



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE
Freetown, Sierra Leone

Public Notice:

28th February, 2020

UPDATE ON PAYMENT OF TUITION FEES FOR PUPILS IN PRE-PRIMARY, PRIMARY, JUNIOR AND SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT ASSISTED SCHOOLS

The Ministry of Finance, in collaboration with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE), would like to inform the general public that Government has made a total payment of **Le146,927,817,600** as tuition fees for pupils in pre-primary, primary, junior and senior secondary schools in Government and Government assisted schools for the 2018/2019 school year and first term of the 2019/2020 school year. This is in fulfilment of Government's commitment to the citizens of Sierra Leone on the flagship Free Quality School Education (FQSE) programme.

We also wish to inform the general public that the MBSSE in consultation with the leadership of the Council of Principals of Secondary Schools and the National Council of Head Teachers agreed to delay the payment of second term school fees for the 2019/2020 academic year until Government conducted direct head count of pupils in Government and Government assisted schools.

The head count conducted to validate the actual enrolment figures in schools, shows anomalies in enrolment data submitted by some schools in the 2019 Annual School Census (ASC). In 29% of schools, the enrolment numbers are consistent between the two data sources while 37% of schools reported much higher numbers in the ASC than was recently counted. 34% of schools have more students enrolled than was captured during the ASC conducted last year. **There is only 1% overall difference in enrolment numbers between the ASC and the completed headcount.**

The recently completed and validated head count will be used by Government to determine the payment of school fees, supply of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) and textbooks for the remainder of this academic year while more robust systems are put in place to mitigate against discrepancies for the ASC 2020. School leaders are encouraged to desist from cheating the system.

The Government assures heads of schools and the general public that payment of school fees for the second term of the 2019/2020 academic year is now being processed. Government reiterates its commitments to the full implementation of its flagship Free Quality School Education programme which has added close to 700,000 new students and continues to be highly successful.

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Despite the above challenges, for the first time in several years, we were able to process and release full year allocations to almost all MDAs in FY2019 and we were also able to pay December 2019 salaries way ahead of the festivities. This administration is also on record to have paid all Government workers monthly irrespective of unusual delays, unlike sister countries in the sub-region.

It is further worthy to note that 75% of public expenditure is funded from domestic revenue, 15% from Grants and 10% from financing. In particular, since April 2018 to date, we have financed salary payments only from domestic revenue with no recourse to bank borrowing. Bank borrowing has been used to pay some non-salary expenditures.

The Ministry of Finance remains committed to increased domestic revenue mobilisation and efficient expenditure management as well as timely payment of salaries and spending on critical pro-poor areas.



13th February, 2020
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