



# President Bio Declares National Emergency on Drug Abuse Crisis

By *alhajimkamara@awokonewspaper.sl*

Freetown, SIERRA LEONE - In response to the alarming surge in drug abuse, particularly the consumption of synthetic Kush and its

devastating impact on the nation's youth, President Joe Musa Maada Bio has announced a national emergency on drug and substance abuse during a televised address on Thursday, April 4th, 2024.

President Bio expressed grave concern over the escalating fatalities and deterioration of young lives due to addictive drug use, despite the government's prior efforts to curb the proliferation of drugs.

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## No evidence of narcotics possession after raid on Admire Bio's residence

By *sulaiman.sesay@awokonewspaper.sl*

Freetown, SIERRA LEONE - A marathon raid on the home of Admire Jalloh, which began in the early hours

of Thursday morning has produced no evidence of narcotics possession, police have confirmed. Police made this disclosure at their regular press briefing at the Sierra

Leone Police Headquarters on George Street in Freetown, on Wednesday 4th of April 2024.

The police say they were acting based on suspicion that Jalloh - who is better known by her maiden name Admire Bio - and her husband are allegedly linked to the supply of the deadly drugs kush, that has claimed the lives of many Sierra Leonean youth.

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## SOLTHIS launches SHARE Project to strengthen Sierra Leone's health systems, tackle HIV in new campaign

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Solthis, partners viewing posters on Solthis project.



UNFPA'S Rasheed

## UNFPA Urges Collaborative Efforts for Full SDG Implementation in Sierra Leone

By *Sahr Eric George*

Freetown, SIERRA LEONE - Nadia Rasheed, the UNFPA Country Representative, addressed members of parliament, stressing the urgent global need for comprehensive implementation of the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs).

During a presentation on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process regarding SDG implementation, Rasheed acknowledged Sierra Leone's efforts, particularly in gender equality and women's

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# SOLTHIS launches SHARE Project to strengthen Sierra Leone's health systems, tackle HIV in new campaign

By sulaiman.sesay  
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Freetown, SIERRA LEONE - SOLTHIS, the global healthcare and support organisation, has unveiled an all-encompassing project which will see an improved approach to strengthen Sierra Leone's health systems and tackle issues and actions about HIV. The project is titled "Sharing HIV Actions, Results and Experiences for Decision (SHARE) Project."

The launch took place at the Bintumani International Conference Centre, at Aberdeen, in Freetown, on Thursday 4th of March 2024.

Welcoming invited guests, the Country Director for SOLTHIS, Morris Kwite disclosed that the SHARE Project is aimed at strengthening lessons learnt from past projects which SOLTHIS has implemented.

"We are not only implementing, but we make a stop to know if what is being implemented has got the required impact in the lives of the population and the health outcome of the people of Sierra Leone," he revealed.

In a PowerPoint presentation, the Project Coordinator, Knowledge Generation, Kazeem Ayankola told partners that the project is funded by the French Development Agency Group, adding that the project will span from July 2023 to June 2025 and it shall be implemented nationally and in seven districts.

According to Ayankola, the project shall be implemented using two approaches, such as the partnership approach, and a health promotion approach to strengthen health systems and community health.

Ayankola also mentioned that the theme for the project is: knowledge management. The project has two components such as the service delivery component which shall be handled by Solthis, and the community engagement component.

In the area of beneficiaries, Ayankola disclosed that the project aimed at benefitting international organizations, national authorities, HIV implementing partners (NETHIIPS and other relevant CSOs), district management teams, support groups and recipients of care (RoCs).

The objective of the project according to SOLTHIS is to influence the HIV response in the country through generation, documentation, dissemination and advocacy for adoption as well as use of knowledge from SOLTHIS experience on HIV service delivery and health systems strengthening at health facility and community levels. Specifically, the project will inform, highlights and influence decision makers on the following:

- \*The benefit of mixed strategies and comprehensive approach for health care workers capacity building on HIV care.

- \*The importance and impact of support groups supporting people living with HIV towards good adherence and care retention, etc.

The Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Alie Wurie congratulated SOLTHIS for the project. The DCMO also talked about the 12 years relationship that had existed between SOLTHIS and the Ministry of Health. He applauded SOLTHIS for supporting people living with HIV in the country and pledged his Ministry's support. The Director General, National Aids Secretariat, Abdual Rahman Sesay emphasized the need for knowledge sharing, noting that no one person knows it all. The DG assured of providing the relevant support during the course of implementing the project.

Representing UNAIDS, Isaac Ahemensa remarked that the objectives which this project aims to achieve is one of the things that is lacking in the national response. "This project will strengthen the country's national health system," Ahemensa said.

He recommends the development of a national HIV and AIDS learning strategy, adding that there is need to have a tool that will assess projects. "Let us have a learning strategy on implementing national response, and we must sustain the learning and ensure that the lessons learnt is maintained," he maintained. Ahemensa urged for speed in the implementation of the project.

Director of Disease, Prevention and Control, Dr. Sulaiman Lakkoh emphasized the need for knowledge sharing. "Knowledge sharing is crucial to enhance uptake of support services," he added.

Dr. Lakkoh revealed that there are currently 77,000 people living with HIV and Aids in Sierra Leone, underscoring the need to provide the necessary information to guide people at all levels so that people can access services.

On the side of government, the Director of Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MOPED), Eric Masallay said that the Government of Sierra Leone does not only register NGOs but ensure that they deliver services effectively.

Masallay applauded the project, for it resonates with Pillar 2 of the Government Big Five Changers which is health strengthening.

Masallay recommended for the development of a strategy that speaks to HIV and AIDS. He further stressed the need for coordination and collaboration to beat the HIV and Aids virus in the country. SKS/5/1/2024