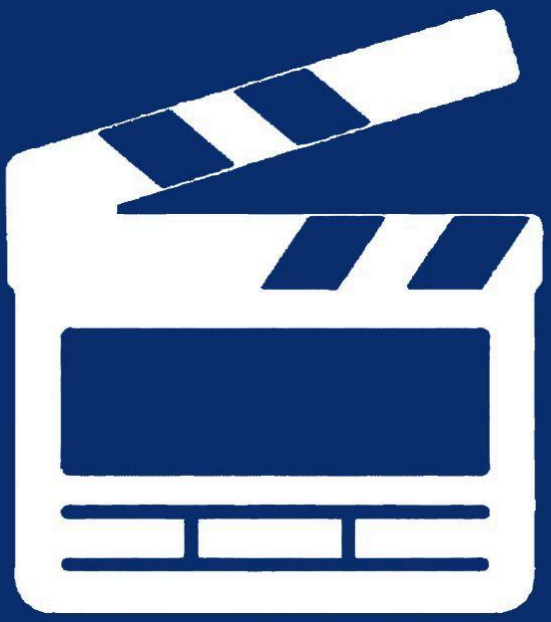
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND CIVIC EDUCATION

National Film Policy



Freetown | 2025

FOREWORD BY MINISTER

The story of Sierra Leone's creative and film industry is one of resilience, imagination, and ambition. Over the past two decades, our filmmakers, performers, and storytellers have shown that creativity is not just an expression of identity—it is a driver of jobs, innovation, and national pride. The growing investment of talent, capital, and expertise across the creative sector reflects an unmistakable momentum. Our task, therefore, is to turn this momentum into a sustainable and inclusive industry that contributes meaningfully to Sierra Leone's economic growth and cultural influence.

This **National Film Policy** represents the first coordinated effort to build a clear and lasting framework for the growth of our film and performing arts industries. It draws lessons from global success stories—Hollywood, Bollywood, and particularly Nollywood—while defining a uniquely Sierra Leonean path rooted in our own stories, languages, and cultural heritage.

The policy sets out a five-year vision for transforming Sierra Leone into a regional film destination—one that creates decent jobs for young people, encourages investment, strengthens our cultural identity, and positions the arts as a viable economic sector. It proposes a governance and financing framework to professionalize the industry, attract local and international partners, and promote screen tourism through films that showcase the beauty and diversity of Sierra Leone.

To bring this vision to life, we must work together—across government, the private sector, and the creative community. I look forward to close collaboration with my colleague Ministers of **Tourism and Cultural Affairs; Trade and Industry; Communications, Technology and Innovation; and Finance**, among others, to jointly implement this policy. The creative and film industries touch every sector of our national development. They deserve to be co-owned and co-driven by all of us who believe in Sierra Leone's potential to become a hub for creative excellence and economic transformation.

I am particularly encouraged by the inclusive and consultative process that produced this draft. Under my direction, the Ministry of Information and Civic Education (MOICE) established a national task force that engaged filmmakers, performers, producers, and other stakeholders in every region of the country. With support from **UNDP and UNESCO**, and under the expert guidance of **Rev. Fr. Victor Suma**, the process has produced a policy that reflects both national aspirations and international best practice.

This policy is not an end in itself—it is a beginning. Its implementation will demand sustained collaboration, practical leadership, and long-term investment. Our government remains fully committed to building the enabling environment—through legislation, infrastructure, training, and incentives—that will allow Sierra Leone's creative and film industries to flourish.

As we validate and operationalize this policy, we reaffirm a simple belief: that storytelling is power—and that in telling our stories, we shape how Sierra Leone is seen, understood, and remembered in the world.

Chernor A. Bah
Minister of Information and Civic Education
Republic of Sierra Leone

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 4

THE SIERRA LEONE FILM POLICY 11

Policy Mission: (Lets select one) 11

Policy Vision: 11

POLICY SCOPE 11

OBJECTIVES OF THE FILM POLICY 11

LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE FILM INDUSTRY 12

CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE (1991) 12

THE SIERRA LEONE BROADCASTING CORPORATION ACT (CAP 13

SIERRA LEONE INDEPENDENT MEDIA COMMISSION ACT 2020, 13

SIERRA LEONE COPYRIGHT ACT 2011/BOARD 13

THE CYBER SECURITY & CRIME ACT 2021 14

SETTING UP OF THE NATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO CENSORSHIP ADVISORY BOARD (NFVCAB-SL) 14

2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE 17

3. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE 17

DEFINITIONS OF THE CATEGORIES OF FILM AS QUOTED IN THIS POLICY 24

DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE 30

A. Setting up of Film & Television (TV) Studios 30

Post Production: 30

B. UPGRADE FILM & TELEVISION (TV) INSTITUTES & EXPAND THEIR SCOPE 30

C. SETTING UP OF THEATRES (MINIPLEXES) AND ALTERNATE EXHIBITION FORA 31

8. BROADCAST STATIONS 36

REGULATING EMPLOYMENT IN THE FILM SERVICING INDUSTRY 37

- Create a structured framework for the employment sector. 37

FILM EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES 38

INTRODUCTION 38

FILM AND MEDIA YOUTH PROGRAMS: 38

Film and Inclusion: 39

HIGHER EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING: 39

INTRODUCTION 41

TYPES OF SCREEN TOURISM 41

Annex 42

Annexure-II 44

INTRODUCTION AND BACKBROUND

1. INTRODUCTION

The film industry is an important vehicle for social, cultural, political and economic development because a well nurtured film industry can be a major source of employment and an effective tool and platform for the cultured expression of a people. The industry can promote a country's potential as an investment, tourist destination, as an advocacy tool to shape opinion; film can in itself be used to effectively demystify cultural and ethnic differences to promote integration and unity of Sierra Leoneans.

The Government of Sierra Leone therefore, sees film not only as a tool for information and entertainment but also as a powerful communications instrument for national integration, for social and economic development and for the exploitation, preservation and further enrichment of cultural heritage.

The sector encompasses the following activities:

- Local film and video productions;
- Foreign film and video productions;
- Film and video production support services; and
- Film and television commercials.

Until now, efforts have mostly been geared towards selling Sierra Leone as a filming location to foreign film producers. Whereas it is important to support foreign filmmakers using Sierra Leone as a location, it is imperative that similar efforts be directed towards developing indigenous Sierra Leonean film industry in order to add value to the cultural and artistic heritage of Sierra Leone through film productions made by Sierra Leoneans themselves.

There is also the need to provide Sierra Leonean filmmakers with an avenue to fully exploit their potential and create employment and wealth. The Government therefore, recognizes the need to develop a policy for film development and interventions to promote growth of the film industry.

In this regard, the government, through the various existing film associations (National Film Council, Sierra Leone Film Industry, Labour and Marketing Guilds, Elders Council, etc.) shall engage the private sector to formulate action plans in a bid to address suggested specific support services that will enhance the innovativeness, efficiency, quality and competitiveness of the film sector. The government shall endeavour to provide a conducive environment for investment including attracting direct foreign investment to supplement local capacity through an aggressive film investment and promotions abroad.

The liberalisation of the airwaves of broadcasting stations has not fully benefited local filmmakers since the issuance of broadcast licenses and the enactment of the Sierra Leone Local Content Agency Act of 2016. This is done because there is no stipulated provision specifying filmmaking and broadcasting of local films.

This Film policy seeks to ensure that Sierra Leone strategically exploits its resources and places itself optimally in an increasingly globalized market for content development.

Since film derives its content from the indigenous literature, theatre, arts and music of a people, it provides an important medium of expression and celebration of a people's culture and heritage.

This National Film Policy aims to provide the platform by which Sierra Leoneans will develop a sense of identity, understanding and communicate to each other and to the rest of the world. The policy also aims at making film an integral part of the creative industry and performing arts in Sierra Leone as well as an important investment and commercial product within Sierra Leone's economy.

In general, this policy seeks to facilitate sustained development of the Sierra Leone film industry to meet international standards.

2. BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SIERRA LEONE FILM INDUSTRY

Filmmaking was originally introduced during the era of British colonial rule in the form of the Colonial Film Unit established in 1939 for the projection of Britain to the colonial people and to organise the production of educational film for colonial territories at (8mm and 16mm celluloid).

After independence, the practice of government documentary film production was largely abandoned due to the costs of celluloid film production and processing. In the 70s and 80s, videotape offered a cheaper alternative and through the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS), the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting ensured that news footage of the lives of Sierra Leoneans was available for broadcast to the nation. Unfortunately, due to the ever-present concerns for cost, the original videotapes used for the programme recordings were erased for re-use, losing valuable historical social footage.

Salt was further added to this wound when some of the remaining footage that had escaped erasure or disintegration through time, and had been stored at SLBS, was burnt during the Sierra Leone brutal war.

Ironically, it could be argued that the current new wave of film-making is a direct consequence of the war. Few people were able to travel and film the brutality of the war whilst it was being fought 'up country' in the regions. However, when it finally

reached the capital of Freetown, footage shot on the streets were sufficiently shocking to alert the whole world to the level of brutal violence and rampant destruction being meted out upon the country's civilian population. The pictures gave visual reinforcement to requests for an increase in international help, and before long, hundreds of NGOs and international organisations had duly focused their attention and resources on Sierra Leone. Some of these organisations helped fuel interest in filmmaking by soliciting and funding productions that were needed for documentation or sensitization purposes.

Following the end of the war, came the process of peace-building and reconciliation. The arrival of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court called for the filming of victim and witness testimonies and thus offered further opportunities for gaining practical training and employment.

However, in addition to these forms of videography and documentary, a new generation of independent filmmakers had grown up during the war years, who were also interested in creating their own feature films. Like African audiences in general, they had watched Nigerian films grow, in just ten or so years, from virtually nothing to the massive international phenomenon of 'Nollywood' that it has become today.

These Nigerian films, shown on Sierra Leone television as well as in local cinemas, addressed an untapped market amongst African audiences who had a desire to see reflections of their African culture on screen. It is to this new breed of young film-makers that the country now looks, as they face the challenges inherent in attempting to document and dramatise their lives and experiences through the creation of their own indigenous film industry.

CHALLENGES IN THE SIERRA LEONE FILM INDUSTRY

The film and Performing Arts industry in Sierra Leone have not been fully exploited due to lack of a policy framework despite the industry’s potential. The performance of the industry has been unsatisfactory. The key challenges include but not limited to the following:

a. Unstructured approach to management of the industry;

b. Lack of enforcement of guidelines, ethics and codes of conduct;

c. Inadequate channels for legal redress for aggrieved parties working with both local and international filmmakers;

d. Lack of adequate funding opportunities for local film productions;

e. Weak accreditation and vetting mechanisms for film agents;

f. Lack of clear criteria or regulation to manage local/foreign film productions for the benefit of Sierra Leoneans;

g. Absence of sector specific incentives that would encourage development of film industry in Sierra Leone;

h. Higher levels of piracy that denies producers and distributors their returns on investment in film production;

i. Lack of effective local industry association;

j. Lack of standard trainings in film production in the film industry;

k. Minimal local content in productions and inadequate training tailored to increase local content;

l. Lack of proper marketing pathway and distribution drive

THE RATIONALE FOR A FILM POLICY

The film industry can become one of the biggest employers for both creative and non-creative people and can contribute to the advancement of the economy through income generation and the growth of gross domestic product. In terms of job and wealth creation in the production and distribution of films and also generation of foreign exchange and tax revenues.

Therefore, the film industry has great potential to contribute to Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan (MTNDP 2024-2030) including the Government's Big 5 Game Changers (Feed Salone, Human Capital Development, Youth Employment Scheme, Enhancing Public Service Architecture, Technology and Infrastructure Initiative) and its Enablers, the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth and Goal 9; Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure Inclusive and sustainable industrialization.

The film industry with proper structure, coordination and regulation with sustained and inclusive economic growth can drive progress, create decent jobs for all and improve living standards, together with innovation and infrastructure, can unleash dynamic and competitive economic forces that generate employment and income. The industry can play a key role in introducing and promoting new technologies, facilitating international trade and enabling the efficient use of resources.

The films and videos produced also contribute to the social and political landscape of the country which enhances national cohesion, values and aspiration of the Sierra Leone people. Filmmaking is environmentally friendly and can add to the quality display of places, enhance the prestige of a country's landscape thereby promoting its cultural heritage and tourism. The film industry can become an important factor for multi-national enterprises which will in turn affect the process of value creation. In all sense, the contribution of the film industry to the economy, peace building and social cohesion is enormous. The Film Policy has been developed with the following justifications:

i) Increased Economic growth

ii) Building the national Brand

iii) Promotion of National Culture and Heritage

iv) Promotion of Tourism

v) Promotion of National Cohesion and Integration

(i) INCREASED ECONOMIC GROWTH

The Creative Economy Outlook 2024 underscores the pivotal role that creative industries play in trade and economic growth. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD's) global survey reveals the varied economic contributions of the creative economy across different countries, ranging from 0.5% to 7.3% of GDP and employing between 0.5% to 12.5% of the workforce.

Digitalization is transforming the creative economy. For example, streaming services expanded their share of the global music market by 10.4% year-on-year, and now account for 67.3% of global music revenue streams. AI is a key driver of this change, enhancing content creation, distribution and consumption. It generates scripts, movies, news articles, music, images, captions, animations and virtual reality content, while improving post-production workflows and analyzing user data.

According to PwC's Global Entertainment & Media Outlook, the Nigerian Film Industry is ranked second globally in revenue. Revenue in the Cinema market is projected to reach US$129.50m in 2024. Revenue is expected to show an annual growth rate (CAGR 2024-2029) of 5.39%, resulting in a projected market volume of US$168.40m by 2029.

UNESCO estimates that Ghana pumps out about 600 films per year, the second-highest number across Africa behind Nigeria. Revenue in the Cinema market is projected to reach US$7.41m in 2024. Revenue is expected to show an annual growth rate (CAGR 2024-2029) of 0.82%, resulting in a projected market volume of US$7.72m by 2029.

According to a UNESCO report, Africa's film and audiovisual industries could create over 20 million jobs and contribute $20 billion to the continent's combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Sierra Leone film industry is on an exciting path of growth, but it is still emerging on the global stage. While it is not currently ranked among the top global revenue generators, the industry is showing significant potential.

The estimated direct earnings by the film industry (motion pictures and related industries) in Sierra Leone recorded a moderate growth. Direct earnings by the industry increased gradually from SLL. 200 million in 2010 to SLL. 2 billion in 2012 as indicated by three marketing and distributors namely, Ansev Production, Kennys

Production and Palgoden Enterprises for films released and distributed on DVDs. These records are from eight films that are rated to be the highest selling films from 2010 to 2012. By investing in and supporting the film industry, Sierra Leone can give a significant boost to its economy while fostering a thriving creative environment. The release of "Fatima My Bride" marks the beginning of a promising journey towards eminence in the movie industry.

In this regard, the government through the Ministry of Information and Civic Education and through engagement with the private sector shall formulate action plans to address constraints on suggested specific support systems that will enhance the competitiveness, innovativeness, efficiency and quality of the film sector. The government shall endeavour to provide a conducive environment for investment including attracting direct foreign investment to supplement local capacity through an aggressive film investment and promotions abroad.

In this age of global, multi-cultural storytelling, a well-rounded Film & Entertainment Policy also showcases the bounties of a state that would inspire a filmmaker and provide to the producer, various facilities & incentives that make filming and, at times even the after-film experience, very satisfying and beneficial. In other words, Film Policy, if robust and well implemented, holds the key to evolving a film-friendly state.

(ii) FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS:

The Film Industry is important in contributing to the foreign exchange earnings. The potential sources of foreign exchange earnings from the sector include:

Global Distribution/Exports: Films released internationally can generate substantial box office revenue. For instance, Nollywood films are distributed worldwide, reaching audiences in Africa, Europe, the Americas, and beyond. This global reach generates substantial revenue from international sales and streaming platforms like Netflix.

Tourism Boost: Popular films can boost tourism to the locations where they were shot. Fans often visit these places to experience the culture and locations featured in the films, contributing to foreign exchange earnings through tourism. International film festivals and awards can increase a film's visibility and marketability, leading to higher sales and distribution deals worldwide.

Collaborations and Co-productions: Growing reputation of films will lead to collaborations with international filmmakers and studios. These partnerships not only enhance the quality of productions but also bring in foreign investment.

Cultural Exports/ Merchandising: Films showcase culture, music, and fashion, which helps promote the country's products and services abroad. This cultural export will boost Sierra Leone's image and attract foreign buyers. Successful films often lead to the sale of related merchandise, such as toys, clothing, and other products. These sales can generate additional foreign exchange earnings.

Streaming and Digital Sales: With the rise of digital platforms, films can be sold or rented online to a global audience. This digital distribution can bring in significant foreign exchange earnings.

Employment and Skills Development: The industry creates jobs and develops skills, which in turn supports economic growth. A thriving film industry attracts foreign professionals and investors, further contributing to foreign exchange earnings.

By leveraging these avenues, the film industry can play a crucial role in promoting foreign exchange earnings and boosting the economy.

(iii) BUILDING THE NATIONAL BRAND

Films can be part of a nation's cultural legacy, especially for a country as unique as Sierra Leone. Reserved parks, food noted for being healthy and tasty, clothing designed with local fabrics, traditional drama and folk music, visual arts showcased in art museums, Gold and silver beaches, etc. these all draw tourists and their fascination can be enhanced through films. Projecting a positive image of a country on film will promote nation branding.

(iv) NATIONAL COHESION & INTEGRATION

Every nation has a set of values and norms that govern the behaviour of its people. Similarly, every society has a system of social control or mechanism of ensuring that its people behave in consonance with its normative values in order to ensure social cohesion and integration. This is a way of keeping them together as one indivisible entity, with a common heritage, identity and destiny. The issue of national unity has become topical since the war.

Films can play a significant role in promoting national cohesion and integration by highlighting shared values, fostering understanding among diverse groups, and addressing social issues. This could be achieved through:

Storytelling: Films tell stories that resonate with a wide audience, showcasing the experiences and struggles of different communities. This helps build empathy and understanding.

Representation: By featuring diverse characters and cultures, films can promote inclusivity and reflect the true diversity of a nation.

Dialogue: Films often spark conversations about important social issues, encouraging viewers to think critically and discuss topics that might otherwise be overlooked.

Education: Documentaries and educational films can inform the public about historical events, cultural practices, and social challenges, fostering a more informed and cohesive society.

Sierra Leone is a multi-ethnic nation with diverse cultures and traditions. In spite of the challenges of cultural diversity, there have been many films produced in promoting values which have continued to promote unity, national cohesion and integration. Sierra Leone cultural heritage is inherent in the cultural sites and monuments, drama, education, sports festivals, trade, language, music, film industries, food and modes of dressing. These values have been used over the years to unite Sierra Leone citizens culturally over the past decades.

THE SIERRA LEONE FILM POLICY

MISSION AND VISION OF THE FILM POLICY

Policy Mission

To facilitate, nurture and develop a lucrative Sierra Leone film industry which promotes and markets Sierra Leone's cultural and artistic expressions for the socio-economic development of the country.

Policy Vision:

To have a vibrant and lucrative film industry of international standards in Sierra Leone.

Policy Scope

This policy covers the legal framework and the infrastructure needed to set up a film governance structure, classify films and video works, regulate and prescribe safety precautions to be observed in licensed premises, regulate and control cinematographic exhibitions, regulate the import of foreign movies and export of Sierra Leone movies. It encompasses recording of moving images and sound digitally, on cellulose, videotape, disc or any other recording medium for public exhibition. It also aims to address the challenges facing the industry such as lack of adequate funding, lack of awareness of Sierra Leone as a premier filming location, non-availability of adequate filming facilities and equipment and inadequately trained human resources as well as other bottlenecks.

Objectives of the Film Policy

Sierra Leone is a vibrant state with a relatively young film industry but rich in the diversity of its locations, people and cultural expressions. Its people are enterprising and dynamic. Films from Sierra Leone have recently generated a lot of commercial interest and garnered laurels at the highest international and national cinematic events.

It is, therefore, the right time to formulate and implement a robust Film Policy with the following objectives:

1. To promote artistic, creative and cultural expressions
2. To brand Sierra Leone as a vibrant film shooting destination by easing approval processes for film shooting
3. To build large, enthusiastic audiences for films shot in Sierra Leone, both at the domestic and global level
4. To develop and support local talent and provide skilled ecosystem in Sierra Leone
5. To recognize and promote the legacy of torchbearers who have brought laurels and acclaim to Sierra Leone cinema.
6. To promote and preserve the cultural heritage of Sierra Leone in all its forms.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE FILM INDUSTRY

As a strategic partner in development whose sector employs over 5,000 young people across the country, there are several legal, subsidiary legislation and guidelines that regulate film production and distribution in Sierra Leone. These include but are not limited to the following:

CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE (1991)

The Constitution of Sierra Leone (1991) commits itself to the promotion, protection and preservation, and of the country's cultural heritage which includes its audiovisual archiving. In accordance with Section 12a (enhancement of national culture), the cultural objectives of the Constitution, stipulate for the state to:

a) Promote the Sierra Leonean culture such as music, film, art, dance, science, philosophy, education and traditional medicine in the spirit national development;

b) Recognize traditional Sierra Leonean institutions compatible with national development.

c) Protect and enhance the cultures of Sierra Leone; and

d) Facilitate the provision of funds for the development of culture in Sierra Leone.

THE SIERRA LEONE BROADCASTING CORPORATION ACT (CAP)

The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC), established under the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation Act 2007, has part of its mandates to provide facilities for commercial advertising and for the production of commercial

programmes at such fee or levy as the corporation may determine. This, coupled with its other functions, positions the SLBC as a corporation that is mandated to enhance the audio-visual industry in Sierra Leone, including film production. As a public broadcaster it should consciously and programmatically promote the film industry by making film products part of its broadcast content.

INDEPENDENT MEDIA COMMISSION ACT, 2020

The IMC Act 2020 - provides for the registration, licensing and regulation of mass media institutions in Sierra Leone including the broadcast media. The IMC 2020 Act, does not expressly provide for the Film sector (except for scanty references in the Print & Electronic Media Regulation 2022) as an integral component of mass media to enhance professionalism, which would ensure the production, broadcast and marketing of quality movies.

As part of its mandate to regulate the media including film and video, the Commission, in reviewing the IMC Act, 2020 has proposed the establishment of the "Directorate of National Film and Video (DNFV)", under the supervision of the IMC Board. The Commission shall constitute an Advisory Committee that will be empowered by the IMC Act to provide oversight, including but not limited to the vetting and classification of all films and videos whether imported or produced locally. It shall also be the duty of the IMC to register all films and video outlets across the country and to keep a register of such registered outlets among other functions.

The Commission will provide capacity building opportunities and facilitate the training of professionals in film production from certificate up to graduate and post-graduate levels. With the existing broadcast institutions, there is urgent need for the Commission to facilitate the establishment of a Film Institute/school as the premier institution for film training through an Act of Parliament.

COPYRIGHT ACT 2011

The Copyright Board and Law Office should continue to play their part in copyright protection and enforcement as provided for under the copyright Act, 2011. Though the 2011 Copyright Act has thus far existed with all the requisite laws, save an enforcing mandate, effort should be made to give the 2011 Copyright Act the needed mechanism to enforce the laws and to grant those who express their idea exclusive legal rights upon completion of an eligible original work known as copyrights.

THE CYBER SECURITY & CRIME ACT 2021

As the entertainment industry continues to migrate away from broadcasting and DVD/Blu-Ray sales toward online content and streaming, the risk of hacking and its potential damage increases daily. Familiar risks, such as stolen credit card credentials and malware, mixed with industry-specific threats such as pirated movies.

Strong security measures and protocols are imperative for online businesses as soon as they are made available to the public. Cyber security in the film and entertainment industry is especially crucial because of the volume of users who will utilize these online services. The Cyber Security and Crime Act, 2021 will enhance Cyber Security concerns in the film industry.

Relevant regulators and government agencies include but are not limited to the following:

- *The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security – Labour Act*
- *Corporate Affairs Commission (CaC) Act*
- *Sierra Leone Investment Promotion Commission Act*
- *National Entertainment Policy (Min of Tourism & Cultural Affairs)*
- *Sierra Leone Immigration Regulations*
- *NRA Act*

Policy Statement: *The Independent Media Commission (IMC) shall formulate policies and regulatory measures to provide the vision and the blueprint for the development of the film industry in Sierra Leone in alignment with global best practices*

SETTING UP OF THE NATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NFVAC)

The IMC Act 2020 as amended shall make provision for the establishment of a National Film and Video Advisory Committee with a Directorate of National Film and Video.

The Directorate shall be headed by a Director and shall constitute the following units:

(i) Film censorship and classification (FC&C)

(ii) Licenses and documentation (Admin)

(iii) Service Innovation – (Directorate of planning)

(iv) Accounts Office – Admin-

(v) Corporate Affairs (Admin & Finance)

(vi) ICT Office (Admin/Finance)

(vii) Other Institutions.

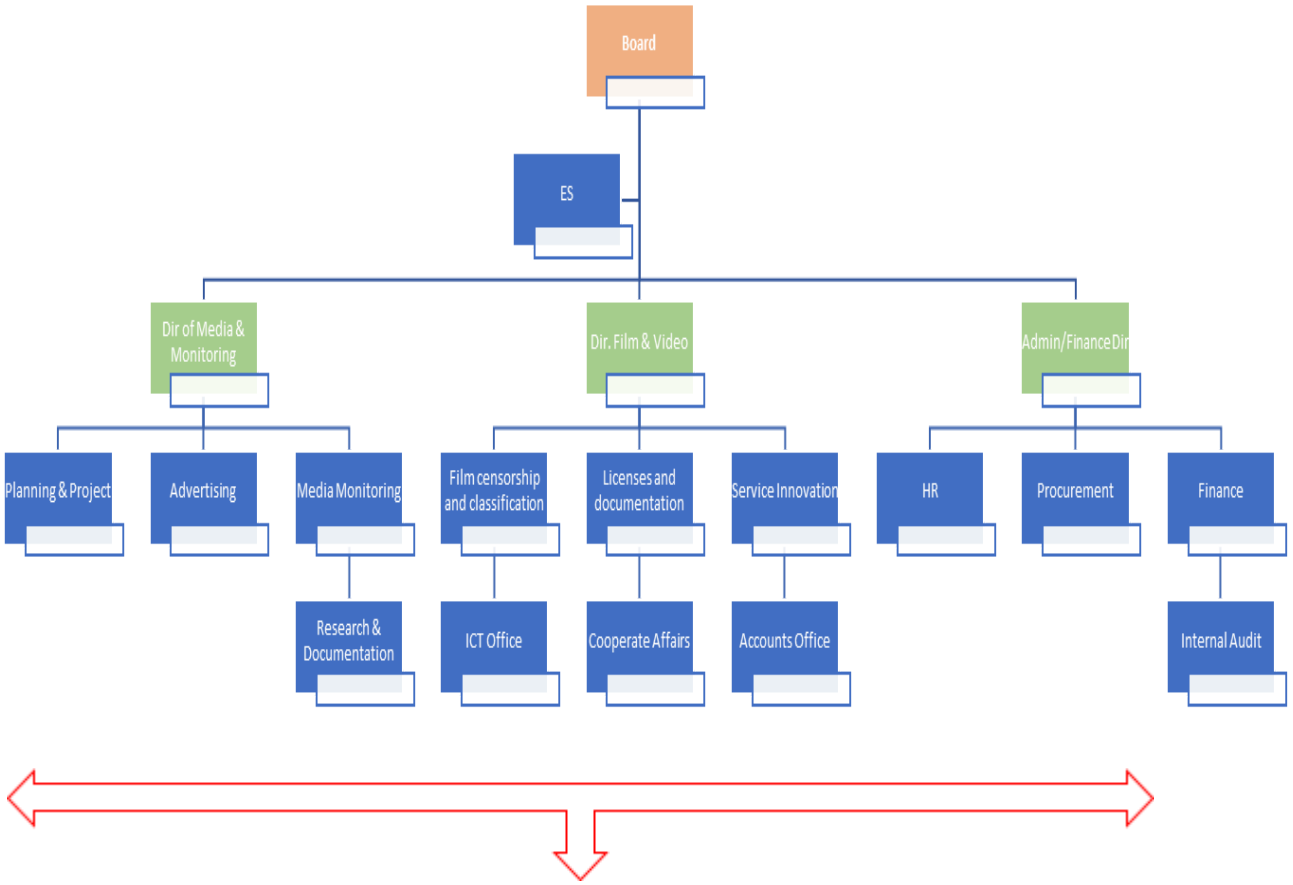
1. **Function of the National Film and Video Advisory Committee**

Subject to the approval of the IMC Board, its functions are to classify films, publicity materials and stage plays that are meant for public exhibition. In addition, it also undertakes clearance exercises at point of entry (seaport/airport) for imported movies prior to their classification.

The Committee comprising Government Officers/professionals/experts will be an appropriate authority for sanctioning projects and for releasing funds under the National Film & Video Policy. The Committee will also act as an advisory body to guide the IMC on implementation of provisions of the Sierra Leone Film and Video Policy. The Committee shall have the following as its members:

1.	Film and video expert (Commissioner IMC Board)	Chairman
2.	The Chairman, IMC	
3.	Directorate of Art and Cultural Affairs Department (MoTCA)	Member
4.	Head of Department of Film Institute/ Performing and Visual Art (By Rotation)	Member
5.	The Director, Independent Media Commission	Member
6.	Three (3) eminent film personalities	Member
7.	Consumer Protection Rep	Members
8.	Inter Religious Council	Member

ORGANOGRAM



2. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

The office of the Director is responsible for ensuring the efficient coordination of

r is its

oversight functions the Directorate handles the following:

- Appointment, Promotion and Discipline of Officers
- Ensures the maintenance of office, infrastructures and equipment.

- Drives welfare agenda for staff in the areas of health, leave, marriage, funeral etc.
- The Directorate is in charge of store, Security and transport units
- Makes recommendation on various personnel matters and other issues relating to the Technical Committees, Retirement, and Gazetting of Appointment, Transfer of service, Secondment etc.
- Initiate policies and make presentations to the Management and Commission for approval.

4. **THE FILM CENSORSHIP AND CLASSIFICATION UNIT**

The office can best be described as the engine room of the Directorate/Committee; the reason being that the bulk of the Committee's classification and rating is carried out in this unit. The office is headed by a Manager, and classifies all films submitted to the Advisory Committee in line with its classification guidelines. To enhance the capacity of staff, the Department organizes seminars/meetings on film production, in addition to the organization of interactive sessions between the staff and film makers.

5. **The Licenses and documentation office (Under Admin/Finance)**

The office that is the life wire to the Commission/Directorate. This is because its functions are very integral to the existence and relevance of the Film and Videos Department. The functions of the unit are:

- Processes application for Film Distribution from existing stakeholders and interested investors in line with the extant rules.
- Recommends applicants for the issuance of license
- Supervises the Directorate's Learning Centre and Library
- Organizes enlightenment programmes like the school outreach
- Implements policies on film licensing and issuance.
- Ensures the safe-keeping of all censored films
- Produces Directory of film Distributors and Exhibitors in Sierra Leone
- Performs archive duty.

- Setting up mechanisms to ensure enforcement of copyright laws in the film industry;
- g) Enforcing regulation governing shooting of commercials, documentaries and feature film productions

6. **Operations Office (Directorate of Planning)**

This is one of the major offices of the department that plays vital roles in the realization of the department's mandate as enshrined in its enabling law. The unit performs the following:

- Organizes all field monitoring and operations to ensure compliance.
- Co-ordinates all the activities of field operations in the six Geo-political zonal and Centre offices.
- Convenes Stakeholders meeting
- Maintains correspondence with Licensed Film Distributors and Exhibitors
- Liaises with sister organizations that perform related duties.
- Implements policies on film distribution and exhibition.

7. **Service Innovation Office – Dir of Planning**

The Service Innovation unit is charged with the responsibility of service innovation, partnerships and support, innovation and implementation. The following functions are carried out by the unit:

- Initiating, planning and implementing all innovative initiatives aimed at building a strong culture of innovation in the Department.
- Identifying and reaching out to the development partners for necessary support aimed at developing and implementing innovation programmes.
- Relates with Management for the development and full implementation of identified innovative solutions.
- Implementing sensitization campaigns necessary for assimilating innovation in the Service.
- Tracking trends competitions in innovation with a view to adopt the same for implementation in the Service.
- Rendering periodic reports on innovative identified ideas to Management.

8. **LEGAL ADVISERS**

The Legal Advisers are responsible for Legal Services and Regulatory Compliance. They are charged with the responsibility of Litigation and related matters, Giving Legal Advice/Opinion, attending to all Legal Matters, Liaising with Law Enforcement agencies, liaising with other regulatory agencies, vetting of contracts agreements involving the Commission's Film Directorate, and any other matter that may be assigned to it by the Management, Executive Secretary or other Directorates/Units of the Commission.

9. **Accounts /Finance Office (Admin/Finance)**

This Unit functions as the Account unit of the Directorate It is also responsible for the Directorate's budget preparation and implementation. The following functions are carried out by the unit:

- In charge of staff salaries, allowances and other financial benefits,
- In charge of all forms of payment
- Advises the management on project funding and implementation strategies
- Produces accounts and financial reports annually.

10. **Corporate Affairs Office (Admin/Finance)**

The Corporate Affairs officer is charged with the responsibility of external communication, public relations and Stakeholder Engagement. It is also responsible for:

- Managing the Commission's film department public image and reputation,
- Handling media relations and public enquiries,
- Co-ordinating press coverage,
- Carrying out daily analysis of media comments from print and electronic media,
- Providing needed feedback on the comments on the comments and reactions from the public.

11. **ICT (Admin/Finance)**

The Information and Communications Technology unit is charged with the responsibility of promoting and implementing information communication technology integration, hardware maintenance, software/website programing and maintenance, network maintenance, and help desk services.

OTHER INSTITUTIONS

1. **NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MOVIE MAKERS -SL**

This policy establishes an umbrella body namely the NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MOVIE MAKERS - Sierra Leone to represent the various professional associations, guilds and unions, film practitioners and other industry players. The Council shall be the primary point of contact recognised by the Government through the IMC and act as a key partner in promoting and protecting the rights of film practitioners and other industry players. The IMC shall license the Film Council and regulate its activities in accordance with the Sierra Leone Film & Video Policy/Bill/Act/Regulation to be enacted. In addition, the council shall be responsible for the following;

a) Establishment and administration of the Sierra Leone Film Development Fund to serve the entire film industry. The fund shall be a perpetual trust to act as a receiver and disburser of funds for film production and post-production activities in Sierra Leone and position the country as a world-class film and post-production hub. The trustees of the fund will be appointed as appropriate and in accordance with International best practice;

b) Granting of loans from the Sierra Leone Film Development Fund to commercially viable cinematographic projects which in the judgment of the Council are capable of enhancing the national interest and cultural development of Sierra Leone;

c) Pro-active funding of production by committees with relatively little access to communication tools;

d) Encouraging the production of documentaries and other film productions of educational nature, which are normally considered by the industry to be unattractive investments;

e) Facilitate research and development in film production;

f) Establish a robust content development industry;

g) Collaborating with other agencies or individuals in funding of economically viable film productions and film related projects;

h) Aggressively market Sierra Leone's position as a film and TV production centre of excellence;

i) Developing pipelines of human and financial resource to develop capacity that will grow the industry;

j) Advising the Government and all relevant stakeholders on matters pertaining to development, coordination, regulation and promotion of the film industry in Sierra Leone;

k) Facilitating in the provision of content development, funding and investment for film projects; and

l) Facilitating the proper keeping of Film Archives in Sierra Leone.

2. GUILD/TRADE UNIONS

The policy shall encourage the formation of registered professional bodies under the Laws of Sierra Leone as trade union bodies and duly registered as part of the guilds and trade unions under the National Council. These include Screen Writers Guild, Directors Guild, Producers Guild, Actors Guild, Cinematographer and Technical Guild, Sierra Leone Film Marketers Association and Television Producers Association, etc. They shall have the responsibility:

a) To act as a pressure group, lobbying and advocating for industry professionals for better working conditions.

b) To develop the industry with efficiency, credibility, commercial integrity and good corporate governance.

c) To foster professional ethics, standards and human resource development.

d) Promotes for the welfare of the film professionals by ensuring that productions are done within international standards with proper insurance coverage.

e) To classify its membership into grades and categories.

f) To coordinate the effectiveness and efficiency of the operations of the other guild.

g) Be the umbrella body for all its sub-guilds.

3. Sierra Leone Institute of Film and Media Studies

The Government and development partners shall support the establishment of Sierra Leone Institute of Film and Media Studies to provide the necessary skills for the job market:

Strategies

a) Train professionals in various film and media cadre;

b) Promote film training in other institutions by developing curricular and ensuring that the trainers possess the requisite skills;

c) Set up a framework for evaluating and certifying film and video production training programme;

d) Develop a mechanism for attracting and retaining skilled human resources in film and video productions;

e) Establish networks for sharing training resources;

f) Develop strategies to support research and innovation;

g) Provide an enabling environment for Public-Private partnership (PPP) in the film industry;

h) Provide guidance in quality film training institutions in the country;

i) Provide linkage with foreign film institutions for training program exchanges; and

j) Provide linkages with donors for acquisition of best available film technology.

4. **The Department of Culture**

The Department of Culture within the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, being the government arm responsible for overall national cultural development;

Strategies

a) Embrace community participation in its development programmes by collaborating through supporting community cultural festivals and cultural groups;

b) The department shall partner with various stakeholders to strengthen and develop the cultural sector and find linkages to the film industry for digitization of these cultural resources.

c) Enhance appropriate protection of national Heritage and ancillary sites for the intellectual property rights commercial exploitation for the benefit of Sierra Leone.

d) The department shall develop and implement cultural programmes in the areas of performing arts, visual arts, promotion and development of languages and positive traditions, development of indigenous health and in cultural education, entertainment and information.

LOCAL, INTERNATIONAL FILM PRODUCERS, AGENT AND CREW

a) Local and international producers shall be expected to engage in quality productions with a range of choices to consumers.

b) Film agents shall be expected to play their part in a market where freedom to contract shall also be respected and ensuring filmmakers work in line with laws and legislations of Sierra Leone

c) Artists shall be trained and made aware of industry best practices to enable them fully exploit their potential.

d) Film crews will be expected to maintain the industry professional standards. They will also be expected to undergo continuous refresher courses to enable them to be on the cutting edge of what is happening in the industry.

TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Training institutions shall continue to provide the requisite training that provides the required human resources for the film industry.

BROADCASTING STATION

Broadcasting stations shall be expected to promote local productions by commissioning production of more local programmes and allocating more airtime to local production.

Strategies

a) **Local Content and the public broadcaster** - The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation as the public broadcaster shall, with its widened mandate as provided through the Sierra Leone Information and Communications Act, be expressly required to provide Sierra Leonean programming, that shall also consider issues which impact on the sustainability of the Sierra Leonean production sector and its capacity to deliver a diversity of high-quality product to Sierra Leonean audiences.

b) **Pay television** - The Sierra Leonean content requirement for pay television shall be reviewed by the IMC to explicitly require that any pay TV service providers observe the cultural objective of having a guaranteed minimum amount of Sierra Leonean programming.

c) **New Services** - The Government should be committed to ensuring that all appropriate and reasonable levels of Sierra Leonean content regulation is provided for new services that emerge in the digital environment.

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Development partners will play complementary roles towards realization of development of the goals and objectives of this policy. Within the framework, the Government shall foster linkages with various development partners to provide financial, material, technical assistance as well as build capacity for sustainability.

CONSUMERS

Consumers will be encouraged to partake of the info-attainment services that shall ensue from the industry.

REDRESSAL OF GRIEVANCES/DISPUTE MECHANISM

In case any dispute arises, the matter would be referred to the Film Council, for redress. All disputes arising under the terms & conditions of the Sierra Leone Film Policy shall be subject to the jurisdiction of Sierra Leonean's legal system.

DEFINITIONS OF THE CATEGORIES OF FILM AS QUOTED IN THIS POLICY

a) **Sierra Leonean Films** – These are films which satisfy the minimum criteria prescribed for Sierra Leone films.

b) **Non-Sierra Leonean Films** – These are films which satisfy the minimum criteria prescribed by non-Sierra Leonean Films.

c) **International Films** – These are films produced by international producers. These would include International Co-Producers – ie. Films shot in Sierra Leone by a Sierra Leonean/Sierra Leonean Producer collaborating with one/multiple producers across the world.

THE IMC - NATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO CENSORSHIP DIRECTORATE STRUCTURE, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCING

DIRECTORATE STRUCTURE

The IMC-National Film and Video Censorship Directorate shall comprise an Advisory Committee Members with a minimum of ten members and a maximum of twelve members appointed as follows:

The Advisory Committee - Industry Representation: Film industry representatives democratically elected and nominated by members of the recognized film council bodies in the film industry, comprising a minimum of 60% of the Board with representation from the six regions.

The Advisory Committee - Government Representation: Government representatives nominated by their Line Ministries (MoICE, MoTCA, MoTI and MoYA) comprising of a maximum of 25% of the Board and where:

The Advisory Committee - Citizens Representation: Civil society representatives (two (2) - Human Rights and Religious Tolerance) comprising of a maximum of 15% of the Board

In addition to official elected or appointed Advisory committee members, may request permission from the IMC to allow non-voting (Police, Diplomat, Military and Citizen) occasional or regular observers at any meetings of the Advisory Committee, where it is deemed appropriate.

THE FILM & VIDEO DIRECTORATE'S MANAGEMENT

The Directorate's affairs shall be managed by the IMC headed by the Director appointed based on experience and qualification as an employee or volunteer. The Advisory committee shall formulate policies and suggest to the Commission for implementation.

FINANCING

The Government through the IMC shall provide financial support through the quarterly/annual budgetary allocation and other grants within the framework of the Government Financial Act.

The Commission through its activities, will also acquire funds from percentage contribution from film permits, Production companies and marketer's licenses and exhibitions and other sources like corporate and business houses, lottery, NGOs and UN agencies and well-wishers.

TENURE OF OFFICE

The tenure of office for Advisory Committee Members shall be three (3) years and not exceeding two consecutive terms.

FINANCES

INTRODUCTION

Sierra Leone among other film producing countries have realised how lucrative filmmaking could be and the government is doing whatever it takes to attract foreign producers. This influx of rival low-cost production centres, complemented with good financial incentives and state-of-the-art studio facilities, has left the Government of Sierra Leone with no choice but to enact a legislation to create a competitive range of financial incentives and rebates in order to provide producers with more value for their money:

THE LOCAL FINANCIAL INCENTIVE FRAMEWORK

THE NATIONAL FILM FUND

This Film Fund provides funding for the development and production of local film projects, while at the same time strengthens Sierra Leone as a shooting location. It is imperative that this is enhanced through a long-term strategy in order to encourage the production of Sierra Leonean films. Several suggestions have been put forward in the section dealing with the indigenous industry.

It is imperative that the Commission shall establish and control a unified fund to be referred to as the National Film Fund. This Fund shall be available for the general developmental activities to be undertaken by the Commission to improve the film industry, and shall also be administered to deserving and qualified film industry players to enhance their production, marketing, and distribution activities. The sources of the Fund shall include money appropriated by Parliament, gifts, grants, loans or donations, made with the approval of the of the Commission's Advisory Board, to the Fund, and any other money accruing to the fund from any other source. The fund shall provide support to the following activities:

(i) Education and Training Funding

(ii) Development Funding

(iii) Production Funding.

(iv) Marketing and Distribution Funding.

(v) Film Festival Funding.

(vi) Co-production Funding.

(vii) Filming Equipment Funding.

(viii) Funding of films of historical and cultural merit.

The Commission shall also formulate the necessary criteria to be met by industry players in order to qualify for the various sources of funding and shall ensure the generation of relevant regulations to provide necessary standards governing the funding processes, and enhance reporting, oversight and accountability in the processes of granting funds.

The Commission may also consider the allocation of repayable loans to industry players. This will count as a form of investment to filming productions and will promote collaborative engagements between the Commission and sector players. The Commission shall also work in collaboration with Parliament, the National Treasury, the National Revenue Authority and the other stakeholders to establish tax incentives and tax credits for the importation of filming equipment."

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE POLICY

1. SINGLE WINDOW PERMIT

Implementation of a simple process for all permits and clearances through a single-window mechanism for all production houses to shoot films/web-series/serials etc. in Sierra Leone. This will incentivise and boost film production houses in the country. Single Window Cell, a part of the IMC-National Film and Video Censorship Directorate, will facilitate promotion of film tourism, including clearance for film shooting in the country. Nodal officers will be appointed for this purpose. They shall develop an online institutional mechanism for coordination with the agencies concerned and all other stakeholders to facilitate film production agencies/film makers in obtaining necessary approvals for shooting. The entire process of approval shall be 10 calendar days.

- If approval is not proposed to be granted in the stipulated time period, the Commission shall communicate to the applicant providing clear reasons for the delay.
- If the filmmakers or producers want to get the approvals in less time (like 5 days before shoot or lesser number of days) because of any actor's dates' issue or any other reason, then the approval can be considered (provided all norms are followed). However, a 10% charge shall be added by the authorities concerned for such cases.

3. INCENTIVES/SUBSIDY FOR FILMS AND PROMOTION OF FILM SHOOTS IN SIERRA LEONE

Film producers in Sierra Leone and abroad should feel encouraged to shoot in a country which offers good financial incentives for shooting, production, release and general administrative systems.

The Sierra Leone Government offers a package of incentives to promote its film production and post-production industry. The incentives consist of the;

- Sierra Leonean Films
- Foreign Film and Television Production and Post-Production Incentive;
- SL Film & TV Production and Co-production;
- SL film and television production incentive

Application forms and guidelines shall be provided on the commission's online mechanism put in place.

DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

A. Setting up of Film & Television (TV) Studios

The Government of Sierra Leone shall support setting up of film and TV studios in Sierra Leone having production and post-production facilities to incentivise shooting and making of films in the country. The Government will strive to set up a Film City in Sierra Leone.

The following suggestions have been made with the scope of achieving a 'turnkey' facility with architecture and landscaping to contemporary standards:

- **Sound stages** - typically a studio complex has more than one stage, all varying in size. Due to the space restrictions Sierra Leone faces, having one or two large stages with movable partitions would be optimal - allowing productions to shoot simultaneously if necessary;
- **Back – lots**. Constructing one or two back lots depicting imagery which is not readily available as locations in Sierra Leone, e.g. a New York Street;
- Constructing up-to-date production support buildings - including areas for hair & make-up, camera, grips, sound, wardrobe warehouses, production offices, meeting rooms, dining quarters and catering;
- Constructing 'shell' structures to house special effects shops, set construction, modeling shops;
- Integrating other services on site relating to both production and post - production.

Post Production:

"Digital technologies have transformed the film-making process and will continue to do so". A lot of emphasis has been made on principal photography; however, this does not mean that the post - production phase is of less importance.

Currently Sierra Leonean studios are not equipped to professionally handle large production with a full service, including post-production services of international standards and above-the-line expertise, thus leaving such productions with no other option but to go elsewhere.

Nevertheless, many foreign productions still prefer to carry out post-production works in their hometown. Thus, any future local post-production facilities should not be created with the sole intent of servicing foreign productions - an alternative use for such department is to offer hands-on training to locals - keeping them running throughout the year.

B. UPGRADE FILM & TELEVISION (TV) INSTITUTES & EXPAND THEIR SCOPE

The Government should encourage public private partnership investment to set up Film Institutes of Performing and Visual Arts in Freetown and all Regional headquarter cities. They should offer professional courses on film making and also impart technical training to enable the trainees to make films.

The core technical departments should be encouraged to have full-fledged programmes taught by qualified and experienced film academics and film makers. In addition to this, there would also be short-term, specific courses to develop skill sets for the line crew like art setting department, camera attendants, sound attendants, production staff and location managers. Skill Development Initiative will also be taken for training and development of content and talent to strengthen the future of the entertainment industry in Sierra Leone.

The IMC shall impart training through labs e.g. a screen writers' lab, directors' lab and a producers' lab.

C. SETTING UP OF THEATRES (MINIPLEXES) AND ALTERNATE EXHIBITION FORA

Screen theatres/cinema halls and alternate exhibition facilities like travelling talkies and special institutional screening forums (e.g. screening schedules through Local Councils, local schools, etc.) should be set up in Sierra Leone, particularly in the rural areas to help the entertainment of rural masses at low cost, inculcate film watching culture and provide impetus to the production of more Sierra Leonean films in the country.

i) The long-term goal of the policy is to achieve a very high screen-population density ratio. The IMC Directorate will actively collaborate with digital cinema distribution entities to set up miniplexes in urban/semi-urban/rural centres. With a view to facilitating this growth, the Government will make the following interventions-

- Facilitating land and/or theatre acquisition/theatre renovation to encourage development of new miniplexes (capacity 300-500 max) as well as upgrading

older theatres. This would be in synergy with the department concerned for ensuring provision for speedy relevant clearances.

- Setting up miniplexes in cities-near bus stands, popular shopping areas, culture centres etc. – for natural traction of audiences & also to ensure profitability.
- Policies of various MDAs will be amended to facilitate this. Change in Land Use related policy will be made film friendly by attracting film and film-related institutes and establishments in low and medium potential zones. Similarly, for the areas within the purview of Freetown and Urban Local Bodies, similar support will be extended through film-friendly policies.
- Single window clearance for prompt clearances and permissions.
- Promotional support: as far as possible, all government controlled/ owned spaces like state tourist complexes, government office lobbies, railway stations and bus stands, etc. will have display spaces for promoting miniplexes.
- The state could hire a credible and experienced private consultant to oversee the processes of setting up and running all miniplexes.
- Leveraging expertise of knowledge firms and companies for getting studies conducted on various aspects of Sierra Leone film industry and content acquisition as per government norms, technical infrastructure, operations and management of theatre and premises (including parking and access matters).
- Contents for the miniplexes could include Sierra Leonean films (with prime time show timings on priority basis in release week), dubbed international content, non-Sierra Leonean (dubbed/sub-titles), and children and educational films. Prime time slot would mean film shows scheduled between 4pm-9pm
- All films availing of the priority scheduling provision will need to submit proof of relevant certification from the IMC.
- It would be mandatory for the miniplexes to have a showcase/display/sale area for local arts and crafts, and local cinema scheduling.

C (ii) Facilitate Alternative On-Ground Exhibition Models: for the far flung and rural areas where constructing new screens might not be viable or a later proposition, special provisions for exhibition could be made with adequate security arrangements (i.e. protection from piracy) for the film. The two models recommended are:-

- Travelling cinema or the cinema van – whereby a film can be taken from centre to centre using a self-sufficient exhibition vehicle (i.e. the cinema van) equipped with projection and screening facilities.
- Travelling Cinema or Makeshift Theatres – whereby the film can be provided in a non-DCB/Print format – i.e. copy-protected movie file to be screened at pre-determined centres.

(D) DESTINATION MARKETING FOR SIERRA LEONE

The IMC Film Directorate will take several initiatives to promote Sierra Leone as a leading destination for shooting and production of all feature and non-feature content - films, digital content and television shows. The list of deliverables for the producer of incentivized films would include incorporation of the logo of the IMC Directorate for Film and Video Censorship as:

- a solo credit in opening credits in Sierra Leone Films
- part of slide featuring partner logos in opening credits of non-Sierra Leone Films
- part of partner logos mentioned in the end role of international and mega budget films, and also
- Adequate mention/acknowledgment to all concerned departments and locations used in the end roll of film.

There are a number of effectual marketing techniques that can be utilised to promote Screen Tourism, which include a mixture of interactive and traditional forms of marketing. Ideally a destination branding campaign is created using a proper strategy which would allow for a more sustainable and long-term vision. It is imperative that any destination branding is wary of emphasizing sets that are temporary: the ramifications of promoting sets that are eventually destroyed after production has wrapped could lead to the loss of visitor satisfaction.

To consider the critical intervention of Government in relation to market expansion, Sierra Leone is considered a major signatory to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) signed by H.E the President Rtd brigadier Julius Maada Bio and ratified by the House of Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone. The AfCFTA creates market opportunities for a population of 1.3 billion people across fifty-five (55) countries in Africa and a total GDP of $ 3.5 trillion. A market space of fifty-five countries, with a population of 1.3 billion people is the largest market for trading in goods and services. Audio Visual Services is one of the major components under the Communication Services of the AfCFTA.

Other components include Motion picture and Video tape production and Distribution Services, Motion Picture Projection Services, Radio and Television Services, Radio and Television Transmission Services and Sound Recording. Other subsectors that must be taken into consideration are: Photographic Services, Packaging Services, Printing and Publishing Services.

It is indisputable that the digital age has increased opportunities to promote destination images and filming locations, however, although the significance of social media must be recognised, it is also important to acknowledge the more traditional forms of promotion which include:

- newspaper journalism;
- specialist reportage; and
- books.

In relation to a marketing action plan, the following is a suggested model that various stakeholders can utilise for a variety of marketing activities during and after film production:

Before/During Production:

Management action is required which is achieved through the following marketing methods and planning:

- engaging workforce support;
- engaging artists, directors and other VIPs to promote the location;
- sourcing destination images;
- creating a marketing image for post-production exposure;
- creating a strategy for media coverage during shooting and postproduction.

Post Production:

Management action is vital to maximise the release impact through the following techniques:

- Brand marketing;
- Co-operative marketing;
- National and international promotion;

- Hosting events to continue to 'pull' production.

Furthermore, in case of negative exposure after the production, there would be a need for a process of de-marketing to minimise the negative impact.

This model can be implemented via a multi-interest working group which will be capable of cultivating an action plan for each of the phases highlighted above.

Once a template has been trailed, the working-group can choose whether to adopt it for future use.

CONCLUSION:

Film can be a very good marketing and PR tool to promote Sierra Leone around the world. The IMC Film & Video Censorship Directorate should offer an additional cash rebate incentive to those productions that portray Sierra Leone in a positive way. Other incentives and marketing strategies should be established in tandem with the Sierra Leone Constitution.

Policy Statement 1: *The Government shall expand the market for Sierra Leone as a source, destination and production location for the global film industry*.

Policy Statement 2: *The Government shall develop a framework for co-production treaties with other states and the private sector.*

(E) DEVELOPMENT OF SHOOTING PLACES

The government/local councils will identify, catalogue and develop promising potential shooting locations which have aesthetic and cinematic appeal. These locations will be developed in synergy with the Tourism Department and private investors.

(F) SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR FILM PRODUCTION

The government through the security sector will ensure absolute security and devise crowd control mechanisms during film shoots. Appropriate security and safety arrangements would be made free of cost to enable the film makers to complete shooting schedules. Permission to shoot shall include Police clearance and shall be granted within seven (7) days on the online portal to be developed. The security team will be specifically trained/oriented for film shoots. A liaison officer from the Ministry of Internal Affairs will coordinate with the IMC to ensure security.

(G) PROHIBITION OF ILLEGAL EXHIBITION OF FILMS AND VIDEO PIRACY

The Government, through interrelated legislations, especially the Copyright Act 2011 will implement strict anti-piracy laws and proscribe illegal exhibition of unauthorized and uncertified films.

The government will through the 2011 Copyright Act and other ancillary laws proscribe, prohibit and penalize the unauthorized use, possession and/or control of audiovisual recording devices for the unauthorized recording of cinematographic films and other audiovisual works and/or their soundtracks in an exhibition facility that are the designated legal intellectual properties of others.

4. SIERRA LEONE FILM AWARDS

There shall be state film awards named as 'National Film Awards' ("Awards"). Special effort must be made to felicitate and recognize Sierra Leonean film makers who have won awards at select national and international film festivals and forums. Such awards will aim at encouraging the production of films of aesthetic and technical excellence and social relevance. For selection of winners of these awards, a Jury will be constituted by the relevant film governing apparatus. The Film Council of Sierra Leone in collaboration with the IMC will coordinate the entire process of the award ceremonies. The awards will also aim at encouraging the study and appreciation of cinema as an art form. Awards/ Honours will be initially divided into broadly three categories.

a. Awards of Excellence for Sierra Leonean Films
b. Best film promoting Sierra Leone as a destination

5. RESTORATION & PRESERVATION OF SIERRA LEONEAN FILMS

A Sierra Leone Film Archive will be established in collaboration with the Directorate for National Records and Archives Department, to document, protect and preserve all past and present film material produced in the country. This will enable the Government to not only maintain a record of the acclaimed works but also create a data base of the film industry going forward. Producers will be mandated by law to deposit a copy of their film and publicity material with the archiving office. Archives will ensure proper storage, cataloguing and maintenance of the films.

6. AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The IMC will promote initiatives to create a fruitful nexus between the films of Sierra Leone and its target audience. Film Festivals would be organized from time to time to provide a platform to the people of Sierra Leone to experience films of

international, national and regional repute to help people to resonate with their own national cinema.

7. FILM AS INDUSTRY

The film industry remains an important vehicle for social, cultural and economic development. Thus, a well nurtured film industry can be a major source of wealth creation, employment generation and an effective tool and platform for the cultural expression of the people of Sierra Leone. The industry can promote Sierra Leone's potential as an investment and tourist destination even as it acts as a powerful tool for dissemination of its culture.

Accordingly, "Film" will be covered under the definition of "enterprise." This would make production of films eligible for the grant of incentives under the Enterprise Promotion/Investment Policy in Sierra Leone.

8. BROADCAST STATIONS

With the collaboration of the Independent Media Commission, broadcast stations within Sierra Leone will be required by law to promote local film productions, allocating more airtime to local productions in accordance to the existing policy directives of the Government.

The policy recommends that broadcasting stations progressively increase the set local quota as prescribed in the programming code.

Furthermore, the broadcasting stations shall practice and foster fair business practices in content acquisition, prompt payment and transparency in promotion of local content.

Policy Statement 1: *The Government shall put in place financial and non-financial incentives to promote the growth of the film industry in Sierra Leone.*

Policy Statement 2: *The Government shall establish the National Film Fund to support the growth and development of the film industry*.

REGULATING EMPLOYMENT IN THE FILM SERVICING INDUSTRY

'Smart competition' in the film business does not only consist of a studio complex and financial incentives, but also in ensuring the availability of an abundance of qualified crew.

Unfortunately, Sierra Leone has a problem providing enough crews in terms of quantity and first-class expertise to sustain even the normal levels of productions

visiting the country. Contiguously with the implementation of training courses, it is exigent that the Sierra Leone Government takes the initiative to put in place the following:

- appropriate structure and legislation aimed at better protecting and regulating film employment.
- determining the Employment Status of Film Crew vis-a-vis the Employer
- enhance a standard national minimum condition of employment
- Enacting a Legal Framework to Protect and Regulate Film Employment - a specific legal framework should be introduced in order to avoid putting such an important part of the industry in jeopardy.
- Create a structured framework for the employment sector. It would be ideal for such framework to function through negotiations between representatives of the employers, the employees and an independent party acting as a mediator.

CONCLUSION:

As it stands, there is no regulatory system or structure dealing with employment in the film industry in Sierra Leone, while it is indisputable that the general employment provisions are too vague, making room for abuse.

A thorough investigation and data collection is necessary in order to establish a concrete structure regulated by appropriate provisions. Such amendments should be reflected in the film crew contracts which so far are based on decisions taken by the production company and an individual's bargaining power, which very often lead to a 'one size fits all' contract. Furthermore, the above initiatives are crucial, if the desire to build a studio complex is imminent, that has to demonstrate that the labour needs of any type of production can be met.

Last but not least, it is vital that a balance is found between safeguarding the local crew's rights in a way that attracts people to join the industry, but at the same time not spoiling the workforce and scaring producers away due to an overload of complications.

FILM EDUCATION AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

Education can contribute greatly to the development of Sierra Leone's audio-visual sector and film servicing industry, while also providing social and cultural benefits to

the community. The need for a strategic educational framework is already enshrined in the current development agenda "Human Capital Development. The next step is to implement such dispositions of the law materially.

A lot of effort is already being made to construct a local pool of talents. Although the local film industry is moving in the right direction towards improving film crew expertise, there is still a long way to go. Ideally this will be achieved by providing film education to young children and higher education levels, including hands-on training and academic initiatives for those wishing to pursue a career in film.

FILM AND MEDIA YOUTH PROGRAMS:

Film and media literacy programs have been undervalued in the Sierra Leone context, with only certain independent schools offering such an important subject as part of their curriculum. Therefore, the significance of film literacy programmes as either integrated into the national curriculum or as a complimentary activity needs to be highlighted.

- **Active Learning**:

  Film is not only about watching, but also about active learning and participation, which can have positive effects on youth motivation and behaviour.

- **Film as a Supplement to the National Curriculum:**

  The cross-curricular use of film can reframe and add an extra dimension to a wide range of subjects which are already part of the national curriculum, by activating critical thinking. Furthermore, film is regarded as an accessible medium, able to engage students of varying abilities and also an effective tool for languages and understanding of different cultures.

- **Film Appreciation: Film as Art Form and Culture:**

  Although the bulk of this document has argued that film is a business, it is also an art. Introducing students to films from different cultures can reduce the stigma attached to watching sub-titled films, or films from different eras, thus creating a higher demand for films and increasing cinema-going, while building a new generation of cinema goers and perhaps even filmmakers, with more eclectic preferences.

- **Youth Film-making Initiatives:**

  Organising projects that incorporate filmmaking and/or extracurricular filmmaking initiatives would be ideal as such activities help to increase confidence, inspire team work, build social skills, improve concentration and problem solving, planning and presentation skills. Furthermore, such projects allow students to

realise the potential to work within the audiovisual industry, as they become aware of the different components involved in production.

Film and Inclusion:
Incorporating film activities could also help students with different learning abilities to socialise.

Film education is not only a useful academic tool but it also gives younger people the opportunity to advance skills that future employers would find desirable. A number of suggestions were put forward in order to shape a national plan for film education that is strategic and cost-effective:

- Introducing a pilot project;
- Ensuring that there are enough educators who are trained to offer quality training and advice on how film can be incorporated in class;
- Carrying out research to provide evidence of effectiveness of film education in the Sierra Leone context - preferably a longitudinal study that assesses the long-term impacts of the pilot scheme;
- Creating partnerships between public organisations, the education sector and the industry, while linking various stakeholders together including the Ministry of Tertiary and Higher Education, the National Archives of Sierra Leone, and other relevant bodies.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING:

The need for a thorough assessment of the state of the audiovisual labour force is evident. To date, no in-depth state-backed research has been carried out in regards to skills shortages within the film industry. A skills gap analysis is required for a number of reasons:

- to assess the progress of the national film industry in Sierra Leone thus far;
- to assess the capacities of the film servicing industry; and
- to be adequately and professionally informed about the kind of film schools or film academies to be set up to answer to the relevant questions of the film industry in Sierra Leone.

Furthermore, to be able to create a pool of workers and fill in the skills gap, it would be ideal to evaluate the training structures already in place and the practicalities entailed in creating further structures. With regards to the desire to build a dedicated film school or academy, a proper feasibility study is necessary.

The current structures offering film related training are too spread out, uncoordinated with skimpy and rudimentary programs of studies. A coordinated approach is very much necessary so that synergies should be created between all entities to create more capacity. When that synergy collaborates with government efforts and investment, the results could be a strong vision, a curriculum and structures that could give birth to academies and film schools of international standards.

Though starting from scratch a fully-fledged film school is the ideal solution to the lacuna in the dearth of professionals in the film industry, a lot of work is however involved to set it up. It requires a responsible framework to serve as a good basis, while it will take a good number of years until it will open its doors. This does not mean that there are no alternative education and training ideas which could be implemented until the film school becomes a reality. The following are a few suggestions:

- offering special training abroad to a specific group of already experienced film crew from a number of film groups and departments - similar to offering a scholarship or placement;
- making a distinction between the programme for employability, inclusion and learning and more long-term forms of study;
- allocating a % in tax incentives to encourage film productions to take a number of local workforce and trainees on board;

CONCLUSION:

A cohesive action plan involving a detailed assessment of the facilities, managerial and training structures is urgently required to be carried out in order for Sierra Leone to be able to offer professional film production training.

On the other hand, one has to keep in mind that training and education will not be effective in the long term, unless backed up by a real possibility of employment and that of building a professional future in these industries.

SCREEN TOURISM

INTRODUCTION:

The phenomenon of Screen tourism has been recognised by local authorities in recent years as a driver for tourism and economic growth. The Government recognises the importance of emerging tourism and the film industry's potential for

giving these entities visibility. Given the potential economic value that this strand of tourism can generate, it would be worth evaluating a key number of themes, which would in turn allow for the provision of a clear vision and strategy.

TYPES OF SCREEN TOURISM:

Screen tourism takes various forms - the following are types relevant to the Sierra Leone context:

- **Specific Sites** - sites which become popular destinations thanks to their appearance on small or large screens;
- **Film-Themed Attractions** - attractions with a connection to film;
- **Film Tours** - there are currently several initiatives including the Movies Locations, Sierra Leone Film Tours and the upcoming Sierra Leone Movie Map to be developed;
- **Film Festivals and Conferences** - the Sierra Leone Film Festival undoubtedly has the potential to draw in a range of audiences and become an effective screen tourism tool. The same can be said for more specialised events such as the Small Nations Cinema Conference.
- **Filming Underway** - this refers to visiting a location where filming is taking place, which is a common form of screen tourism.
- **Celebrity promotion** via media channels and social networking sites.

Annex **1**

Application form for Film Subsidy/

Grants under Sierra Leone Film & Video Policy

To,

The Chairman,

National Film and Video Advisory Committee

Independent Media Commission,

Kissy House, Siaka Stevens St.

Freetown.

Sir/Madam,

I/We request you to grant subsidy for my/our film Titled..... in Sierra Leone and sanction subsidy/grant for the proposed Film as per the provisions of National Film & Video Policy-2024.

I/We declared that……. % of the film has been/ will be shot in …….. Sierra Leone and its estimated cost is NLe……. (Approx.) (In Words) .....

The details of the film areas are as follows (to be filled in capital letters).

	Name of the Applicant/Producers *	
	PAN No. of the Applicant/Producers*	
	Address of the Applicant * Contact No* Mobile No* Email*	
	Name of the Film/Title* Certificate issued by Recognized Title registration body)	
	Name of the Banner/Firm/Company *	
	PAN No. of the Banner/Firm/Company *	
	Membership of any Association of Producers	
	Category of the film-* i) Sierra Leonean ii) Non- Sierra Leonean iii) Short Film	
	Story/Script writer's name & experience*	
	Name of the main Actor/Actress & their experience	
	Is the applicant a National/International film award winning Producer/ Director? If YES. Please attach self-attested details/proof	
	Format of the Film: (35mm/16mm/HD/4K/Other. Please specify) *	
	Length of the Film (in minutes) *	
	i) Total number of Characters (In Words)* ii) No. of Actors belonging t	
	Details of the Production:* i) Days of the total shooting ii) Total shooting Days: iii) Estimated duration of the complete edited film iv) Complete shooting schedule a) Indoor	

	b) Outdoor Total v) No. of unit members vi) Details of technicians vii) Estimated date of release	
	Shooting locations details	

1. Hard copies of Concept Note of film.
2. One copy of the Directors profile and the Producer's profile.
3. Company registration license as a film maker.
4. Income Tax returns of the producer/firm of previous years should be attached with the application, including the Company Registration License.
5. Please provide the bank details of the Producer/Director/Firm.

Place:

Date:

Seal:

Name of Applicant **Signature of the Applicant.**

Annexure-II

AFFIDAVIT
(To be notarized)

I/WE……Messrs……
…….Producer/Director of the film hereby declare oath that all the facts and details mentioned in the application are true to my knowledge. If any facts or details are found incorrect, then the SLFDB will be free to recover the entire amount sanctioned as subsidy with interest from me and also initiate legal proceedings as per the rules against me.

2. I also declare that this entire/partial shooting of the film has been shot in Sierra Leone according to the National Film & Video Policy-2024. It will not be a dubbed or copied film.

3. I declare on oath that the Sierra Leone Film Development Board may examine my application for grant/release of subsidy for my film and decide regarding granting/non-granting of subsidy after checking the criteria/provisions and objectives as mentioned in the National Film & Video Policy-2024. I will have no objection to the decision taken by NFVSB and the decision taken by NFVSC will be final and acceptable to me. I will not raise any dispute, or initiate any legal action against the decision of NFVSB, before any forum legal or otherwise.

4. I shall solely be responsible for all consequences which may arise due to non-grant of subsidy amount by SLFDB due to any reason whatsoever, and the same shall not be a subject of litigation, dispute or objected by me in any manner.

Place:

Date:

Name of the Applicant Signature of the Applicant.

The Enclosures need to be submitted as per following guidelines:

1. Please submit this application form along with Complete Film (in 3 sets of Pen Drive/DVD) with all required documents with Censor Board certificate in the office during office hours.
2. It will be necessary to attach the certificate issued by the concerning DM office regarding the shooting period in their districts.
3. Furnish an Affidavit pertaining to total number of shooting days for Completion of film.
4. Previous Film Experience of the Director must be showcased through a Show reel in MPEG format.

5. All the columns should be filled, if not filled give the reason.
6. The total budget cost should be certified by a Chartered Accountant.
7. The title of the film should be registered with the authorized institutes.
8. The proposal of the film should be presented by the producer or director of the film.
9. It is mandatory for the applicant to submit self-attested copies of all the necessary documents/certificates.
10. Submission of certified financial status of producer/financer is mandatory for proposal approval.
11. Details of other projects that you are currently working on and their status.

Terms & Conditions

1. Applications can be submitted at the office during office hours.
2. Submit a duly signed hard copy of application, along with all relevant documents in the …… (Address).
3. Any decision of the Governing Council will be the final decision of the NFVCB. No further Correspondence with respect to the decision of the SLFDB will be entertained.
4. Full and complete information in regard to the particulars required as mentioned in the project should be disclosed, withholding or concealment of facts shall invite appropriate legal action from the NFVCB.
5. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing conditions, the decision of the Chairman, NFVCB with respect to grant of subsidy to your project shall be final and binding on both the parties.

Appendix: Sierra Leone Film Tax Incentive Document

Film & Television Production Tax Incentive Framework – Sierra Leone

The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to making the country a competitive and attractive destination for international film and television productions. This incentive package aims to support the development of the local creative economy, create jobs, and stimulate foreign direct investment in the cultural and tourism sectors.

Incentive Highlights

Incentive	Details
Corporate Tax Credit	49% Tax Credit on qualified Sierra Leone production spend and expenditures.
Withholding Tax Reduction	0% Withholding Tax on payments made to foreign cast and crew.
VAT Exemption	Full VAT exemption, and (5%) on goods and services directly related to production.
Customs & Duties Exemption	Exemption from import duties on all film equipment and production materials.
Local Talent & Training Support	Up to 20% additional tax credit for productions that hire and train Sierra Leonean crew.
Fast-Tracked Permitting	Expedited processing of filming permits with priority handling (target: 10 business days).
Location Access Incentive	Free access in the first year of filming and up to 50% subsidized access to national parks, heritage sites, and government-owned locations.
Post-Production Incentive (New)	5–10% bonus rebate for productions completing post-production in Sierra Leone.
Green Production Bonus (New)	5% additional incentive for productions that meet sustainable filmmaking criteria.
Production Assurance Support (New)	Optional government-backed letter of support or production guarantee for large-scale projects.
Dedicated Film Liaison Unit (New)	Access to a single-point Film Liaison Desk to coordinate permits, locations, and inter-agency approvals, no visa required, only a visa fee of $100 for 4 months

Eligibility Criteria

- Minimum local spend of $100,000 on qualifying production activities in Sierra Leone.
- Submission of a detailed production plan and proof of financing.
- Commitment to comply with local labor, safety, and environmental standards.
- Registration with the National Film Commission of Sierra Leone.

Application Process

1. Submit Letter of Intent & Production Summary.
2. Secure Provisional Certificate from the Film Commission.

3. Submit Final Budget, Location Plan, and Crew List.
4. Receive Final Incentive Approval.
5. File Post-Production Spend Report for Audit & Claim Processing.

Additional Notes

- Incentives are applied as tax credits or direct offsets against local taxes owed.
- For international producers not subject to Sierra Leonean tax, a reduction in effective production costs through exemptions is the main benefit.
- Audits and compliance checks will be conducted to validate claims.

Film Tax Incentives Benchmark

Country / Region	Incentive Type	Incentive Benefit	Key Highlights
Sierra Leone	Tax Credit / Tax Reduction	Up to ~55% of local spend (proposed)	Applies to qualifying local production spend. Designed as a cost-offset mechanism reducing taxes owed rather than requiring cash reimbursements. Focuses on backward integration and stimulating early-stage production.
United Kingdom	Expenditure Credit / Tax Rebate	Up to **53%** for independent films (IFTC); **34%** standard AVEC; **25.5–29.25%** base relief (FTR)	High-tier incentive for films under £15M; generous credits to spur creative production and VFX investment. Rebate model with robust compliance and cultural tests.
UAE (Abu Dhabi)	Cash Rebate	Base **35%** (current), up to **50%** for qualifying productions	Rebates on production & post-production spend with a scoring system favoring local talent, cultural integration, and infrastructure use. Competitive caps and rapid rebate processing.

Notes for Sierra Leone Framework

- **Tax Credit Approach**: Opting for a tax deduction rather than a cash rebate aligns with Sierra Leone's fiscal realities while still providing compelling financial relief.
- **Incentive Tiers**: Aligning tiers to internationally competitive benchmarks (e.g., 30-35% base, with scope to top up to 40-55% for local integration) can attract foreign productions.
- **Visibility & Clarity**: Clearly detailing incentives per production type (e.g., feature films, TV, documentaries, animation) will help producers assess feasibility quickly.

Proposed Policy Enhancements – National Film Policy, Sierra Leone

1. Competitive Automatic Film Incentive Programme

- **Structure**:
    - **Base Incentive**: up to 49-55% non-discretionary tax credit on qualifying local spend.
    - **Uplifts**: Additional 5–10% for hiring & training Sierra Leonean crew, shooting outside Freetown, or showcasing specific cultural heritage sites.
    - **Turnaround Guarantee**: Credit issued notes or refund processed within **1 months** of final audit submission or tax credit ahead of submission
- **Benchmarking**:

Country	Incentive Type	% of Qualifying Spend	Extras / Uplifts	Payout Speed
South Africa	Rebate	35%	+5% for post-prod	6–9 months
Morocco	Rebate	30%	None	4–6 months
Mauritius	Refund	30%	None	3–6 months
Sierra Leone (Proposed)	Tax Credit	49% + up to 6% uplift in initial years	Training, regional shoots, heritage filming	**≤ 6 months**

3. Clear Industry Governance Structure

- **Organizational Chart** in the policy showing:
    1. **Independent Media Commission** – policy oversight.
    2. **Film Commission** – international liaison & facilitation.
    3. **National Film & Video Advisory Committee** – technical advisory.
    4. **National Council for Filmmakers** – guild, workforce, and film fund management.
    5. **Film & Media Institute** – training.
- Clearly **define mandates** and remove overlaps to improve efficiency.

4. National Film Fund Mandate and Scope

- **Purpose**: Finance local projects, support co-productions, and build crew skills.

- **Funding Sources**: Government allocation, private sponsorship, and a 1% levy on all theatrical box office receipts.
- **Management**: Run by the National Council for Filmmakers with Film Commission oversight with a business or private sector focus.
- **Grant Categories**: Development, Production, Post-Production, Skills Training.

5. Separate Film & Tourism Marketing

- **Film Marketing Strategy**:
    - Focused entirely on attracting producers, streamers, and studios.
    - Digital location library, downloadable guidelines, crew database.
- **Screen Tourism Strategy**:
    - Co-branded campaigns with the Tourism Board after major releases to convert film exposure into visitor arrivals. Locally and abroad at embassies

6. International Standard Terminology

- Rename "National Council for MovieMakers" → "National Council for Filmmakers."
- Adopt "Film Commission" in all references to the primary industry-facing agency.
- Align definitions of "Sierra Leonean Film" and "Non-Sierra Leonean Film" with global norms (e.g., BFI, South Africa DTI criteria).

7. Workforce Development & Local Benefits

- **Mandatory Local Hiring Targets**: 30% of crew for international shoots must be Sierra Leonean.
- **Training Linked to Incentives**: Productions must offer workshops or on-the-job training for locals as part of qualifying expenditure.
- **Film & Media Institute**: Develop accredited, short-format technical courses in cinematography, editing, sound, VFX, and production management.

8. Additional "Sweeteners" to Outcompete Rivals

- **Zero Import Duties** on all film equipment and props.
- **VAT Exemption** on all production-related goods and services.
- **Government-Backed Location Support**: Free or heavily discounted access to public buildings, heritage sites, and national parks.

- **Fast-Track Immigration**: Priority visa issuance for cast and crew within 5 business days.
- **Risk Guarantee Fund**: Government-backed insurance to cover delays caused by state agencies.