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Immediate Release: World Water Day 2023 Press Release

United Nations after forty (40) or more years for the first time held a water conference 2023, this is an indication of global importance of water in contributing to peace and health. Network AID want to draw the attention of the government to countries like ¹Malta, Greece, San Marino, Monaco, Liechtenstein, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Iceland, New Zealand, Kuwait, Singapore that have invested hugely and prioritize water for all its citizens (100%). It's time for the government of Sierra Leone to invest more in WASH than ever. Investing in human capital development "education" with probability of having a sick nation is lost investment. Network AID join the world to reflect on the strides made and challenges faced with by all (human, animal, plant) on a daily basis to access water. ²26% of the world population doesn't have access to safe drinking water and 46% lacks access to basic sanitation.

³In 2020, Sierra Leone with emphasis in the municipalities, districts head quarter town and chiefdoms head quarter towns; It no doubt that water allocations by Sierra Leone Government excluding support from donors (bilateral and multilaterals) is substantial and the seriousness to address the water challenges is low. ³An amount of Le11.3 billion leones was allocated from the recurrent budget to the Ministry of Water Resources, of which, Sierra Leone Water Company charge with the responsibility for rural water supply 5.2 billion leones was allocated as grants; 21.0 billion leones to finance the completion of water supply project in all district, construction of solar-powered bore holes in 13 districts, construction of water supply systems in Bonthe Municipality and construction of industrial bore holes in urban areas; the procurement and installation of metres, billing software and laboratory equipment. 2.1 billion leones to National Water Resource Management Agency. An amount of 6.0 billion leones was allocated to the National Water Resource Management Agency for the construction of 10 hydrological monitoring networks and 25 ground water monitoring stations. 3.0 billion leones was allocated to GUMA Valley Water Company charge with the responsibility of providing water supply in western urban for the emergency water supply project in the Western Area. Ministry of Water Resources are not blind to the daily water crisis in the country.

Development partners, including the African Development Bank, World Bank, DFID, Kuwaiti Fund, Saudi Fund will disburse 253.0 billion leones for the implementation of various water projects by GUMA and SALWACO. Government's counterpart contribution to these projects will amount to 34.7 billion leones.

⁴In 2023 Government is allocating the amount of NLe26.0 million from the domestic capital budget to the Ministry of Water Resources for the Lungi Water Supply Project. The Sierra Leone Water Company (SALWACO) is allocated NLe59.5 million, of which NLe40.0 million is for the completion of the construction of water supply facilities in six districts; NLe5.0 million for the ongoing construction of the water supply system in Bonthe; NLe6.0 million for the construction of 45 industrial boreholes and the rest as counterpart funding for donor funded water supply projects which include the construction of 100 solar powered boreholes, the Six (6) Towns

Water Supply Project and Phase II of the Three (3) Towns Water Supply Project. The Guma Valley Water Company is allocated NLe11.5 million for the Emergency Water Supply Project in the Western Area and restoring water supply to the IMATT and Hill Station communities. Development partners will disburse the amount of NLe210.9 million and NLe79.4 million for the implementation of various donor-funded projects implemented by GUMA and SALWACO, respectively. ⁵In 2016, the government of Sierra Leone in partnership with the Africa Development Bank (AfDB), UNICEF, UNDP and other partners completed the mapping of 31,345 water points across the country provide an important foundation for the water sector planning and strategy development. 20,673 are technical and 2,108 were functional but partly damaged while 6,055 were recorded as broken down. Another 813 points that were still under construction.

⁶Sierra Leone clean water access for 2020 was 10.62%, with Morocco 79.95%, Tunisia 79.29%, Algeria 72.38%. We recognize the resources of government responding to the dare water situation however we want the SLPP led government and the government in waiting to prioritize accessibility, availability and affordability water in communities, schools, hospitals.

Water is no more just a commodity rather it a political and security concern that can make or break a nation. ⁷Testimonies of rape, sexual penetration, gang attack, teenage pregnancy, single mothers, accident has been communicated by resident in mountain communities where there is less sign of community own water source for instance Hill Top Community with approximately 10000 inhabitants. Three water tanks (5000,5100,10000) provided by the Freetown City Council through the then Councilor of ward 436 are not functional as well as the solar power borehole funded by UNDP.

The Hill Top Community has challenged themselves by identifying and providing land for the construction of ten (10) basement for which 3 had already constructed for the installation of ten (10) ten thousand (10000) prospective miller water tanks to address prevailing SGBV issues facing women and girls in the community while fetching water in streams and private homes.

We at Network AID through the Hill Top Community seek the intervention of: -

1. The Ministry of Water Resources in providing the 10 (ten) 10000 miller water tanks for Hill Top Community and the Hill Top Community school.
2. Guma Valley Water Company and SALWACO to be supplying emergencies water on a regular basis mountain and water vulnerable communities.
3. Guma Valley Water Company, SALWACO and all water agencies to speedily complete all outstanding projects

¹Microtrends.net;²The U.N. World Water Development Report 2023.;³Government Budget and Statement of Economic and Financial Policies 2020. Pg. 39.;⁴Government Budget and Statement of Economic and Financial Policies 2023. Pg. 28.; ⁵washdata-sl.org; ⁶Microtrends.net ⁷Hill Top Community meetings.

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