



**MINISTRY OF BASIC AND SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION
NEW ENGLAND, FREETOWN (www.mbsse.gov.sl)**

GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE DISBURSES LE 15.7 BILLION (USD 1.2 MILLION) PERFORMANCE-BASED FINANCING GRANTS TO 5,058 PRIMARY SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE

The Ministry of Basic & Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) has disbursed school grants valued at Fifteen Billion Seven Hundred and Twenty-Nine Million and Two Thousand Leones (Le 15,729,002,000) directly to 5,058 public schools running a full cycle primary education from classes 1 through 6. These grants, based on data collected in March 2022, were disbursed on 15 June 2022 as Performance Based Financing for Term 2 of the 2021/22 academic year, and they seek to improve various components of quality education at the school level.

The Government of Sierra Leone currently provides largescale support, including provision of teaching and learning materials, and financing (fee subsidies) to 'government' and 'government-assisted' schools at all levels. However, these resources are not always adequate to cover all the expenses and needs of beneficiary schools and 'unapproved' schools do not currently receive such mainstream government financial support.

The Performance-Based Financing (PBF) school grants are innovative additional resource-support packages to schools that amplify specific learning and administrative outcomes. The size of the support is dependent strictly on performance metrics - the school gets more of the standard PBF grant if it improves student attendance, retention and progression and improves teaching and learning outcomes. Schools with special needs and circumstances (i.e., unapproved or small schools, schools in poor communities, or schools with students with disabilities) also receive extra funds. Guidelines for the use of PBF Grants are available in the PBF Manual on which all School Management Committees (SMCs) and Head Teachers have been trained. Parts of these resources could be used for payment of stipends to community and volunteer teachers, payment of staff bonuses based on performance, and supporting school operations.

As part of this project implementation, MBSSE received technical assistance under the Free Education Project from the Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovations (DSTI) to introduce the Open 'Government to Person' (G2P) framework to accelerate cash transfers to the schools. The platform integrates the data collection on the schools' performances on the PBF indicators, calculation of the grants, and transfer of funds to the schools' accounts in real time in a secure manner. As a pilot from this collaboration between MBSSE, DSTI and the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank, One Hundred and Fifty-Seven Million Seven Hundred and Sixty-Six Thousand Five Hundred and Ten Leones (Le 157,766,510) of the total amount was transferred to 58 out of the 5058 school accounts using the (G2P) payment mechanism. This automation and digitization will provide rigor, transparency and efficiency to the system when scaled in the future.

The Government of Sierra Leone Free Education Project / Multi-Donor Trust Fund is implemented by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education through the Free Education Project Secretariat and it is supported by World Bank (IDA), European Union, Irish Aid, Foreign Commonwealth Development Office, and the Global Partnership for Education.

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