



THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF SIERRA LEONE

HRCSL LAUNCHES REPORT AND VIDEO DOCUMENTARY ON KUSH

The Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone (HRCSL) on 20th January 2026, officially launched a video documentary and a comprehensive report examining the human rights implications of Kush, a synthetic drug that has rapidly escalated into a national public health and security crisis.



The event in the conference room of the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL) brought together key institutions, including the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the Ministry of Health, the Sierra Leone Correctional Service, the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs, the military, civil society organisations, and the media.

The documentary and report capture the lived experiences of Kush users and their families, and also talk to people who have been working on the issue, such as health workers and law enforcement officers. It also highlighted how the current responses to Kush intersect with fundamental human rights, including



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the right to health, dignity, due process, and protection from cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.

The Director of Education, Communication and Training, Richard Tamba M'Bayo did a PowerPoint presentation of the report, highlighting its findings and recommendations and called on government for an immediate action to eradicate Kush and other synthetic drugs in the country.

On behalf of HRCSL, the Vice Chairperson, Victor Idrissa Lansana Esq. highlighted the menace of Kush and called on Sierra Leoneans to wage a war against it.

According to the Vice Chairperson, many young people have lost their lives to Kush, while others are in rehabilitation center as a result of Kush. He added that the government should look at the issue of Kush from a human rights perspective.



“The documentary clearly shows our young people are being abused. The impact of Kush is quite telling which is why we came in to let the government understand that the fight must be from a human rights perspective,” he said.

In her keynote address, Deputy Minister of Justice, Madam Saptieu Saccoh, said the findings contained in the report demonstrate that Kush abuse is not occurring in isolation but rather deeply intertwined with poverty,



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unemployment, trauma, social exclusion and limited access to mental health and rehabilitation services.



“Kush has been linked to serious physical and mental harm, and in some cases, premature deaths. Kush continues to destroy the productive potentials of a generation that should be central to Sierra Leone’s development,” she said. She added that the right to human dignity is undermined as users are subjected to degrading treatment or abandonment and criminalization.

While commending the HRCSL for the documenting the human rights dimensions of Kush, Madam Saccoh reiterated the ministry’s commitment to working with relevant institutions to promote human rights complaints, and support policy legislative reforms informed by evidence.

Many of the institutions in attendance expressed their intention to collaborate with the Commission for more awareness raising, engagement and working together on Kush.