confirmed that it did not make any transfer to the CRF.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in line with its operational needs in 2024, the Corporation submitted a budget request of **NLe5,000,000.00** to the Ministry of Finance. Following review, it was reduced to **NLe4, 926,500.00**.

Recommendation

Having duly considered the Corporation's proposed allocation for the Financial Year, 2024, the Committee was satisfied and recommends its approval.

Vote 212- 01 National Drug Law Enforcement Agency

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the aftermath of the civil war in Sierra Leone saw an increase in drug abuse and trafficking in Sierra Leone and the sub-region. After the arrest of Colombian nationals at the Lungi Internal Airport in July 2008, the country was branded as a transit point for narcotic drugs coming from Latin America. Consequently, the Government then passed into law the National Drug Control Act, 2008, which led to the establishment of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency to reverse the menace posed by illicit drugs, with a vision to have a healthy and confidence society, increasingly free from the harm caused by the misuse of illegal drugs.

In 2023 FY the sum of **NLe2, 979,700** was the original budget submission to Ministry of Finance. Following review by MoF, the sum of **NLe950, 000** was allocated to the Agency.

In the course of the financial year, the Agency admitted receipt of its entire budgetary that was approved by Parliament. The said allocation was expended to cover expenditure for the wide range of activities undertaken by the Agency especially in the midst of increased prevalence and use dangerous and/or harmful drugs in the country.

For FY 2024, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency submitted an original budget to the tune of **NLe14, 249,180** the bulk of which is hoping to cover expenditure towards Drug demand reduction and supply restriction and administrative cost. After review by MoF, it was reduced to **NLe2, 075,100.00**.

Mindful of its task to curb the prevalence of harmful drugs in the country, the Agency stated that the reduction on its original budgetary submission would affect the following areas:

- Nationwide sensitisation on drug use;

- Popularisation and implementation of the Strategic Master Plan;
- Review of the National Drugs Control Act, 2008;
- Drug Law Enforcement, Arrest and Seizure Regulation 2; and
- The establishment of regional offices.

Recommendation

Against the backdrop of the Agency's critical function, the Committees consider its 2024 Budgetary Allocation as inadequate and recommends a supplementary budget during the course of the fiscal year.

Vote 701 Koidu New Sembehun City Council

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in line with Part V of the Local Government Act, 2004, Local Councils have, among other things, the legislative and executive powers and are responsible for promoting the development of the locality and welfare of the people with the resources at their disposal.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for FY 2022, the Ministry of Finance allocation to the Koidu New Sembehun City Council and approved by Parliament was **NLe4,584,901** and had received as at 30th September ... **NLe2,540,075** as GoSL regular budget. According to the questionnaire, over 90% of the said amount had been judiciously utilized.

The Council had also received **NLe2, 044,826.79** from RMFA and **NLe82, 751** from UN Habitat respectively. For the period under review all of these monies have been judiciously utilized.

Probing into its 2023 revenue mobilisation revealed that the Councils collected 53% of its projected revenue at the tune of **NLe1, 202,033.00**. Reporting on the shortfall in their revenue target, the Chief Administrator highlighted the following: the lack of logistics, lack of personnel for Revenue generation, etc.

For 2024 FY, the Council's budget submission was **NLe16, 152,177.15** but the Ministry of Finance has approved **NLe7, 402,650** pending Parliamentary approval. In addition to its proposed budgetary allocation stated above, the Council has made a revenue projection to the tune of **NLe3, 317,061.20**.

Recommendation

The views the 2024 proposed budgetary allocation to the Council under review as adequate and recommends its approval.

Vote 701- Moyamba District Council

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, in line with Part V of the Local Government Act, 2004, Local Councils have, among other things, the legislative and executive powers and are responsible for promoting the development of the locality and welfare of the people with the resources at their disposal.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for FY 2023, the Ministry of Finance allocation to the Moyamba District Council and approved by Parliament was **NLe6,073,268.86** and had received as at 30th September ... Le 1,670,000 as GoSL regular budget. According to the questionnaire, 100% of the said amount had been judiciously utilized. The Council had also received **NLe2, 078,702.75** from World Bank. For the period under review all of these monies have been judiciously utilized.

Probing into its 2023 revenue mobilization revealed that the Councils collected 25% above its projected revenue at the tune of **NLe2, 171,870.91.**

For 2024 FY, the Council's budget submission was **NLe21, 620,271** but the Ministry of Finance has approved **NLe12, 158,114** pending Parliamentary approval. In addition to its proposed budgetary allocation stated above, the Council has made a revenue projection to the tune of **NLe3, 247,875.**

Recommendation

The views the 2024 proposed Budgetary Allocation to the Council under review as adequate and recommends its approval.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, kindly permits me to recognize and extend my deepest appreciation to Honourable Members and Staff of my Committee for their invaluable contribution and support throughout the course of the Committee's hearings with MDAs without any doubt, their contributions helped us to get where we are today.

I wish at this juncture, to recommend that the Report of the Sub-Appropriation Committee 2 on the review of the current and development budget estimates of ministries, departments and agencies under its purview for the Financial Year 2024 be adopted by this Honourable

House and that the Budget Heads including Sub-Heads of MDAs listed below in respect of budgetary provisions for the Financial Year 2024 stand part of the Schedule.

Thank you.

Submitted in faith by:

.....

Honourable Boston Munda

Committee Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Honourable Chairman. Any views, any views from Honourable Members? Please limit your views to the MDAs concerned, okay? Mr Minister.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Sorry, Mr Chairman; I have a concern

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: My concern is with Votes 212-01, National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Mr Chairman, it will be a disservice if this report is presented and the name 'National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency' is mentioned without us in this Parliament, talking about the challenges we face, and the strategy we can use to tackle the menace of drugs. Mr Chairman, it is no secret that we are inundated across the country, including Bo District and other districts with the problem of 'Kush'; Kush is a major problem in Sierra Leone.

Mr Chairman, if you look at the report, the period spanning 2008 is what the report referenced; that it was after the landing of the 'Columbian Plane' that led to the formation of the Drugs Law Enforcement Agency.

Mr Chairman, it would interest you to note that after that plane landed and those involved tried and convicted, the amount of drugs that is coming into Sierra Leone is way higher than the drugs that were confiscated by then. It is true, and the challenge is, we are not going to fight drug with Budgetary Allocation- that is the fact. We are going to fight drugs by facing the issues head-on. The issues are with us, we know those who are bringing in drugs into this country; we have to name and shame them publicly because when we say future, the future is now. I was listening to

somebody this morning on watts-app and he was referencing Chinua Achebe and he said '*we are the children of Africa*', no, we are the parents of Africa because we are going to define the destiny of Africa. And the destiny of this nation sits with those whom we call 'future leaders' – our children.

Mr Chairman, if you go to Grafton, Pastor Mambu is inundated with the number of people; young boys that he brings into his place at Jui to try to transform them from drug addiction. If you go to Grafton, there is another centre runs by a Traditional Herbalist who normally chains them. There are lots of such places across the country - go to Fergusson Street, there is this Aladura Church which also takes in drug addicts, and we keep on looking at the situation as a minor problem; it is a major problem. We are not going to tackle drug issues with Budgetary Allocation. Even if we increase the Budgetary Allocation of the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency to **Le4Bln**, if we do not tackle the means of accessing drugs into Sierra Leone, it would be of no use because the monies you are going to give them cannot be spread across this country to meet the demands and the needs of the young people. So what we have to do is to tackle the problem of entry; we have security at all the entry points of this country – at Lungi and at Water Quay. Yes, we have porous borders across the country but we know that drug is brought into this country by means of the formal entries.

Quite recently, I saw on the news that a Container from the Queen Elizabeth II Quay was taken to UK and it was tested and there was drug in the Container. It is not only an embarrassment to us if it is true, but it shows the volume of passage of drugs that come through this country. So it is high-time that whatever infrastructures we need to put in place to tackle the problem of drug we do it, and if we need to strengthen the Legislation, we strengthen it, if we need to bring in more Law Enforcement Officers that would go into these areas to strengthen the security control measures in the entry points of this country we do it so that we tackle the problem of drug. Otherwise, in the next 5 to 10 years we would not have a future. That is my submission, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Honourable Tawa Conteh. Yes, let us hear from the Leader and after the Leader, you and then we close.

HON. ABDUL K. KAMARA: Mr Chairman, what my brother from Lumley is raising are very serious issues. I remember when this Parliament and the nation took the issue of Rape seriously, we had series of measures. Just within the last two years, if you go to the mortuary and check for the corpse of young people that have been gathered in the streets of Freetown as a result of kush alone, I am sure that number is more than 300- just in the Western Area. There was a period in the East where every day you would meet a corpse lying down on the main roads of Bai Bureh

Road, going to Calaba Town. I wonder why as a government or as Lawmakers we ignore some of those horrible scenes and we fail to call for the laws to come to us so we would enforce the laws. I would not talk like the Honourable from Western Area who is emphatic in knowing who is bringing drug; I do not know but it is also a negligence on our part [*Undertone*] no I am not. If we know them, it is good we do not only shame them but we bring them to the Law and let the Law takes its course. The problem is, when you look at these young people who are taking these substances across the nation the number is huge. In Lumley alone where the Honourable is coming from, just two weeks ago, there were sporadic deaths occurring as a result of young people taking drugs. Also, just within one week, we have had a situation of burying five in a row; Ladies and young men who are in the habit of smoking Shisha mixed with chemicals. So the issue of drug is so much serious that we need not just limit it to the issue of the law and employing more staff, it also boils down to the issue of Allocation which is being captured in the Report. We cannot handle the issue of Drugs without empowering the Institution with resources, we cannot, and the situation is so alarming. So I am calling on this Parliament that we bring the Laws for us to see what we can do or make better as Members of Parliament.

Mr Chairman, the situation is terrible, today we are not direct victims, our kids are not direct victims but if the situation becomes loose and the Drugs enter the schools, we might be direct victims tomorrow. Therefore, we must make the laws and empower the Institution in order to stop the situation that is looming, thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Honourable AKK. Honourable Quinton Salia-Konneh, you have the Floor.

HON. QUINTIN SALIA-KONNEH: Thank you very much Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, at this point, I do not intend to overwrite the story. But again, I believe from the Budget allocated to this Agency, I do not see any effort from our side in terms of tackling the situation we already have. I say this because, when you look at the issue of Drugs, especially Kush, you would notice that it is something that has infiltrated the length and breadth of this country, right into the villages. It may amaze you that even in the remotest villages there are people who are addicted to this Kush.

Having looked at the Report, I realised that **Le14Mln** was requested but only **Le2Mln** was allocated to combat this whole situation of Drugs. Mr Chairman and Minister, this is so discouraging, to say the least. I believe if we want to show seriousness that indeed we are very passionate, and we are indeed affected by the effect of this Kush, then I believe that such an allocation is very much infinitesimal. It is another way of saying we are not interested, and that we

want our young people to continue dying. As my colleague Honourable Member on the other side was saying, if you go along the streets you will see dead bodies and you will see people in deplorable conditions; you will see living corpses moving- you may think that they are already dead but yet they are moving. All this is happening as a result of this Kush, Mr Chairman.

Mr Chairman, for us as Law Makers, if we do not take the deliberate stance to actually support the personnel responsible for this drug stuff then we would be failing as a country. And I believe most of the people who are involved in this drug intake are the young people who should be taking after us. Before now, when people talked about drug addicts you would see that **99%** was mostly elderly men and young boys. But now, it is completely different; there is no gender difference because you will see women and small girls at the ages of 13 and 14 highly involved in smoking Kush. So Mr Chairman, I believe it is now a concern and it should be a concern for us as a State to take deliberate action.

Mr Minister, I believe the **Le2Mln** allocated is so infinitesimal to an extent that we are almost saying no because nothing can be done with **Le2Mln**. And this is a national crisis just like we had the Covid-19 which was all over the place. Initially, you would have realised that this whole drug abuse issue was mainly in urban cities. But with the advent of Kush, even villages are affected. Recently I was called by the Youth Leader in Daru, asking me to send some money for them to use to go to schools to sensitize them about the impact of Kush. That is not enough; they have succeeded in getting it once from me but is it going to continue? Am I going to be giving them monies to do sensitization? No, because I don't have it myself.

So please Mr Minister, put some consideration on this to see how you can increase the Budget allocated to this Agency so that all of us in this Chamber, irrespective of the Committees we head or belong to, we would be able to support that particular Agency to make sure we minimize if not eradicate this whole Kush saga, I thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes Mr Minister, let us hear from you.

MR. SHEKU F. BANGURA: Thank you Mr Chairman and thank you Honourable Members for the expressed focus on the menace. The Executive is very seized of this and I know there have been a lot of discussions on it. The matter is not just with the National Drugs Law Agency [NDLA] that is trying to help the government address the problem, it is across many other entities of the State; Social Welfare is there, the Ministry of Health is there, NDLA that is expressly responsible for reaching out is there, the Police – Internal Affairs, they are all on board on this. And I think it is

going to be heightened and State attention is going to be drawn to it. So I am happy you were able to lay emphasis on this.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Budget is the Budget, and I hear you very clearly that we should make it a central issue of the State because of the way it has permeated youthful people; it is damaging the future of this country. What we would do in the Ministry of Finance, it is not only the National Budget; there are many other partners out there that are very much interested in working with government in addressing this issue. We have actually committed that we would reach out to be able to enhance the capacity of these entities. It is not only the budget, but we will reach out to several other Agencies that are seized of an interest in addressing drug abuse; whether it is UN systems, whether it is other bilateral entities that are out there. That is the way we would go about balancing the limited resources that we have, or enhancing the limited resources that we are allocating across the government. So that is the commitment that I make to the House; what we have done here is really a serious announcement in my view, to demonstrate government's commitment in the fight, and the only way we are going to be able to add more to that, is reaching out to other partners to help us in the fight. I would want to appeal that we approve the allocation to this particular entity as provided, let the Ministry take the extra engagement to other partners to come on board. So that is the recommendations that I want to actually proffer to the House.

I did not hear much on the others, but I have actually read through the Report and very much pleased with the recommendations of the Committee and I would therefore move again Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, that the Vote Heads and Corresponding Estimates stand part of the Schedule.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to]

[The following Vote Heads and Corresponding Estimates as pronounced by the Minister of Finance stand part of the Schedule].

This Sitting was stood down for 5 minutes at 1:46p.m and the House resumed at 1:50p.m.

GROUP IX

[VOTE HEADS AND CORRESPONDING ESTIMATES FOR GROUP IX WAS PRONOUNCED TO STAND PART OF THE SCHEDULE]

MR. SHEKU F. BANGURA: Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I pronounce the following Vote Heads and Corresponding Estimates for Group IX to stand part of the Schedule:

Table 1: Ministries Department Agencies Account Heads and their Allocations for 2023

Vote	Div.	Vote Description	Amount [Le]
123	01	Public Service Commission	4,210,700.00
146	01	Minister Of Western Region	2,963,300.00
124	01	Office of Solicitor General	17,879,600.00
313	01	National Youth Service	3,394,900.00
319	02	National Children's Commission	1,000,000.00
317	01	Sierra Leone Council for Post Graduate Colleges of Health Specialist	3,281,700.00
413	00	National Water Resources Management Agency	4,300,000.00
428	03	Corporate Affairs Commission	2,197,500.00
139	01	National Commission for Privatization	2,602,800.00
414	00	Sierra Leone Water Company	828,837.00
110	03	National Assets and Government Property Commission	1,631,600.00
311	01	Health Service Commission	6,526,500.00
107	04	Provincial Secretary's Office North (Makeni)	4,573,900.00
723	00	Falaba District Council	966,967.00
721	00	Port Loko City Council	962,963.00
		Conclusion	

[Question Proposed]

**REPORT OF SUB- APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE NINE [9] ON THE
RECURRENT AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGET ESTIMATES,
2024**

SUBMITTED BY: _____

HON. TOM ISSIC TUCKER

CHAIRMAN, SUB APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE NINE [9] DECEMBER

2023

VI. TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	1-2
Table of Content	2
Introduction	3
Membership	4
Scope of the Exercise	5
Procedure	6
Objectives of the Exercise	6
General Observations and Recommendations	7
Specific Findings and Recommendations	8
Public Service Commission	9
Minister Of Western Region	10
Office of Solicitor General	11
National Youth Service	12 -13
National Children's Commission	14
Sierra Leone Council for Post Graduate Colleges	15 - 16
National Water and Regulatory Agency	16 - 17
Corporate Affairs Commission	18 - 19
National Commission for Privatization	19 -20
Sierra Leone Water Company	20 -21
National Assets and Government, Property Commission	23 -26
Health Service Commission	27 -30
Provincial Secretary's Office North (Makeni)	30 -33
Falaba District Council	33 -35
Port Loko City Council	35-36
Conclusion	37

1. INTRODUCTION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the 2024 budget with the theme, **“Restoring macroeconomic stability while protecting the poor and vulnerable”** undoubtedly is a continuation of the 2023 financial statement in which hosts of catalogued commitments were partly achieved and the others to roll over to 2024. The external environment has not been favourable as the recovery of the global economy is losing momentum due to the slowdown of the Chinese economy, disruptions of energy and food markets caused by the Russia-Ukraine crisis and the impact of tighter monetary policy to fight global inflation. The situation is being exacerbated by heightened geo-political tensions, economic fragmentation and climate change risk. Whilst acknowledging that the 2023 budgetary allocations to various sectors have shown substantial increment, the Committee noted a dismal performance of Ministries Department Agencies as most programmes were uncompleted partly due to the geo-political tensions, economic fragmentation and climate change risk. As usual 2023 Appropriation is in tandem with the traditional approach that gives authority to each Sub Appropriation Committee to carefully follow up on the programmes, projects and activities of Ministries ,Department and Agencies under it purview to ensure there is value for money ,compliance with the laid down financial provisions,due process, accountability and transparency.

Sub-Appropriation **Group Nine** wishes to acknowledge the good work of all Members Parliament and Staff who painstakingly put efforts together to produce this report.

VII. MEMBERSHIP OF SUB APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE NINE - COMMITTEE 9

1. Hon. Tom Issic Tucker – **Chairman**
2. Hon. Unpha Sorie Gbassay Koroma **-Deputy Chairman**
3. Hon. Mohamed Bangura
4. Hon. Paul Samba Conteh

5. Hon. Ibrahim Barrie
6. Hon. P.C Desmond Mahagei Kargobai II
7. Hon. Mahmoud Kamara
8. Hon. Alice Kornya Sandy
9. Hon. P.C Alhaji Kandeh Paria Kawalleh
10. Hon. Mohamed Sheriff Rahman - Coker
11. Hon. Moigua Peter Musa
12. Hon. Musa Lahai
13. Hon. Emerson Lamina.

VIII. SUPPORT STAFF:

1. Mannah Berewa –Lead Clerk
2. Margaret Coomber-Assistant Lead Clerk
3. Yattah Kabba-Committee Clerk
4. Jefferina Lahai-Parliamentary Budget Officer

2. SCOPE OF THE EXERCISE

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, this Report covers fifteen (15) Ministries Department Agencies as listed in the 2023 Appropriation Act. The hearings on the 2023 Budget lasted for four days and covered the following Ministries Department and Agencies:

- **Public Service Commission**
- **Minister Of Western Region**
- **Office of Solicitor General**
- **National Youth Service**
- **National Children’s Commission**
- **Sierra Leone Council for Post Graduate Colleges**
- **National Water and Regulatory Agency**
- **Corporate Affairs Commission**

- **Sierra Leone Water Company**
- **National Assets and Government Property Commission**
- **Health Service Commission**
- **Provincial Secretary's Office North (Makeni)**
- **Falaba District Council**
- **Port Loko City Council**

IX. PROCEDURE

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee sent out questionnaires to all Vote Controllers of Ministries Department and Agencies mentioned above for detailed information on how the budgetary allocations and all monies were received for and on behalf of Government of Sierra Leone for the Fiscal Year 2023 were expended. Vote Controllers were requested to respond to questions relating to their budgetary allocations, highlight their challenges, proffer solutions and state how they have been able to carry out their respective mandates in order to achieve set goals and objective for the next financial year.

X. OBJECTIVES

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the hearings were conducted with the aim of achieving the following objectives:

- 1.** To examine the absorptive capacity of the various Ministries Department and Agencies and ascertain the prudent management and utilisation of their budgetary allocations and other resources;
- 2.** To determine whether Revenue generating Ministries Department and Agencies were able to meet their revenue targets;
- 3.** To determine whether the expenditures of the Ministries Department and Agencies in the last fiscal year conformed to established financial rules and regulations;
- 4.** To examine the strengths and weaknesses in budget preparation and performance

with the view of improving on the appropriation process;

5. To provide Justification for any increase or decrease in the allocations for a given Financial Year;
6. To decide whether budgetary resources were equitably distributed;
7. To critically examine the Ministries Department Agencies recurrent and capital budget estimates and make recommendations for general debate in the House;
8. To highlight challenges or constraints faced by the Ministries Department Agencies; and
9. To enhance transparency and accountability in the management of public funds.

XI. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, having critically examined the various Ministries Department Agencies under its purview, the Sub- Appropriation Committee Nine 9, draws the attention of the House to the following general observations and recommendations:

1. Most Ministries Department interviewed by Sub-Appropriation Committee 9 did provide their proposed action plans for 2024. As reported during the 2023 budgetary approval in this House, this practice would enhance the capacity of Parliamentary Oversight Committees in their effort to evaluate progress in the implementation of the proposed activities of Ministries Department and Agencies.

The Committee recommends that Ministries Department and Agencies work within their action plans for the year under review.

2. Most Ministries Department and Agencies stated that the first and second quarter allocations have been disbursed but some reported that the third and fourth quarter allocations were not received.

The Committee recommends that for the Ministries Department and Agencies to meet their performance trackers, expected programmes and projects set for Financial Year, funds must be disbursed as required and on time.

3. The two Councils interviewed were unable to adequately deliver services to their respective localities as a result of poor own source revenue collection.

The Committee recommends that Local Councils sensitise taxpayers on the need to pay tax. Also, monitoring and evaluation from the top administrators should be done and measures are put in place to ensure that those involved in revenue collection meet the set targets. There is also a strong need for Councils to Invest in Agriculture especially Cash Crops and use the proceeds to finance various programmes, projects and activities.

4. Delay in the release of allocations resulted in unfinished activities and projects that are rolled over to the next Financial Year. These rolled over expenditures were not properly defended by some Vote Controllers and could also be a recipe for mis- direction of public funds. Whilst the Committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance improves on their timely release of funds to Ministries Department and Agencies, the Parliamentary Committee on Finance should investigate the rollover expenditures of Ministries Department Agencies for the purposes of accountability and transparency.

Table 1: Ministries Department Agencies Account Heads and their Allocations for 2023

Vote	Div.	Vote Description	Amount [Le]
123	01	Public Service Commission	4,210,700.00
146	01	Minister Of Western Region	2,963,300.00
124	01	Office of Solicitor General	17,879,600.00
313	01	National Youth Service	3,394,900.00
319	02	National Children's Commission	1,000,000.00

317	01	Sierra Leone Council for Post Graduate Colleges of Health Specialist	3,281,700.00
413	00	National Water Resources Management Agency	4,300,000.00
428	03	Corporate Affairs Commission	2,197,500.00
139	01	National Commission for Privatization	2,602,800.00
414	00	Sierra Leone Water Company	828,837.00
110	03	National Assets and Government Property Commission	1,631,600.00
311	01	Health Service Commission	6,526,500.00
107	04	Provincial Secretary's Office North (Makeni)	4,573,900.00
723	00	Falaba District Council	966,967.00
721	00	Port Loko City Council	962,963.00
		Conclusion	

XII. VOTE (123-01) PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Public Service Commission was established by an Act of Parliament with the mandate to transform the public service to become professional, efficient and effective for the realisation of national development agendas. Some of the functions of this Commission are, to recruit, promote and train and staff Ministries Department Agencies, serve as the machinery to foster and achieve the implementation of government policies and programmes and to carry out the day to day operations of the various governments departments.

For the F.Y 2023, the Table below show the Commission key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget (NLe)	Total Expenditure (NLe)
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1	80% of 350 critical vacancies in MDAs filled	2,500,000.00	450,000.00
2	Promotional examinations for 250 civil servants in the professional and Administrative cadres conducted.	500,000.00	202,598.44
3	Deepen the Decentralization Process of PSC Operation	104,200.00	50,000.00
4	Rehabilitation of Public Service Commission building	3,319,212.86	2,945,046.56
	Grand Total	6,423,412.86	3, 647, 645.00

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	3,500,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 & Q2)	1,050,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)(including supplementary budget)	1,076,036.62

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le 3,500,000.00** to the Commission. The Committee noted a decrease in the Commission's approved budget from **Le3, 500,000.00** to the actual budget received of **Le1, 050, 000.00** in 2023, and registering **70%** decreased. And there was an opening balance of **Le 482,332.95** rollover with a closing balance of **Le 351,826.95** as at 30th September, 2023.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	2024 (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	3,433,150.00
2	Original Budget submitted to MoF	3,433,600.00
3	Budget Approved	4,210,700.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget to be approved by parliament is **Le 4, 210, 700.00**. The Committee noted an increase in the Commission original budget submission from **Le 3, 433, 600.00** to the actual budget to be

approved of **Le 4, 210, 700.00**. In 2024, registering **18.46%** increase. According to the Secretary the increase in the Commission original budget submitted will help in the following areas;

- The number of intended recruitment for the year 2024.
- Confirmation & Promotion of Civil Servants
- Human Resource Audit in Public Service entities

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee observed that the recruitment, transfer and promotion of staff was very slow due to late budgetary allocation from the Ministry of Finance.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance gives timely allocations to the Public Service Commission considering the important role it plays in recruiting, promoting and the placement of Public Service Workers who are responsible to implement all government policies.

XIII. VOTE (146-01) MINISTER OF WESTERN REGION

The Ministry was established by an Executive Order by His Excellency the President to expedite the administrative bureaucracies in governance taking cognizance of the huge population within the Western Area and the possible interventions of the government in providing necessary services.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Ministry key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget (Le)	Expenditure	Actual Expenditure (Le)
1	Administrative Cost	600,000.00		600,000.00

2	Leadership Training & Community Assessment (Transport refund to Headmen & Stakeholders) Name of deliverable 1)	480,000.00	474,956.13
3	Community Sensitization on Elections	174,956.13	170,000.00
4	Computer and Accessories	20,000.00	30,000.00
	TOTAL.	1,274,956.13	1,274,956.13

The budget analysis for 2023 FY is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	2,000,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	2,000,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3)	1,400,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)	1,274,956.13

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, the Ministry of Finance allocated **Le 2,000,000.00** to the Ministry of the Western Region. The Committee noted an increase in the Ministry's actual budget allocation from **Le2,000,000.00** to the actual budget received of **Le2,010,467.85** in 2023, and registering **0.52%** increased, because of the rollover from 2022

For the FY 2023, the ministry did undertake recurrent and capital expenditure.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	2,763,300.00

2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	6,350,473.00
3	Budget to be Approved	2,963,300.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget approved by parliament is **Le2, 963,300.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Ministry original budget submission from **Le6, 350,473.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le2, 963,300.00**. In 2024, registering **53.34%** drop. According to the Permanent Secretary the decrease in the original budget submitted will affect the following areas;

- ❖ Administrative Running Cost of the Ministry
- ❖ The Programmes that were intended to be implemented by the Coordination within the Western Urban and Western Rural will not be fully implemented.

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee observed during the sitting that more sensitization and community engagement is needed to bring governance and government policies closer to the people hence, budgetary allocation is needed for these activities.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance increase the budgetary allocation given to the Ministry of Western Region to increase sensitization and outreach to both head men and outreach to community stakeholders.

XIV. VOTE (124-01) OFFICE OF SOLICITOR GENERAL

The Office of the Solicitor General was created to provide effective, efficient and impartial legal service to achieve justice Sierra Leoneans. Its vision is to ensure expediency where law and order is needed with equal justice for all.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Solicitor General Key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Actual Expenditure (Le)
1	Witness /victims Management	350,000.00
2	Admin & General operation	4,212,158.00
3	Recruitment & Development of 30 state counsel	500,000.00
4	Continuing professional Development and Training of State Counsel and Administrative staff	564,232.00
5	Litigation Foley Hoag LLP & CRC Retreat	1,219,616.00
	TOTAL.	6,846,006.00

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	12,000,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	7,703,592.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3)	7,703,592.24
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)	7,703,592.24

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved **Le12,000,000.00** to the Office of the Solicitor General. The Committee noted a decrease in the Solicitor General's actual budget approved from **Le12,000,000.00** to the actual budget received of **Le7,703,592.24** in 2023, and registering **3.58%** decreased.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	13,000,000.00

2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	22,958,000.00
3	Budget to be Approved	17,879,600.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget approved to be by parliament is **Le17, 879,600.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Solicitor General original budget submission from **Le22, 958, 000.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le17, 879,600.00**. In 2024, registering **22.12%** drop. According to the Vote Controller the decrease in the original budget submitted will affect the following areas;

- ❖ Witness Management
- ❖ Administrative Operation
- ❖ Draft /Received Legislation
- ❖ Development of Concept Note for the Constitutional Review
- ❖ Legal Representation
- ❖ Human Capital Development

Key Findings:

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee observed that there is a drop of **22.12%** from the budgetary allocation given to the Office of the Solicitor General which will adversely affect modern ways of expediting Justice , legal representation and drafting legislations for the government and governmental institutions.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee strongly recommends that the Ministry of Finance allocate the original budgetary allocation of Le 22.9 Billion to the Office of the Solicitor-General acknowledging the vital role it plays in expediting justice.

XV. VOTE (313-01) NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, the National Youth Service is a Government Agency established by an Act of Parliament in 2016 to create a platform for young graduates to

develop their practical and theoretical skills, mitigate graduate youth unemployment, build social inclusion and national cohesion.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Service key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget (NLe)	Total Expenditure (NLe)
1	Administration Cost	352,125.00	331,934.00
2	Media.	11,000.00	9,276.90
3	Repairs and Maintenance	60,000.00	55,000.00
4	Fuel	500,000.00	594,810.00
5	Electricity Bill	16,000.00	13,500.00
6	Printing	10,000.00	5,103.00
7	Stationary	276,781.00	290,000.00
8	Monitoring and Evaluation	400,000.00	13,041.00
9	Provision and Sundries	280,500.00	250,270.00
	Grand Total	1,906,406.00	1,562,934.90

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	4,500,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	2,400,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 & Q2)	2,400,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)(including supplementary budget)	2, 303, 542.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le 4,500,000.00** to the Service. The Committee noted a decrease in the Service's approved budget from **Le 4,500,000.00** to the actual budget received of **Le 2,400,000.00** in

2023, and registering **46.67%** decreased. And there was an opening balance of **Le 110,267.21** rollover with a closing balance of **Le 1,314.11** as at 30th September, 2023.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	2024 (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	4,400,000.00
2	Original Budget submitted to MoF	3,000,000.00
3	Budget Approved	3,394,900.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget to be approved by parliament is **Le3, 394,900.00**. The Committee noted an increase in the Service original budget submission from **Le3, 000,000.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le3, 394,900.00**. In 2024, registering **11.63%** increase. According to the Executive Director the decrease in the Service original budget submitted will affect the following areas;

- **The number of youth service corps to be recruited**
- **Procurement of corps uniform (Full Set)**
- **Feeding of NYS corps at training camp**
- **Recruitment of NYS staff**
- **Others support to NYS activities**

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, it was observed by the Committee that the National Youth Service needs additional funding for both operational and running costs

This is crucial to the success of the National Youth Service vision and should be looked into by the Ministry of Finance with a view of increasing their budgetary allocation.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee recommends that due to the vital role played by the National Youth Commission in improving youth employment, creativity and resilience that the Ministry of Finance approve a supplementary budget that will cover the additional cost highlighted.

XVI. VOTE (319-02) NATIONAL CHILDREN'S COMMISSION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the National Commission for Children was established by an Act of Parliament with a statutory mandate to monitor and coordinate the implementation of the Convention on the rights of Children and the African Charter on the rights and welfare of children in order to oversee the implementation of Part III of the Child Rights Act of 2007. It advises Government on policies and aimed at improving the condition and welfare of children in Sierra Leone compatible with the Convention and the Charter.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Commission key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget Expenditure (Le)	Actual Expenditure (Le)
1	Administrative Cost	897,150.00	859,904.00
2	Nationwide data collection of Child-led and Child focused organisations, monitoring and assessing the impact of violence Against Children, SGBV, Juvenile Justice, HIV/AIDS, drug and substance abuse, Trafficking/Labour and Children with Disabilities	78,392.00	63,600.00

3	Child Participation and Advocacy Commemoration of 5 key International Child Advocacy events, Innovations on Technology	160,000.00	160,681.00
4	Nationwide awareness raising on non- involvement of Children on Child Rights Instruments and practices	125,000.00	128,272.00
	TOTAL.	1,252,150.00	1,221,555.00

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	2,100,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	1,252,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3) including supplementary budget, donations and other revenue	1,399,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)(including supplementary budget, Donation & Grant	1,465,040.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le2, 100,000.00** to the Commission. The Committee noted a decrease in the Commission's approved budget from **Le2, 100,000.00** to the actual budget allocation of **Le1, 252,000.00** in 2023, and registering **40.38%** decreased. And there was an opening balance of **Le29, 808.63** rollover, with a closing balance of **Le 88,483.04** as at 30th September, 2023.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	2,276,000.00

2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	2,376,000.00
3	Budget to be Approved	1,000,000.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget approved by parliament is **Le1, 000,000.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Commission original budget submission from **Le2, 376,000.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le1, 000,000.00**. In 2024, registering **57.91%** drop.

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee observed by the Committee that more funds should be allocated to child's rights, advocacy and education. The budgetary advised that allocation given by the Ministry of Finance to the Commission should be increased to cover the cost areas highlighted.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee strongly recommends that the Ministry of Finance make the needed finances to cover the programmes, projects and activities to be implemented by the Commission. This is in line with international best practice and the Sustainable Development Goals.

XVII. VOTE (317-01) SIERRA LEONE COUNCIL FOR POST GRADUATE COLLEGES

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Sierra Leone Council for Postgraduate Colleges of Health Specialties was established by an Act of Parliament in 2016 to supervise and coordinate the training of postgraduate health specialists and to provide for other related matters.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Postgraduate Colleges key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget Expenditure (Le)	Actual Expenditure (Le)
1	Administrative Cost	2,002,200.00	2,002,200.00
2	Education & Training and Functionality	511,500.00	511,500.00
3	Development with Quality Management System	455,000.00	455,000.00
4	Partnership and Relationship in line with Research and Innovation	188,000.00	188,000.00
5	Infrastructure Resources and Facility	125,000.00	125,000.00
	TOTAL.	3,281,700.00	3,281,700.00

The budget analysis for 2023 FY is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	2,900,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	870,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3)	870,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q2 & Q3) (including supplementary budgets)	975,340.45

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le2, 900,000.00** to the Postgraduate Collage. The Committee noted a decrease in the Postgraduate collage's approved budget from **Le2, 900,000.00** to the actual budget allocation of **Le870, 000.00** in 2023, and registering **70%** decreased. And there was an opening balance of **Le484, 745** rollover with a closing balance of **Le379,404.72** as at 30th September, 2023.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	3,281,700.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	3,281,700.00

3	Budget to be Approved	3,281,700.00
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Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget approved by parliament is **Le3, 281,700.00**. The Committee noted a fair approval in the Postgraduate Collage original budget submission from **Le3, 281,700.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le3, 281,700.00**. In 2024, registering **0%** drop.

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee commends the governments initiative in creating the Council of Post Graduate Colleges to train Medical Doctors in specialized areas, however the Committee observed that operational and running costs were not met by the allocation given to the Sierra Leone Council for Postgraduate Colleges of Health Specialties.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee therefore recommends that adequate funding be made available by the Ministry of Finance to the Post Graduate Colleges Specialities to cover areas of research and development, planning and operational cost of the Institution.

XVIII. VOTE (413-00) NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AGENCY (NWRMA)

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, National Water Resources Management Agency (NWRMA) was established by an Act of Parliament in **2017** responsible to ensure that the water resources of the country are controlled in a sustainable manner taking into account:

- (a) Adopting natural river basin and aquifer boundaries as the basic units of management of water resources;
- (b) Protecting the water resources for sustainability of their source and protection of aquatic systems and recognizing the polluter-pays principle;

(c) Providing for existing customary uses of water and avoidance of significant harm to other users;

(d) Promoting the efficient and beneficial use of water resources in the public interest;

(e) Promoting community participation and gender equity in the allocation of water resources;

(f) Promoting conservation and recognizing the economic value of water resources;

(g) Reducing and preventing pollution and degradation of water resources; and (h) meeting international obligations in protecting and managing trans boundary water bodies.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Agency key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget Expenditure (Le)	Actual Expenditure (Le)
1	Admin & Operation Activities 1 Cost	672,470.00	648,000.00
2	Vehicle, Building Maintenance Services 2	78,392.00	63,600.00
3	Board Expenses & Staff Travel	473,370.00	476,225.00
4	Establishment of Two Regional Offices 4	117,096.00	109,400.00
5	Finance & Accounting Software for Provincial Branches 5	65,000.00	60,000.00
	TOTAL.		1,357,225.00

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	2,280,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	2,280,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3) including, supplementary budget and other revenues(Citizen Science	4,093,880.94

	& Third – Party Water Users)	
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3) including supplementary, donation and other revenues	1,357,225.00

With regards revenue generation, the Agency collected revenue of **Le2, 021,085.54** in **2023**, thereby exceeding its original target of **Le1, 500,000.00**.

The excess, according to the Agency, was largely due to increase cooperation from existing clients and the ratification of its regulations by the House of Parliament. The latter development has empowered the Agency to enforce the laws stipulated in its Act, leading to a rise in compliance visits conducted by the Planning, Research & Operations and Legal Regulations & Outreach departments. In this regard, the Agency revenue target for **FY 2024** is **Le1, 600,000.00**.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	4,300,200.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	10,433,860.00
3	Budget to be Approved	4,300,000.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget approved by parliament is **Le 4,300,000.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Agency original budget submission from **Le 10,433,860.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le 2,963,300.00**. In 2024, registering **58.79%** drop. According to the Director General the decrease in the original budget submitted will hinder the implementation of the aforementioned policy initiatives and impede the recruitment of crucial personnel.

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee observed that the drop in the Agency's allocation will affect the implementation of the laid down policy management and recruitment, this will hinder the objectives for which the Agency was created and therefore recommends to the Ministry of Finance to make provision for a supplementary budget to be added to the Agency.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance makes provision for additional budgetary allocation to the Agency to enable it fund various projects, programmes and projects as water is public good needed by all in society.

XIX. VOTE (428 - 03) CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) is legally established to provide support towards business growth, issues out licence and business registration certificate to potential investors, to provide information to the public, and contributes towards sustainable socio- economic development in the Country.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the demand for administrative and service delivery to the public level is rapidly increasing. The workload of the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) is increasing.

In 2024 FY, the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) was allocated **Le2,197,500.00** The Committee noted that the allocation is not reflective of the performance of the Commission in terms of prudent public financial management, it was also observed that the Commission had difficulty in procuring base office equipment and operational running cost.

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee observed that the Commission is a revenue generating institution but does not retain any amount of the monies generated for its operational and running costs. This has had a telling effect on the administration of the Commission.

Recommendation.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee strongly recommends that a specified amount or percentage of the monies collected from business licences and registrations be remitted into the Commission's account for operational and running cost. It is also hoped that the new parent body called the National Investment Board (NIB) would take this recommendation into account considering the pivotal role the Commission plays in investment and business opportunities in Sierra Leone.

XX. VOTE (139 - 01) NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR PRIVATIZATION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the National Commission for Privatisation was established by an Act of Parliament in 2002 to take responsibility for the reform and divestiture of non-performing public enterprises with venture of making them profit worthy. The object for which the Commission is established is to serve as the policy and decision-making body for the divestiture and reform process of public enterprises of Public Private Partnership ventures.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Commission key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget Expenditure (Le)	Actual Expenditure (Le)
1	Administrative Cost	1,473,216.93	645,101.55
2	Enhancement of divestiture and privatization of Public enterprises, Performance Management, Negotiation	344,123.23	332,407.00
3	Organization of Workshops / Good Corporate Governance	112,283.06	
4	Business and Asset Valuation of Parastatals	172,965.93	

5	Feasibility studies, International trips, Conferences and Case Study Programmes for Privatization and Due Diligence	742,410.85	36,881.36
	TOTAL.	2,845,000.00	1,014,389.91

The budget analysis for 2023 FY is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	2,300,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	2,845,000.00

3	Actual Budget Received (Q1 to Q3) (including other revenue – Payment Reversal)	914,051.04
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3) (including supplementary budgets)	1,011,379.90

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le2, 300,000.00** to the Commission. The Committee noted a decrease in the Commission's approved budget from **Le2,300,000.00** to the actual budget received of **Le914,051.04** in 2023, and registering **60.25%** decreased.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For the FY 2023**, the Commission did not undertake any capital project.

The budget analysis for 2024 FY is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	2,602,800.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	10,190,000.00
3	Budget to be Approved	2,602,800.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget approved by parliament is **Le2, 602, 800.00**. The Committee noted a decrease in the Commission original budget submission from **Le10, 190, 000.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le2, 602, 800.00** in 2024, registering **74.46%** drop.

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, it was observed that the National Commission for privatization should do more to undertake capital projects to privatize more public companies for effective service delivery that will help to accrue huge dividends and profits to the government of Sierra Leone.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee strongly recommends that the Ministry of Finance increase budgetary allocation to finance public private partnership ventures.

XXI. VOTE (414 - 00) SIERRA LEONE WATER COMPANY

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Sierra Leone Water Company was established by an Act of parliament (The SALWACO Act 2001) charged with the responsibility to provide safe and efficient water Supply Services to provincial towns and cities. The SALWACO Act was amended in 2017 as enacted by Parliament to strengthen the company's financial viability and also added a technical advisory role for SALWACO to Local Councils in rural areas. SALWACO's current operational areas with Conventional Water Supply Systems include but not limited to; Lungi, Port Loko, Kambia, Lunsar, Makeni, Magburuka, Kabala, Mile 91, Moyamba, Bo, Bonthe Island, Pujehun, Blama Bandawor, Kenema and Kailahun.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Company key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget Expenditure (Le)	Actual Expenditure (Le)
1	Improve access to water in district headquarter towns supply systems running cost	2,500,000.00	2,500,000.00
2	Maintain and run existing / newly acquired plants vehicles to meet effective water supply delivery in provincial towns – Maintenance of fleet of vehicles	4,760,000.00	4,760,000.00
3	Sensitization campaign	40,000.00	40,000.00
4	Monitoring and Evaluation	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00
	TOTAL.	8,800,000.00	8,800,000.00

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	8,800,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	2,500,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received GoSL Regular Budget (Q1 & Q2)	6,535,185.04
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)	5,157,346.05

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le8, 800,000.00** to the Company. The Committee noted a decrease in the Company's approved budget from **Le8, 800,000.00** to the actual budget allocation of **Le2, 500,000.00** in 2023, and registering **71.59%** decreased.

With regards revenue generation, the Company collected revenue of **Le3, 895,185.04** in **2023**, thereby reduced its original target of **Le8, 345,850.00**. The decrease, according to the Company, was due to the following;

- i. Most Government institution such as Hospitals, Military Barracks, Schools, Police Barracks etc. very reluctant to pay for the water consumed
- ii. Low payment during the rainy season. In this regard, the Company revenue target for **FY 2024** is **Le8, 580,825.00**.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	9, 958, 400.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	10, 569, 600.00
3	Budget to be Approved	828,837.00

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members it was observed by the Committee that public institutions have refused to pay water bills and this has had an adverse effect on the operations of the Sierra Leone Water Company.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members Committee strongly recommends that bills from public institution that use water be paid promptly as this will help the Sierra Leone Water Company [SALWACO] to generate enough revenue for its internal operational running costs.

XXII. VOTE (110-03) NATIONAL ASSETS AND GOVERNMENT PROPERTY COMMISSION

Mr Chairman, Hon. Members, the National Assets and Government's Property Commission was established by an act of Parliament in 1990 to control and identify all national assets and government's property, provide for the maintenance and improvement of such property and the monitoring of their used or disposal, and for connected purposes. The Commission is directly under the control of the Office of the President. The Commission establishes and maintains a national Register of all national assets and Government's property to be known as the Master Register which shall contain a list of all national assets.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Commission key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget Expenditure (Le)	Actual Expenditure (Le)
1	Administration Cost	2,031,800	288,089.00
2	Establishment of Regional Offices	271,300.00	98,470.00
3	Development of the National Asset Register	168,000.00	173,000.00
4	Development of Fixed Assets Policy	133,600.00	179,912.00

	Regulatory Framework		
5	Inspection of Government Asset	11,000.00	0.00
	TOTAL.	2,615,700.00	739,471.00

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	1,000,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	500,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received GoSL Regular Budget (Q1 & Q2)	500,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)	420,550.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le1, 000,000.00** to the Commission. The Committee noted a decrease in the Commission's approved budget from **Le1, 000,000.00** to the actual budget allocation of **Le500, 000.00** in 2023, and registering **50%** decreased.

With regards revenue generation, the Commission collected revenue of **Le1, 523,257.67** in **2023**, thereby exceeding its original target of **Le.00**. The excess, according to the Agency, was largely due to increase cooperation from existing clients and the ratification of its regulations by the House of Parliament. The latter development has empowered the Agency to enforce the laws stipulated in its Act, leading to a rise in compliance visits conducted by the Planning, Research & Operations and Legal Regulations & Outreach departments. In this regard, the Agency revenue target for **FY 2024** is **Le 2,000,000.00**.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	1,131,600.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	3,473,600.00

3	Budget to be Approved	1,631,600.00
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Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget approved by parliament is **Le1, 631,600.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Commission original budget submission from **Le3, 473,600.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le1, 631,600.00**. In 2024, registering **53.03%** drop. According to the Executive Secretary the decrease in the original budget submitted will affect administrative and operational, and increase in staff as a result of proposed recruitment, and establishment of regional offices.

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members the Committee observed 53% drop in the budgetary allocation of the Commission's budget which will affect administrative and operational costs.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members Committee recommends that the Commission ensure it retains some profit accrued from sales of government properties and use it for its operational and running costs.

XXIII. VOTE (311-10) HEALTH SERVICE COMMISSION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Sierra Leone Health Service Commission (SLHSC) was set up by an Act of Parliament 2011 to assist the Ministry of health in the implementation of health National Policies, ensuring access to good quality healthcare services, appoint health professional staff, determines remuneration of health professionals and their conditions of service.

For the F.Y 2023, the table below show the Commission key approved deliverables and actual costs incurred:

No	Name of Deliverable	Budget Expenditure (Le)	Actual Expenditure (Le)
1	Administrative Cost	2,900,000.00	1,182,876.00
2	Recruitment of 1000 Health Workers	600,000.00	311,354.00
3	Planning Monitoring & Evaluation	500,000.00	61,797.00
	TOTAL.	4,000,000.00	1,556,027.00

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	4,000,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	3,500,000.00
3	Donation/Grants/Loan Received	1,200,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from Donation /Grant/ Loan	1,556,027.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le4, 000,000.00** to the Commission. The Committee noted that the Commission did not receive Government Regular budget from Q1 to Q4. The Commission only received Donor/Grant & Loan. And there was an opening balance of **Le21,717.47** rollover with a closing balance of **Le69,251.47** as at 30th September, 2023.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	6,026,500.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	7,977,214.90
3	Budget to be Approved	6,526,500.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget to be approved by parliament is **Le6, 026,500.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Commission original budget submission from **Le7, 977,214.90** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le6, 026,500.00** in 2024, registering **24.45%** drop. According to the Secretary the decrease in the Commission original budget submitted will affect; Cost of establishing new District Offices, fuel for staff etc.

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, it was observed the budgetary allocation given to Health Service Commission to cover policies and implement quality health care is not adequate, hence a supplementary budgetary allocation should be considered by the Ministry of Finance.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee strongly recommends that the Ministry of Finance increase its budgetary allocation to the Health Commission to cover very important areas like health insurance and policies for public sector workers.

XXIV. VOTE (107 – 04) PROVINCIAL SECRETARY’S OFFICE NORTH MAKENI

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the demand for administrative and service delivery at local level is rapidly increasing. The workload of the Office of the Provincial Sec is increasing, especially for chiefdom de-amalgamation, crowning of Paramount Chiefs to meet the needs of the decentralisation service delivery.

In 2024 FY, the Provincial Secretary’s Office, North was allocated **Le4, 573,900.00**. The Committee noted that the allocation is not reflective of the performance of the Office in terms of prudent public financial management.

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, it was observed during the sitting that more needs to be done in sensitizing headmen and the general public on the roles and activities of the government as this draw government closer to the people and reduce misinformation .

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee recommends that the Ministry Finance gives additional allocation to Provincial Secretary's Office for the purposes of outreach and sensitization.

XXV. VOTE (701) FALABA DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Falaba District Council is one of the 22 Local Councils in Sierra Leone. From the review of documents and the discussions with Management, the Committee observed the following:

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	17,214,802.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	2,052,279.41
3	Actual Budget Received GoSL Regular Budget (Q2 & Q3) (including supplementary budget, donation / grant loans	6,482,888.00
	received other revenue and Accountable governance	
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)	12,127,762.23.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le 17,214,802.00** to the Council. The Committee noted a decrease in the Council's approved budget from **Le 17,214,802.00** to the actual budget allocation of **Le2,052,279.41** in 2023, and registering **88.08%** dropped.

With regards revenue generation, the Council collected revenue of **Le15,977,813.48** in **2023** thereby reduced its original target of **Le17,214,802.00**. The decrease, according to the Chief Administrator, was due to the following;

- i. Poor road network
- ii. Lack the required technology
- iii. Low awareness by tax payers
- iv. Poor coordination between stakeholders or conflict between council and chieftdom authorities. In this regard, the Company revenue target for **FY 2024** is **Le21, 827,772.97**.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	5,848,353.00
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	5,882,607.27
3	Budget to be Approved	966,967.00

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, it was observed that own source revenue and taxes generated for the Councils are very low.

Recommendation

The Committee strongly recommends for the Councils to invest in Agriculture and use the proceeds to finance their projects, programmes and activities.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget approved by parliament is **Le966, 967.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Council original budget submission from **Le5, 848,353.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le966, 967.00**. In 2024, registering **83.47%** drop. According to the Chief Administrator the decrease in the original budget submitted will affect administrative cost and operation of the Council.

XXVI. VOTE (701) PORTLOKO CITY COUNCIL

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, Port Loko City Council is one of the 22 Local Councils in Sierra Leone. From the review of documents and the discussions with Management, the Committee observed the following:

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For the F.Y 2023**, the Council key approved deliverables and total actual costs incurred is **Le888, 810.00**

The budget analysis for **2023 FY** is shown in the table below

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Approved Budget	1,276,000.00
2	Actual Amount Allocated (Q1 to Q4)	390,000.00
3	Actual Budget Received GoSL Regular Budget (Q1 & Q2)	390,000.00
4	Actual Expenditure from GOSL Regular Budget (Q1 to Q3)	390,000.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, for **2023 FY**, Parliament approved the sum of **Le1, 276,000.00** to the Council. The Committee noted a decrease in the Council's approved budget from **Le1, 276,000.00** to the actual budget allocation of **Le390, 000.00** in 2023, and registering **69.44%** decreased.

With regards revenue generation, the Council collected revenue of **Le3, 779,164.00** in **2023** thereby reduced its original target of **Le5, 124,390.00**. The decrease, according to the Chief Administrator, was due to the following;

- v. Lack of Logistic
- vi. Lack of personnel for revenue mobilization. In this regard, the Company revenue target for **FY 2024** is **Le2, 671,343.00**.
- vii. Non – compliance of tax payers

Key Findings

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, it was observed that own source revenue and taxes generated for the Councils are very low.

Recommendation

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, the Committee strongly recommends for the Councils to invest in Agriculture and use the proceeds to finance their projects, programmes and activities.

The budget analysis for **2024 FY** is shown in the table below:

No	Details	Amount (Le)
1	Budget Ceiling advised by MoF	2,440,343.74
2	Original Budget Submitted to MoF	2,440,343.74
3	Budget to be Approved	962,963.00

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, **For 2024 FY**, the budget approved by parliament is **Le962, 963.00**. The Committee noted a drop in the Council original budget submission from **Le2, 440,343.00** to the actual budget to be approved of **Le962, 963.00**. In 2024, registering **60.54%** drop. According to the Chief Administrator the decrease in the original budget submitted will affect administrative cost and operation of the Council.

XXVII. CONCLUSION

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to take this opportunity to express sincere thanks and appreciation to Members of Sub-Committee Nine for their cooperation and teamwork as they critically scrutinized the budgets of MDAs under their purview. The Committee wishes to thank all staff who provided technical support.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, on behalf of this Committee, I move that the **Vote Heads** and **sub-heads** of MDAs, including allocations to the Local Councils scrutinized by this Committee as indicated in the table below stand part of the Schedule.

Table 1: MDAs Account Heads and their Allocations for 2023

Vote	Div.	Vote Description	Amount [Le]
123	01	Public Service Commission	4,210,700.00
146	01	Minister Of Western Region	2,963,300.00
124	01	Office of Solicitor General	17,879,600.00
313	01	National Youth Service	3,394,900.00
319	02	National Children's Commission	1,000,000.00
317	01	Sierra Leone Council for Post Graduate Colleges	3,281,700.00
413	00	National Water Resources Management Agency	4,300,000.00
428	03	Corporate Affairs Commission	2,197,500.00
139	01	National Commission for Privatization	2,602,800.00
414	00	Sierra Leone Water Company	828,837.00
110	03	National Assets and Government, Property Commission	1,631,600.00
311	01	Health Service Commission	6,526,500.00
107	04	Provincial Secretary's Office North (Makeni)	4,573,900.00
723	00	Falaba District Council	966,967.00
721	00	Portloko City Council	962,963.00
		Conclusion	

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Hon.Tom Issic Tucker, Chairman
Sub-Appropriation Committee 9.

THE CHAIRMAN: Any views?

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have you got views?

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Yes Mr Chairman, I have.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman

THE CHAIRMAN: Hold on, let me hear the Leader. Yes.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, firstly, I do not know if my colleagues even followed the pattern of actually scrutinising the budget. I did not see any justification; he was just reading through the report. He was not able to tell us the expenditure bracket of the MDAs in previous Financial Year, and what is the projection given in estimate- none of that is given. All what is given or read to us is theory. And even in the theory, all what they talked about is Income and Expenditure. We want to justify why monies were given to our MDAs; is not just to come and tell us for example, our Committee gave **Le4.3Mln** etc. We are confused; I do not know what report we are approving. And even the summary he gave, he did not tell us the grand total for the Public Service Commission. I was expecting him to properly elucidate, using the summary of the Financial Year 2023 with a table below; expenditure list given and the budget that was provided. If you look at Page 8, the Budget is **Le6Mln** and expenditure bracket is **Le3Mln** and they are saying they only allocated... all of them are saying the same language; that because allocation was not enough. We are operating on cash Budget; the way we get is the way we spend monies and that has been happening since after the interregnum. It is not like we have money fixed and we cannot give it to them. So the MDAs must justify to us how the monies given to them in the first and second quarters were expended. And giving justification for an increment to their budget for what? In fact, if I have to make recommendation I would recommend that their budget be reduced because they did not present their budgets properly as expected.

Mr Chairman, for the process to continue, for me, I have not seen any variation and I have not even seen the report given for the Youth Commission. We have a Table; they should be able to tell us what they received in quarter 1, 2, 3 or quarter 1 & 2. And the clarifications should be very clear, stating that they spent such and such amount of money. But if you look at this Report, it is only the general expenditure that they have given us. They did not state whether it is in 1st quarter or 2nd quarter; they just said **FY 2023**. In the case of National Youth Service, they just said Financial Year 2023; no quarter is given, and they talk about Electricity Bill. Why are they asking for Electricity Bill? Most of these MDAs do not pay

electricity bills, I stand to be corrected. So we need to ask them why they are giving these Vote Heads.

THE CHAIRMAN: In fact, I had wanted to ask, Leader please, one minute; Mr Minister, is it possible for you to be paying these electricity bills directly to EDSA? [*Undertone*] Yes, I think, because most of these MDAs, you pay them these monies and they do not pay to EDSA [*Undertones*]. That is not what we are saying, this is just an afterthought. Yes, Mr Minister; is it possible at all?

MR. SHEKU F. BANGURA: Well we have Pre-Paid Meters; it is when you pay that you will have light.

THE CHAIRMAN: The point why I am raising this is because, when you go to the Youyi Building right now you cannot use the lift because MDAs have refuse to pay their bills, and nobody wants to take over the energy used by the lift there. So the lift is just there; you have to walk up to the 8th or whatever Floor because they are all refusing to own up.

MR. SHEKU F. BANGURA: For big edifices like those, I think the Ministry of Works is seized of the responsibility to manage that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly, certainly.

MR. SHEKU F. BANGURA: Yes, but for those other Agencies, they have Prepaid Meters, and in their charges that we transfer to them, they have the responsibility to ensure that it is appropriately utilized to run those offices. So that is how we have been doing it, so they should account for the resources that we transfer to them.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is alright. Yes, Leader.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I cannot say I am not impressed, but it is the analysis I am now questioning. Under the same rubric: Vote Head **313-01**; National Youth Service, for '*Provisions and Sundries*', the budget allocated was just given as, **Le280, 000** and more, and the expended figure given to us is **Le250, 000**.

THE CHAIRMAN: Where is the **Le30, 000**?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: So are these figures just created and put into this document? So is this the budget given, or is this the amount allocated after the Budget was given? These are the MDAs that say money is not enough, and yet they are saying **sundries**. How much are they really getting from **sundries**?

THE CHAIRMAN: Sometimes they are in hurry to put figures because they have to appear before Parliament.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, let me rest my case. It is the same when you look at the Approved Budget. If you go to Page 15, they said Approved Budget for 1st quarter is **Le4.5Bln**, and the actual Allocated Budget for quarters 1 to 4 is **Le2.4Bln**.

Mr Chairman, in the expended bracket, there is nothing given by quarter. How can you now just give general figures from 1st quarter to 4th quarter? In the preliminary report, they said they were not given 3rd and 4th quarters, how now can they say again from 1st quarter to 4th quarter they were given **Le2.4Bln**? I will not even question the reliability of the report, so that is my problem. Did the Chairman properly read the Report? I rest my case Sir; you can make your decision.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, no, let us not proceed on this

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, it is not a debate Sir, but it is something I need to comment on.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, let me hear you.

HON. AARON A. KOROMA: Mr Chairman, I want to thank the Chairman of Committee 9. Of course he is a new Chairman and I am sure he did justice to ensure that he gives a proper disclosure as to what happened during the Committee on Supply.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I want to refer the House to Page 27 of the Report and I want to stick on the 2024 Budgetary Allocation for SALWACO. As per that schedule, SALWACO was given a Budget Ceiling of **Le9.9Bln** and then, the original Budget submitted was **Le10Bln** but the Budget approved was **Le828Mln**. Maybe the Minister needs to truly explain to us the realistic nature of that; how can that be. SALWACO of course, is a highly capital intensive Institution. As we speak, there is an on-going Six-town water supply

project and **800Mln** cannot even dig up to 10 water wells or even 8 Solar Powered Bore Holes. So if you just have **Le828Mln** old Leones being stated as a Budget approved for SALWACO, then that is very abysmal.

Mr Chairman, I also want to talk on the Councils. I have interest in the two Councils mentioned here; the Falaba District Council and the Port Loko City Council and these are new Councils. Mr Chairman, the amount given to these two Councils is just about **Le956Mln**. Mr Chairman, it may interest you to know that this **Le966Mln** is what the Councils are expected to use to run all the devolved sector activities in those districts. And we know how Falaba District is; it is one of the poorest districts as per the Poverty Index, based on the Statistics Report and it is a new Council; they do not even have an Office. So instead of government continues spending **Le100Mln** on rent for these two Councils, I think it is but fitting that government considers giving them specific amount under the Public Investment Programme so that they can construct Offices for themselves.

Mr Chairman, we have the **Feed Salon** which is a priority project of government just like the Education which is also another priority project. All the supervision role of the education budget is being done by these Councils. In the Agricultural Sector, all the Agric-Extension Service is being done at the district level and not at the central level. So Mr Chairman, if they can just allocate an amount less than a Billion Leone to these Councils, it is like you telling them 'just take this and eat'. That amount is actually not something that would actually impact on the lives of our people.

So I want to strongly recommend that the Ministry of Finance considers these two Councils for the fact that they are very new and with a very limited revenue base. You cannot generate more than **Le200Mln** in Falaba District, not to talk of Port Loko City. So they rely on government to survive, so I therefore submit that Government considers these two Councils.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Quinton Salia-Konneh, you have the Floor.

HON. QUINTIN SALIA-KONNEH: Thank you very much Mr Chairman, just a quick one.

As the Honourable Member was reading his report, I actually visualize a pattern; a particular pattern that runs across all MDAs. For all the MDAs that came to my Committee, I also realised that request was always different from allocation, allocation different from disbursement and disbursement was not timely for most of the MDAs. The MDAs came on that platform giving reasons why they could not reach target. Most of them said they received allocation for only two quarters while the remaining two quarters were not received. Others will tell you they did not even receive allocations for the quarters which their colleagues received- so it is a concern.

Mr Chairman, is there a model that the Ministry is using for disbursement of funds approved by this House? If there is a model, then I am wondering why four MDAs received for quarters 1 and 2, and some only received for quarters 2 and 3.

THE CHAIRMAN: How can they pay quarter 3, quarter 4 without quarter 1 and quarter 2?

HON. QUINTIN SALIA-KONNEH: That was what some of them told us; they said they did not receive quarter 2 but received quarter 3. Some will tell you we received monies in quarter 1, we received in quarter 2 but we did not receive for quarter 3 and quarter 4. Others said they only received for quarter 3; so we are confused.

Therefore we want the Minister to tell us whether there is a particular model they use to disburse funds, or there are MDAs that are priorities. Are there indicators that they look at before they disburse these funds? So we may want to know as a House.

Secondly, according to his report, I realised he mentioned National Youth Service and National Youth Commission. For me, I am still confused and I want to know the different mandate because I realized at some points that the two Institutions were involved in Youth Service Scheme and I have been part of the two Institutions supporting them right across. So I do not know what their distinct mandates are because I see most of their functions as duplication of effort.

As for the National Youth Service, I realised they are really doing a great job because year in year out, I have been one of their facilitators before the young graduates are deployed in different MDAs across the country.

Mr Chairman, one thing we must note again as citizens of this country is that every time people go for employment, employers ask them for work experience, and for most of the time without work experience they are not recruited. I believe that was where the National Youth Service came in to say okay, let us step in as an Institution to salvage this whole aspect of lack of experience after graduation and give the graduates the relevant experience before they go in for professional or substantive jobs. We must know that when they are deployed in these MDAs, the primary focus is for them to get the experience they have been yearning for. When once they are in this deployment, the National Youth Service has the responsibility to give them stipend on a monthly basis which should not be below the minimum wage rate. So I think if we really want to kill this aspect of lack of experience, then we must be serious as a country to start prioritising the National Youth Service in terms of disbursement so that they could increase the number of graduates' deployment in the different MDAs. It is just a concern, I am very much impressed but again if it is possible for the Minister to pay special attention to the National Youth Service, it would be better because they are doing a great job by trying to minimize this whole employment gap in the country, I thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Honourable Quintin. At this point Honourable Members, I wish to recognise the presence of certain eminent personalities we have here; great friends of Sierra Leone. They are all here representing Terateck Company:

Dr Gangasieze [their Leader], Richard Miller and Maajo Kamara; they are members of Terateck and they are friends of Sierra Leone who have helped us a lot. You are welcome to the House of Parliament. Mr Leader, you can now proceed.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, I think we are missing the point or we do not want to recognise that in terms of financial difficulties we have to find some remedies to salvage the situation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, you are debating in response to what he said?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: No, no, it is a general view that I am making

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Mr Chairman, you see, they are also constrained with revenue collection viz-a-viz expenditure. So what they are saying is that they have done their own parameter in terms of allocation. We would look at the MDAs and see what is really important in the expenditure bracket. All the business is about expenditure; how to take care of government priorities and the agenda in line with your own Ministry. All of them have proposals, but I think the problem is that they do not even pay attention to the scale of preference in order of their administrative responsibilities. So talking about sundries; sundries is just for you to get some facilities in the office. You have some administrative responsibilities which was given over **Le200Mln**, and other activities that need fuel and other things was given over **Le60Mln**. So what are we saying? It is there, I read it under the National Youth Service Commission.

So, if you said you were not given 1st and 2nd quarters, I would imagine how you operate if you were not given 1st and 2nd quarters. Let me say you were given 3rd quarter, the question now would be how do you now salvage 1st quarter? What I have not heard from the report is the issue of '**value for money**' which is the whole essence of the Committee on Supply. We are challenging them; they have given some MDAs **Le2Bln** as ceiling, while in fact some of these MDAs are not worth having **Le2Bln**. Some are only supposed to have **Le500Mln** and not **Le2Bln**. But how do we justify that? It is by their expenditure bracket because it should be consistent with the previous financial years. If I am giving you **Le5Bln** for this **FY** year 2024, you should be able to justify to the Committee that you were able to use the particular amount that was given to you. That is why the issue of '*we were not given monies on time by the Ministry*' does not hold for certain instances. What is your scale of preference? It is not about giving jobs. If you want to facilitate job creation for your people so that they can work in MDAs, Honourable Colleagues, I think the Commission should divert monies allocated for sundries to issues vital for the operations of the MDAs.

Mr Chairman, if you look at the figures that they gave us from the expenditure, it is clearly stated. You will see one that is of no significance but is having over **Le100Mln** and the other which is significant for the Ministry is having **Le60Mln**. And they are responsible to prioritize their responsibilities, even when you are given Vote Heads. The Minister cannot go

and force them to conduct a workshop on how to develop a scheme for would-be graduates in order to prepare them for the job market.

So in their priority scale, we are expecting them to say okay, we are diverting this expenditure, and they would write to the Financial Secretary and have discussions with the Ministry as well. For example they would say, *'Vote Heads 314 and 316 are going to be diverted with written consent from the Ministry'*. But what they do is that they only pay attention to what they consume in their Offices and fail to capture what is supposed to be done outside to make the MDA very vital.

Now the Chairman of the Committee is making an appeal. But sometimes an appeal does not have much to do with resource allocated, but through making sincere expenditure from what you have received from the Ministry of Finance. It is a difficult task for the Ministry to say okay, we are going to allocate such and such amount because the allocation depends on how revenue is raised or generated— what they collect is what they disburse. So you have to show justification for the ceiling given to you. For me, if I am the Financial Secretary, before I make an allocation to you, you must bring some amount of justification and some oversight responsibilities. If I am to give you **Le2Bln** out of **Le10Bln** ceiling in this quarter, you should be able to tell me how you are going to spend that money— *'value for money'*. So Mr Chairman, what this House is supposed to do now is to look at those ceilings to know whether they are justifiable. I have not been convinced by the presentation of any of the Committees because there is no justification given for the amounts allocated.

Mr Chairman, there are MDAs which have been given **Le10Bln**, but in actual fact they deserve more than **Le10Bln**, but that should be justified in the report. If somebody says we should give an MDA **10%**, my argument still stands that why should we make that increment when you have not shown your spirit of bracket justifying what you are doing?

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Leader, in the face of the Gallery, don't you think this is a Committee Room 1 matter?

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: No, what I am saying is just to draw their attention to the issue of justification of those figures.

THE CHAIRMAN: I know, I know...

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: So that in future,...

THE CHAIRMAN: Please, please, those areas that are meant for Committee Room 1, let us get to Committee Room 1 and address them.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Noted, Mr Chairman, but let me come to what you are saying. This is a Committee Stage, we can say okay accepted, but the Minister has the right to say I can give your allocation when monies are available. I am drawing their attention to justification; we should change the level of the parameters that we are using for allocations.

THE CHAIRMAN: I totally agree with you...

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: I am also asking that we look at MDAs and give them some amount of prominence in terms of Budget Allocation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Not that they are wrong, but they have not justified to us how much they have used in terms of the priority areas.

THE CHAIRMAN: Maybe we need further conversation on this.

HON. MATHEW S. NYUMA: Thank you Mr Chairman. The final point I would like to make to Mr Minister is that, I think the traditional pattern of allocations has to be reviewed. We are just helping but you have the expertise. Maybe you do not even need **Le3Bln** to run the Budget; maybe you only need **Le2Bln** but because you are not doing proper monitoring in some areas, people are having allocations of figures that are not justifiable. So perhaps if you ask for justification from MDs and you apportion Allocations based on preference, maybe you can be able to save some amount of money.

Mr Chairman, it is just a general view, we just want them to do more oversights because the Finance Committee cannot do all, I thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Mr Minister, you have the Floor.

HON. IBRAHIM T. CONTEH: Sorry, Mr Chairman. I had wanted to contribute; with regards to what the Honourable Deputy Leader highlighted on page 27 for SALWACO. At

the beginning of the budget exercise, I suggested and I hope that suggestion would be taken on board for the next Sub-Appropriation Committee exercise. If for any reason we have Vote 414 – Ministry of Water Resources, and under the Ministry of Water Resources, you have two implementing Agencies; Guma Valley Water Company [GVWC] and Sierra Leone Water Company [SALWACO] responsible for two separate jurisdictions – GUMA to provide safe drinking water and all other services related to water in Freetown Municipality, whereas SALWACO is responsible for expansion of water services, creation of new water dams and whatever in the provinces. We have Guma Valley allocated to one Committee, SALWACO allocated to another Committee, and we have the Ministry of Water Resources given to another committee. What happens in this instance is that the Ministry of Water Resources receives money from the Treasury Single Account [TSA] directed by the Accountant-General for payment to vendors of these two Companies. The money comes through the Accounts; through the processing of the IFIMIS to the Ministry of Water Resources. So when SALWACO comes to their Committee, what they can account for is only their recurrent expenditure. And when they account for their recurrent expenditure, it would be difficult for that Committee to know that SALWACO had received more than their recurrent expenditure, and that their public investment programmes had been disbursed through the Ministry of Water Resources and payments were made directly to the vendors. So as a result, it does not add enough credence to the process. So that is one challenge I am seeing from what he has submitted; by saying the monies given to SALWACO is small, considering the work they are doing. What they have actually received is for recurrent expenditure alone.

Mr Chairman, I want to go to Page 8, but before going to Page 8 I would also like to state that the Budget called ***Circular*** under Section 31 is provided by the Financial Secretary of the Ministry of Finance. And what he gives to them as underpinned by the Financial Strategy Statement in line with Section 20 or 21 of the PFM Act. That is what they present to the Ministry as their budget ceiling, and it is against that budget ceiling that the MDAs provide their budget indicating lines. Account Codes and Accounts that are designed under the Votes are only restricted for the Financial Secretary and the Accountant-General; they are the only two people that know the general Account Codes. So it is what they give to the MDAs that

the MDAs would provide to them whilst presenting the Budget during the Budget presentation and it is on that presentation that they are going to set ceilings for them.

So what we review as Sub-Appropriation Committee is what the Financial Secretary has approved already during the Budget presentation. So in effect, it would be very difficult for us to make alterations on the lines that come to us because, what the Public Financial Management [PFM] Act has done in Section 40 is to limit Parliament; for us not to be able to either increase, decrease or alter the State Budget. So when they bring the Budget to us, all we do is to either debate, talk about the issues and highlight what we have discovered during Sub-Appropriation Committees. We can neither increase nor decrease the State Budget presented to us- so that is a challenge in itself.

So for me, if I can add to what the Leader has said, I would say instead of Committees taking all of these heats, let Parliament work together with the PFM-RU and the Ministry of Finance to review the Public Financial Management [PFM] Act quickly so that it reflects the changes in the financial situation so as to give Parliament powers to look at MDAs that would have need for more money and can make viament very easily. For now if you have money as a Ministry, Department or Agency, even within your budget cycle, you cannot do viament automatically; you would have to seek the approval of the Minister, and it is on the basis of the approval and justification provided by the Vote Controller that you can do viament and that viament has to be within the ambit of what is available. So all of these are constrains for Members of Parliament to make recommendations and to be able to justify whether these allocations are enough or not enough.

Mr Chairman, on the issue of Page 8; *Public Service*, I think the President is very wise in putting five key big changers, and among these five key big changers is the transformation of the Public Service.

Mr Chairman, Agriculture and Education will not progress if the Civil Service or Public Service is not ready. Today as I speak, if you talk to everybody in the Public or Civil Service, they would tell you what their belief is, and if anything happens tomorrow morning, their beliefs would change.

Mr Chairman, if you look at the allocation for the Public Service and what is apportioned for training, you would realise that there is need for us to put more emphases on training the Public Servants in understanding that their business is not politics, and that their business is delivery. They should also understand that they should not sabotage government policies and programmes because they think they do not share the same political idea or belief. They are there to provide services.

So For me, I think the most important sector to emphasize on for the attainment of the Five Big Game Changers is the Public Service. If we cannot get a structured Public Service that is ready to roll out the other items under the Five Big Game Changers, all what we are doing; increase allocation for Ministries, increase provisions for Agencies would be tantamount to pouring water on a Duck's back because when it comes, they would use the same techniques they have been using to ensure that those programmes, those projects and proposals remain stagnated.

If you go to some Ministries, even though they have received some World Bank or IFID or whatever Donor Project, to date, they are dragging feet to roll out those projects and in the end, the project would fold-up, the money would go without the project being implemented, why? Because they are not trained to deliver services, rather, they are trained to look after themselves and to try to sabotage programmes of Ministers or government that they do not like. So for me the emphasis should be on training the Public Service so as to ensure that we have a Public Service fit for purpose and ready to deliver on government's programmes. That is just my humble submission, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Honourable Member, let us not make this a debate, please, please no please; if you can summarise that in two minutes, please.

HON. JOSEPH WILLIAMS-LAMIN: Mr Chairman, I respect the opinion of my colleague Honourable Member from Lumley but on the other hand, what our focus should be as Honourable Members of Parliament representing the people of this country is to focus on our activities and not make aspersions on the activities of the MDAs. Let us focus on our Oversight functions because as Members of Parliament, we make laws, we represent people and at the same time we execute the oversight functions. *[Undertone]* I have read that Sir.

You can read the PFM Act from January to December, but at the same time [*Undertone*] yes, I am fully aware of that but also to make a blanket statement particularly on the activities of other arms in our country I do not think it is fair enough. We should concentrate on our task; what is expected of us to do as Honourable Members of Parliament. So I think it would be prudent if we concentrate on our oversight functions.

I once witnessed your Committee sitting and somebody made a blanket statement that our soils in this country are very acidic and therefore they could not produce much. But here we are today talking about SOCFIN spending Millions of Dollars. If we carry out our own oversight functions on them like you have done in your Committee, and like we have done in our Committee for the Technical and Higher Education, I think we would achieve our goals, thank you, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Let me inform Members that just after this one, we are taking a date; we are adjourning Sittings just after this one and we would continue tomorrow. Yes, Honourable Minister, you have the Floor.

MR. SHEKU F. BANGURA: Thank you Mr Chairman, thank you Honourable Members. Thank you for the Committee's work and the report on the respective Vote Heads. Let me just make one clarification on an issue raised by Honourable Aaron Koroma, and I think it requires an amendment. From what I read for both Falaba District Council and Port Loko City Council as per the estimates and even the details of the Budget Report, what we read there is not the correct amount allocated to those two Councils. And so we would make references to the Budget Estimates that has the correct amounts that are allocated to both Councils. So your observations are well noted and we would proffer the amendments or recommendations accordingly.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, I just want to buttress that even in our allocations to Councils, they are supported by Grant Allocation Formula that is looking at fairness and equity across all Councils based on population and needs and other factors that are taken so that at least they are all treated relatively fairly to be able to deliver on the devolved functions across all the different services that they are to render. So those amendments would be taken on board.

Mr Leader, all the questions or comments around ensuring that we probe and have the hearings and justify allocation for different MDAs for carrying out services and needs for the government, I think the budget hearing is an open process. The Ministry of Finance is very engaged not only with the respective MDAs but also Civil Societies to ensure that allocations that are eventually approved are deemed to be justified before they are given. Of course you have noted; we are doing a cash budget and we have history of the needs of the Institutions to deliver on the services that they provide. And then we are guided as well in shifting the allocations based on the national vision and programmes. And so with the national vision on programmes you would see things shift, like we have focused this year largely towards Agriculture, whilst maintaining our focus on human capital development but we are shifting. So you would see that most of the ways we have been moving resources is geared towards ensuring that the vision of the Leader and the Party in power is accorded the resources to be able to deliver on the programmes that have been discussed- so that is the approach. So if you see allocations go down in some areas it is because we are trying to re-direct where the government wants to deliver.

Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, there is an issue around late disbursement or allocation and access to resources. Honourable Members, we are living in a very constrained environment; our revenue, especially for this year and last year took a lot of heat because of the shocks that the economy had endured, and it has affected revenue mobilization hugely. So it affects the way we actually disburse resources to MDAs. This year, we have tried as much as possible to cover many MDAs in terms of the allocations required to deliver on their budget. There may be only very few that may not have received but even those, we are actually giving consideration to them to see what can be done to give them the remaining allocation for the year. The year has ended, but I believe that in terms of execution of the budget, we did as much as possible and that is why you heard very limited cry from within MDAs as to the efforts we made- but it is largely driven by revenue effort. Our Partners, who normally provide budget support, do so at times very late. In fact we are only expecting the one from the World Bank to be approved just today, the year has ended. So we have been driving the whole process in the economy by our own real effort in the government and which we have had lots of difficulties with.

So Mr Chairman, Honourable Members, that is the constraint we face, and I think the House is seized of it that it is a very difficult environment we are trying as best as we can to make sure that we deliver services for the government within the constraints that we have for resource mobilisation. So let there be an understanding around this that it is all efforts. That is why we are pushing reforms for revenue mobilisation but there has been delay in the implementation of those reforms for revenue mobilisation especially this year. But we expect this to change next year as we do effective implementation of all those measures that have been passed in the Finance Act. So, Mr Chairman and the Committee, the findings and recommendations are well noted, and where we have to bid, we would improve as we move forward.

So Mr Chairman, on that note, I would want to move that the Vote Heads and Corresponding Estimates with relevant amendment stand part of the Schedule.

[Question Proposed, Put and Agreed To]

[The following Vote Heads and Corresponding Estimates as pronounced by the Minister, with relevant amendments form part of the Schedule].

The House Resumes

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Minister, you are released.

ADJOURNMENT

The House was adjourned to 15th December 2023, at 10:00a.m. Prompt.

The House rose at 2:50pm