Members of the Support to the Education Sector in Sierra Leone (SESSiL), a European Union funded project, have on 2nd March, 2021 met with the Minister of Technical and Higher Education at his Ministry's conference room in New England Ville, Freetown to discuss ways of enhancing an improved technical and higher education sector in the country.

In his opening statement, the Minister of Technical and Higher Education, Prof. Alpha Tejan Wurie, thanked members for being present and making education a priority. He noted that the government recognizes that a larger number of people require skills which are outside the formal sector, citing the need to put considerable attention to the non-formal sector in a bid to enhance national growth. He recommended the standardization of entry requirements to the various options of certificates, diplomas, and degrees in the formal sector. Prof. Wurie lamented about the problems associated with lack of job placements for students after their graduation, urging the Ministry of Youth Affairs to work with his Ministry with a view to having a roadmap that will eventually address the problems of graduate unemployment. He additionally expressed his dissatisfaction over the increase in number of students that are vying for WASSCE this year, adding that the pressure would consequently be on the higher education sector in subsequent academic years. He mentioned the need to give premium to distance education as a way of addressing the populous nature of the country's higher learning institutions.

The Team Leader of the Support to the Education Sector in Sierra Leone (SESSiL), Mr. Batilloi Siage, intimated members that SESSiL was a program set up in 2016 to cover a five year period of an agreement to finance the linkage between the European Union and the Government of Sierra Leone by relevantly upgrading and infusing some level of support within the education sector. He mentioned that the SESSiL program encompasses four key areas which are to improve education systems management, to improve primary school teaching and learning, to enhance equal opportunity for boys and girls within the secondary school system, and to improve management of technical and vocational education. He said that based on the newness of Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, there are a number of areas that have allowed SESSiL to target and reshape certain aspects of the program estimate. He mentioned the significant support that European Union has given in developing an E-learning digital system in the information management of all universities across the country, an initiative that was recently validated in Kenema. He said that more recently, they have been involved in discussions around licensure examinations.

The Imprest Administrator of SESSiL, Madam Mancay R. Smith, cited that there role is to oversee all operations financed by the European Union and to ensure that the activities speak to the overall objectives during the program. She urged the Ministry of Technical and Higher Education to properly position itself and take advantage of programs that will be supported by the European Union.