

# FREE QUALITY SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

CURRENT STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

BY

AMARA S.M. SOWA

NATIONAL PROGRAMME COORDINATOR- FQSE

# ACCESS, EQUITY AND COMPLETION

- **SCHOOL RE-OPENING DAY ACTIVITIES**
- Schools reopened on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018, the day the FQSE officially commenced.
- MBSSE in collaboration with donor partners deployed staff in all 16 districts to , inter alia, monitor school re-opening day activities and provide support to the District Education Offices in situations where there would be shocks and overflow of pupils for admission.
- DfID through SABI also undertook a survey on pupil attendance and other variables on school re-opening day.
- A consortium of civil society organizations also monitored opening day activities in all 16 districts

# PAYMENT OF SCHOOL SUBSIDIES

- Government has paid Le. 28,050,600,000 as subsidies to 4,023 schools for the first term. An additional payment request of about 2,000,000,000 has been processed and sent to the Ministry of Finance for payment to additional schools

# PROVISION OF FURNITURE

- Government has provided 3 billion Leones for the provision of furniture to schools. An assessment team examined the schools that requested assistance for the supply of furniture from the Ministry. Ninety schools were identified as being in direst need and modalities have been completed for the transfer of funds to the identified schools for the procurement of furniture. The process is still incomplete as the Ministry of Finance has not transferred the funds to the schools yet.

# REHABILITATION/CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOLS/ CLASSROOMS

- Government has also provided an additional 3 billion Leones for rehabilitation of schools/ classrooms. 50 schools have been identified as being in direst need. A technical committee is currently working on assessing and costing the required rehabilitation in each target school.
- Mercury International has also offered to build 20 classrooms each year for 4 years. An MoU between the Ministry and Mercury International has been signed. Mercury International is currently working on the Bill of Quantities to kick-start the procurement process for the construction. The Ministry has also set a committee to work on the selection of schools that will benefit from this year's construction.

# APPROVAL OF SCHOOLS

- The Ministry has received applications for approval from 1200 schools and is currently working on approving these schools. It must be noted that the approval of these schools implies the automatic approval of the trained and qualified teachers in the schools

# INFORMAL LEARNING CENTRES

- 40 Community learning centres have been established at chiefdom level to provide an opportunity for pregnant school girls and schools who have dropped out of school. In January, the Ministry will set up 40 more centres to address the issue of over-aged boys who wish to attend school

# SCHOOL FEEDING

- The provision of school meals to 95,000 pupils in Koinadugu, Falaba, Kambia and Pujehun Districts has commenced
- The Ministry is currently working on reforms in school feeding in collaboration with World Food Programme (WFP), Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Joint Aid Management (JAM)
- The Ministry in collaboration with WFP launched the National School Feeding Programme in Pujehun on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018
- CRS with support from the Ministry also launched the McGovern Dole Education Project (which contains a significant component on school feeding) in Kabala on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The launch was done by His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio



# COMPONENT 2

## **QUALITY, RELEVANCE AND INTEGRITY**

# SUPPLY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

- Government procured 6 million pieces of exercise books at a cost of 8 billion Leones. These books were supplied to all Government and Government assisted primary and secondary schools on the re-opening of schools.
- The procurement process for teaching materials, additional exercise books, pencils, pens and other learning materials, sport equipment etc has been completed. The materials are now ready for distribution to the schools.
- Procurement process for the core text books has also been completed. It is expected that the books will be in the country early next year.

# SUPPLY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS

- Lesson plan manuals for the teaching of English and Maths have been supplied to all schools through the “leh wi lan” project that is funded by DfID (UK aid).
- Pupils’ handbook for English and Maths have been procured through “leh wi lan’ and are also ready for distribution to the schools
- A book handling policy as well as a distribution mechanism for the distribution of teaching and learning materials and textbooks from the Local Councils to the schools have been drafted

# ASSESSMENT/RECRUITMENT OF TEACHERS

- It must be noted that no assessment of teachers has taken place in ten years. Since the launch over 1000 teachers are being reassessed and placed accordingly.
- 2,000 teachers who have retired or resigned are being replaced
- The Ministry of Finance has committed funds for the recruitment of 5,000 teachers this year

# COMPONENT 3

- **SYSTEM STRENGTHENING**

# CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

- Upon the launch of the FQSE, a National Programme Coordinator (Amara Sowa) was appointed by H.E. The President to coordinate the implementation of the programme. The Coordinator is working on measures to create coordination structures at Regional and District levels.
- An International Consultant ( Dr. Michael Mambo)has been contracted by DfID to provide technical support to the Ministry.
- Plans are underway to recruit 160 Inspectors/Supervisors of schools for the 16 Districts in the country. These officers, when recruited, will be provided with motor bikes to facilitate their supervision and monitoring of schools

# CONSTITUTION OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS

- The Ministry is currently re-constituting the Boards of Governors of all Government and Government assisted schools

# WARD EDUCATION COMMITTEES

- The Ministry has completed the formulation of Ward Education Committees



# Lessons learnt

- The recently concluded school census has been a major source of reference and has served as basis for major administrative/policy decisions
- Most of the activities completed have been undertaken on an ad hoc basis
- The launch of the Free Quality Education Programme was done in the middle of the fiscal year thus implementation has largely been slowed down as a result of dearth of resources
- Coordination has been largely challenging as structures at regionals and district levels are yet to be operational

- Advocacy, awareness raising and public knowledge about the FQSE need to be stepped up
- Monitoring and Evaluation needs to be operationalized