Government of Sierra Leone

Ministry of Technical and Higher Education

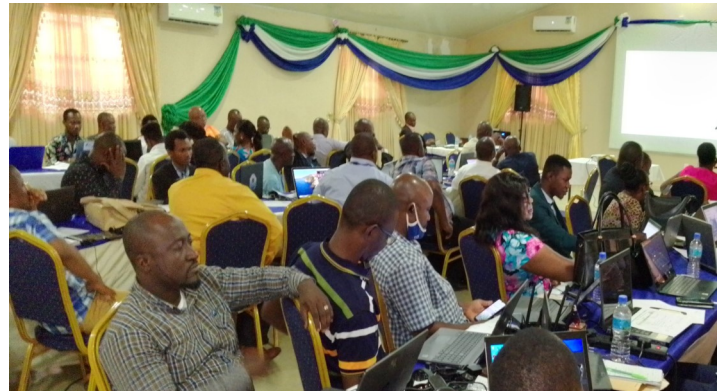**New England Ville, Freetown**

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MTHE Completes a Three-Day Learning Management System Retreat

The Ministry of Technical and Higher Education (MTHE), through its Directorate of Technology and Innovation, has concluded a three-day retreat which focuses on giving viability to its agenda for Learning Management System. The retreat spanned from 16th to 18th November, 2021 at Occasions Hotel in Lakka, Freetown.

The retreat's main objective is to address the gaps in the learning management system by supporting Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) to upload relevant data and ensure accessibility to academic records. This would eventually help in the implementation of the Students' Loan Scheme, service delivery, quality assurance and management of staff.

Participants of the Retreat

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In his official opening of the retreat, MTHE's Minister, Prof. Alpha Tejan Wurie, welcomed and congratulated participants for joining the Ministry in its drive to effectively upload students' data into the learning management system. He informed members of H.E. President Bio's Inauguration of the newly established public universities between October and November, 2021, which complements his pronouncement of opening universities in all regions of the country. According to Prof. Wurie, uploading of data is very key to universities, and the Ministry is working towards digitizing the system in order to avoid paper base. "This system will help monitor staff and students activities diligently," he said, entreating the universities to structure and transform themselves to fit into the learning management system.

The Deputy Minister of Technical and Higher Education, Mr. Sarjoh Aziz-Kamara, thanked members for a job well done, registering his willingness to support the process of "***data upload"*** into the learning management system in order to catch up with the 4th Industrial Revolution. He mentioned that departments in various institutions (academic, human resource, finance and examinations data) are interrelated, and that the system would help identify their roles for proper service delivery. Mr. Aziz-Kamara further referred to the Universities Act of 2021 as one that has led to educational transformation in the country. He entreated all to work towards enhancing a centralized and friendly system in order to match up with International standards. According Mr. Aziz-Kamara, the learning management system will contribute to human capital development, using education as its bedrock.

In giving a general overview of the learning management system, MTHE's Director of Technology and Innovation, Mr. Victor Sesay, highlighted the importance of reliable data which would provide information on student's admission to completion of course, financial data, and staff management to enhance productivity as well as efficiency in service delivery.

In his presentation on the management framework for Higher Educational Institutions, the Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Commission, Dr. Joseph Sherman-Kamara, reiterated on the mandate, functions, strategic plan and structure of Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). According to him, the Data Management framework will enable various departments (Exams, finance and ICT) to function effectively and efficiently. "This system will enhance the collating of reliable data management system, data capacity model, organizational design, data infrastructure and architecture," he said.

Dr. Sherman-Kamara highlighted some of the challenges that affect the success of ICT and the learning management system in HEIs in the following sequence:

- Limited internet connectivity,
- Lack of ICT equipment
- Non-implementation/development of policies
- Seating accommodation
- Irregular Electricity supply

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