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PRESS RELEASE

(Freetown: 13 February 2026). The Media Reform Coordinating Group (MRCG) joins the Independent Radio Network (IRN), the Sierra Leone Broadcasters Association (SiLBA), and other media organisations worldwide to commemorate **World Radio Day 2026** under the global theme “**Radio and Artificial Intelligence.**”

World Radio Day, proclaimed by UNESCO and observed annually on 13 February, recognises radio as a powerful medium for information, education, cultural expression, and democratic participation. Radio remains the most accessible and trusted medium in Sierra Leone, especially for rural and marginalised communities. As artificial intelligence increasingly shapes how information is produced, distributed, and consumed, radio must adapt responsibly to harness these technologies while safeguarding ethical journalism, pluralism, and human rights.

Artificial intelligence offers significant opportunities for radio development. AI-powered tools can enhance content production, improve audience engagement, support local language broadcasting, automate archiving, and strengthen fact-checking and data analysis. For community and public interest radio, AI can help overcome resource constraints and expand reach—if applied in ways that are inclusive, transparent, and context-sensitive.

Community and public-interest radio outlets, which form the backbone of Sierra Leone’s media landscape, often lack the technical capacity, financial resources, and regulatory guidance needed to adopt AI responsibly. This, therefore, poses the risk of widening inequalities between well-resourced urban stations and underfunded community radios, as well as between wealthy technology providers and local media institutions.

MRCG reaffirms that artificial intelligence should serve as a tool to strengthen—not replace—human judgment, creativity, and accountability in radio journalism. As a medium deeply rooted in community life and democratic discourse, radio must remain people-centred, trustworthy, and accessible, even as it embraces technological change.

On this World Radio Day, MRCG calls on the Government, media institutions, regulators, technology developers, civil society, and development partners to work collaboratively to: promote ethical, human-rights-based use of artificial intelligence in radio broadcasting; invest in capacity-building and digital skills for radio journalists, producers, and managers; ensure inclusive access to AI technologies, particularly for community and rural radio stations; develop clear regulatory and policy frameworks that protect media freedom, data privacy, and editorial independence in the age of AI; and support locally relevant innovation, including AI tools that strengthen public interest programming and local languages.

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