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16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM:

“BAYO BAYO BABY” IMPACT FILM EVENT CALLS TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE THROUGH EDUCATION AND WOMEN’S ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SIERRA LEONE

FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE - 11 December 2023

Just at the end of the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence, a high-impact film event, hosted by the EU Delegation to Sierra Leone in partnership with the film’s impact producers Think-Film Impact Production, which features an exclusive extract from upcoming documentary film “Bayo Bayo Baby” is putting a spotlight on the situation of women and girls in Sierra Leone. The film also highlights the urgent need to provide protection, support and education to ensure that girls and women have safety, access to opportunities and hope for a better future.

“Bayo Bayo Baby”, directed by Amaia Remírez and Raúl de la Fuente and produced by Kanaki Films and Bellota Films, follows the inspirational true story of Aminata Jalloh, a child sex trafficking survivor and women’s rights activist in Freetown, Sierra Leone, who now dreams of creating a surf school on a vision of hope and freedom to provide a safe space for other abused girls and women, and help them take back their own power.

Aminata’s story is one of courage and persistence in the face of overwhelming poverty and violence. She transforms her hardships into a source of strength, saying: “I can’t change what happened, but I can change what will. I hope one day, my daughter will only deal with men who treat her well.”

The impact event, featuring “Bayo Bayo Baby” as a work-in-progress anticipating to premiere internationally in 2024, is impact produced by the Oscar-winning company Think-Film Impact Production (“Navalny”, “Dark Waters” “The Territory”, “The Cave”).

Founder & CEO of Think-Film Impact Production, Danielle Turkov Wilson, said: “We are honoured to be partnering with the EU Delegation to Sierra Leone and sharing the first scenes from this unique creative film in Sierra Leone in the context of the 16 Days of Activism. We hope that Aminata’s courage to share her story will prompt more action to end violence against women, and help her and others like her who inspire us all to keep pushing for a world free of violence and full of hope.”

The event opened by EU Ambassador to Sierra Leone Manuel Müller, shows an exclusive preview extract from “Bayo Bayo Baby” and includes a high-level panel debate on the issue of gender-based violence in Sierra Leone, moderated by influential national broadcast journalist,

media entrepreneur and human rights activist, Ms. Phebean Swill and with distinguished speakers: Sierra Leone's Minister of Gender and Children's Affairs, Hon. Dr Isata Mahoi, Head of the UN Women Sierra Leone Office, Mrs. Setcheme Jeronime M Mongbo, UNICEF Child Protection Specialist, Mrs. Emma Vincent, Executive Director of the Rainbow Initiative, Mr. Daniel Kettor, and Head of Girl's Programmes at Don Bosco Fambu, I Fr. Sergej Gorman.

Drawing inspiration from "Bayo Bayo Baby", EU Ambassador to Sierra Leone Manuel Müller says: "Breaking the silence surrounding violence against women is an urgent imperative. Addressing gender-based violence starts with talking about it to break the taboo and break the stigma. Gender-based violence is not a private issue, not a women's issue, but an issue for the whole society. By combating gender-based violence the whole society benefits."

The panel discussion draws attention to gaps and needs in the protection and wellbeing of girls and women in Sierra Leone to end violence against women and protect vulnerable girls and women across the country. Speakers will explore and unpack how legislation and government policy can provide key structural support to help girls access community education and life skills training programmes, and help young women, such as Aminata, realise ambitions to live independently and help others.

Following this event, the "Bayo Bayo Baby" impact campaign with Think-Film Impact Production will continue into 2024, championing Aminata and helping to further her surf school ambition, giving the film a tangible legacy in the lives of many.

ENDS.

Media Contact for the EU

N'Fa Alie Koroma, N'Fa-Alie.KOROMA@eeas.europa.eu

Media Contact for Think-Film

Danielle Turkov Wilson, Founder & CEO Think-Film Impact Production
dturkov@tfip.org

Notes to Editors

"Bayo Bayo Baby" is currently in production, anticipating an international premiere and distribution in 2024.

Think-Film Impact Production is an Oscar-winning impact media company with specialist expertise at the intersection of art and social change. For more information, please visit our website at <https://tfip.org>

This work-in-progress preview screening event is supported and funded by the EU Delegation to Sierra Leone.

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign to challenge violence against women and girls. The campaign runs every year from 25th November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day.