

**Press Brief**

Released: 1 March 2024

**UNOPS to implement the Government of Japan Funded Project on Urgency Support for Reducing Waterborne Diseases in Freetown**

*The new project signed in partnership with the Government of Japan and the Guma Valley Water company through the Japan Supplementary Fund will improve and increase access to safe water, reduce water loss and improve the resilience of water network systems.*

Freetown, Sierra Leone - 1 March 2024

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is set to implement a new project in partnership with the Guma Valley Water Company, with funding from the Government of Japan.

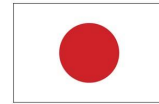
The project titled: *Urgency Support for Reducing Waterborne Diseases in Freetown* aims at increasing access to safe water and reducing waterborne diseases in Freetown. The 1-year project which commences on 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025 will support the Guma Valley Water Company (GVWC) in achieving safe access to water in Freetown.

Freetown's water supply system has been hugely impacted by the decreasing availability of water supply as against the number of consumers. This has resulted in an intermittent water supply system to be able to serve consumers through rationing. Additional water is being lost due to leakages along aged pipes, long spaghetti connections due to insufficient mains network, and water theft from undocumented consumers.

High incidences of waterborne diseases such as typhoid and diarrhea are prevalent and recurring diseases related to poor access to water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities, remain among the leading causes of morbidity. There are several causes of water pollution in Sierra Leone but, the most common is the sewage efflux and surface runoff into boreholes, streams and rivers. The project, Urgency Support for Reducing Waterborne Diseases in Freetown, will tackle some of the challenges.

At the end of the project, it is expected that water losses will be reduced in target areas, system operations will be optimised, water quality will be improved and incidents of waterborne diseases will be reduced, ultimately resulting in improved and increased access to safe water.

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From  
the People of Japan

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**About Guma Valley Water Company**

Guma Valley Water Company was established on 14th April 1961 by an Ordinance of Parliament and has the primary objective of providing safe and affordable water to the residents of Greater Freetown. The 1961 Ordinance that created the Company was repealed and replaced by the Guma Valley Water Company Act No. 6 of 2017. Read more: <https://gumavalley.sl/>

**About UNOPS**

UNOPS is a UN organization that helps partners run peace and security, humanitarian and development projects in some of the world's most challenging environments. Read more: [www.unops.org](http://www.unops.org)

**About the Government of Japan**

Japan's Country Development Cooperation Plan to Sierra Leone addresses basic infrastructure development in the power sector in the priority areas. This project will contribute to it, in particular, by increasing energy access to public services and enhancing economic growth in underserved rural communities. In addition, at the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 7) held in August 2019, Japan announced a "Deepening sustainable and resilient society" and this project is a concrete response to this statement.