



**SIERRA
LEONE**

EDUCATION AND
DEVELOPMENT
TRUST



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

Including our accounts for 2022



Mohamed was found with a completely broken wheelchair by our volunteer Foday in a village about 20 miles from Freetown. This new wheelchair enables Mohamed to go to school every day where he is doing very well. The donor who paid for the chair has also given money to keep the chair in good repair with new tyres.

Kroo Bay Education Project



Kroo Bay is a disadvantaged neighbourhood built by the sea in Freetown on a former rubbish tip. 11,000 people live here. It is affected by rubbish which flows down in rivers and streams from the densely populated areas above. It is prone to flooding and there is a high incidence of water borne diseases especially in children.



These top year children at Kroo Bay Primary School show off their leaving certificates.

Umu Turay, our Deputy Chair, continues to lead our work in support of Kroo Bay Primary School. We have supported 81 boys and girls in the top two classes, aiming to improve their chance of continuing to secondary school. Our support consists of a set of textbooks for every child, reading books, solar lights for evening study and extra tuition from teachers ahead of the national exams. Umu

has also arranged some in-service training for the school's teachers. We are also sponsoring 13 girls and boys from Kroo in Junior Secondary School – all top performers in the National Primary School Exams. After two more years we will evaluate this 'whole school' approach.

Our approach

We are a small charity. With about £35,000 this year we have helped parents and other carers to give their children more opportunities. Sierra Leone is one of the world's poorest countries where adults who care for the children we support live on less than £1 per day (that's about 24 new leones).

We are not a strategic charity. We cannot abolish poverty in Sierra Leone. But we have brought education, dignity and the hope of a better future to 229 children and young people this year.

We believe our focus on education contributes to the country's development in a small way by ensuring that some of the most able children grow into future professionals, role models and leaders in their communities. Already, after ten years' work, we are seeing some of the children we have supported become young men and women, ready to inspire others to access education. Six of them have joined us as volunteers, travelling to remote villages to find children who cannot walk and taking them mobility equipment.

We employ no paid staff, have no office and own no vehicles. Our eight UK trustees claim no travel expenses. Our wonderful Sierra Leone volunteers receive modest travel expenses but no fees or salaries. We keep running costs to an absolute minimum; even this report is printed for us by a donor and our postage costs are met by another donor.

Our Vision Statement:

We envisage a society in which the children and young people of Sierra Leone have overcome the barriers to their education and advancement in life.

Our Mission Statement:

We will contribute to the development of Sierra Leone by empowering children and young people to achieve their full potential through access to and support for education.

Support for tertiary education

Three of our successful secondary school graduates have completed their second year at university. Fatmata is studying Mass Communications, Alie Political Science and Zorokong Pharmacy. Hassan is studying solar power installation at technical college. Kandeh, Mariama and Alhusine began university courses this year. Alhaji began a vocational training course in Lunsar college. Fatmata Sheriff (*pictured below*) now leads this tertiary programme, supporting all our students.



Each university and college student is sponsored by one of our donors or a small group of donors. Sponsorship covers fees and textbooks and in some cases transport. The student's extended family must provide accommodation and food.

When we consulted a sample of our donors about extending our support to tertiary education they supported the proposal but urged us not to reduce support for children in secondary school. Individual sponsorship has enabled us to do this.

We have provided every tertiary level student with a donated laptop. Thanks to everyone who has donated old laptops in good condition – please keep them coming.

Please get in touch if you would like to support one of our students to continue their education after school. £500 (£42 each month) plus gift aid enables a young person to go to university. Part sponsorship or group sponsorship is also welcome.

Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust

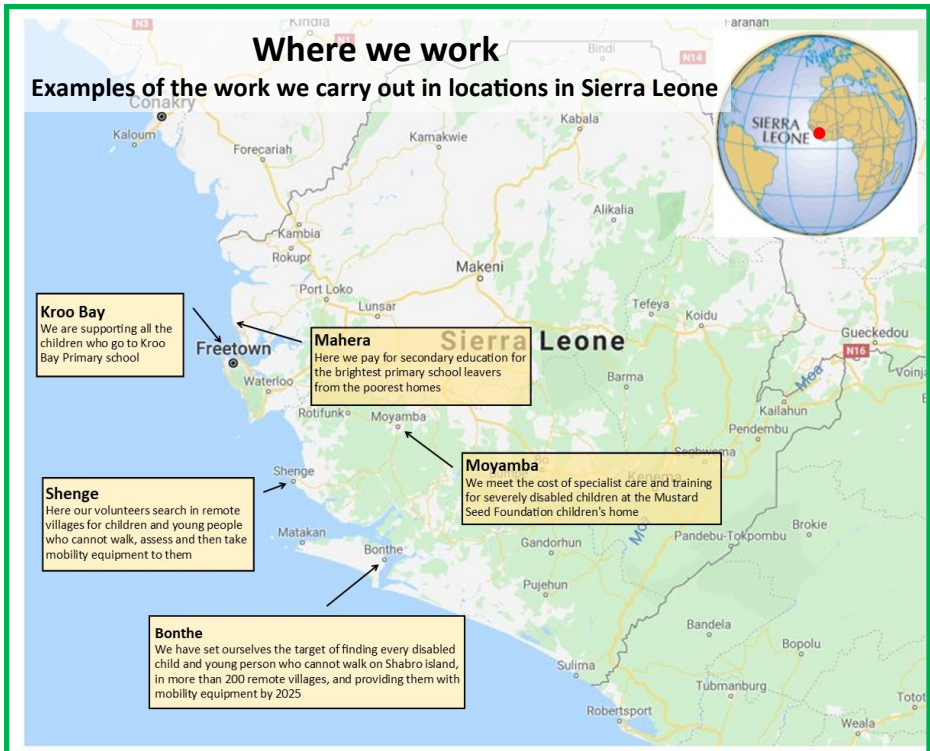
www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk

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Registered Charity No.1158253



In 2023 we achieved these things:

Sponsorship of secondary school students

We met the cost of secondary school education for 73 young people. Each one performed very well in the national examinations at the end of primary school but could not thrive in secondary education because of poverty. Although the Sierra Leone government has abolished secondary school fees, money is still needed to buy uniform, shoes, exam fees, textbooks, pens, to pay teachers for extra lessons and sometimes to travel to school.

Our students have told us that having a set of textbooks for all their subjects has been a vital factor in their success at examinations.

42 of our sponsored students are boys and 31 are girls. We are working towards a better balance but it's not easy. Girls under perform in primary school because they miss school for several days every month because of inadequate toilets. And they are sometimes made to stay at home for domestic duties.

Sometimes we have met other needs so that education is not impaired. For example, we have paid for small solar lights so that our young people can study in the evening. Most of our students come from homes without electricity. We have also paid for mosquito nets to help our young people avoid getting malaria.



Solar lights mean that our sponsored students in Mahera and Lungi can study after dark in homes which have no electricity.



Sometimes we provide our students with a small table and chair so that they can study at home. Typically, it costs £260 to sponsor a child's secondary education for one year. We also provide specialist support so that two blind and two deaf children can go to school.

Henry (pictured centre left) is blind. He has learnt braille at a specialist boarding school. This year he joined junior secondary school and is doing well.

In 2023 we achieved these things:

Mobility equipment for disabled children

We have provided mobility equipment for 45 children and young people who cannot walk or who walk with difficulty. Many of the children we help have been disabled by polio. Some have been injured in vehicle accidents. There are many young people who will live with the consequences of polio for the rest of their lives.



Our volunteer Alhusine (in blue) found three boys who cannot walk in Kamakwe village. He travelled for seven hours on a motorbike taxi to deliver three wheelchairs to them. Moses, Bockarie and Yarabah now go to school every day.

Our volunteers have continued to search for disabled children in remote villages and then take wheelchairs and crutches to them. This equipment transforms the lives of the children and their parents or carers. It enables a child to get to school without crawling through the mud or sand or being carried by their mother. School attendance improves markedly and social life can be enjoyed with friends. For about £300 a girl or boy is empowered and their life is enriched. Sometimes the cost is higher if, for example, our volunteers need to hire a boat to carry mobility equipment to a remote island village.

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In 2023 we achieved these things:

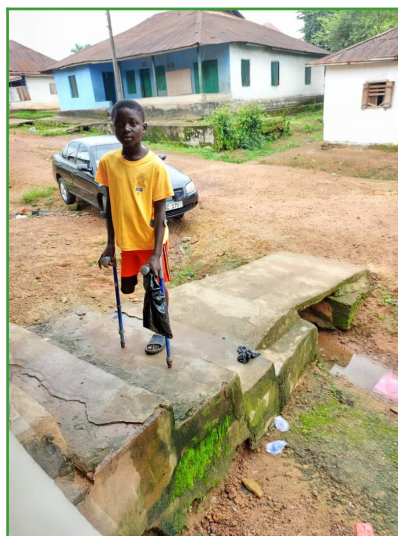
(continued from Page 7)

We continue to provide prosthetic legs to children who have experienced amputations. However, following a review by our volunteers of children who received prosthetic arms we no longer provide these. Despite early enthusiasm all the children stopped using the arms because they were heavy and unwieldy.

We are often asked to provide mobility equipment to disabled adults. We have decided that we will help if the adult is a parent or carer because it is clear that parental mobility also assists the children in the family.



Volunteer Sulaiman found Isata crawling in Tombo fishing village. Now she has a walking frame sent by donor Anita Vincent.



Steven wears his prosthetic leg to school and is a keen player in the amputees' football team

Mustard Seed Foundation Children's Home

We continued to support the Mustard Seed Foundation's children's home in Moyamba. This loving home is one of only two homes in Sierra Leone which cares for disabled children who are orphans or who have been abandoned by families. It is run by the dedicated Roselyn Freeman whose mother Deborah founded the home. Of the 29 children who live at Mustard Seed, ten are severely disabled. We paid for two extra care workers to support these children and train them in simple personal tasks such as going to the toilet. The salary cost is £2000 for 12 months.

In 2023 we achieved these things:

Medical costs



Sulaiman loves life and is doing well in school. He is a very caring volunteer who searches in villages for children who cannot walk.

Our policy is to pay for medical treatment for our students only in life threatening situations where parents and carers do not have the money.

There is no free medical care in Sierra Leone. The risk of high medical costs is one of our greatest challenges. We live with the fear that there may be occasions in the future when we cannot help our students who face big hospital bills for urgent treatment.

In 2021 and 2022 we held special appeals to save Sulaiman's leg and to prevent his death from infection. Sulaiman is doing well. His leg was saved although he still suffers some pain. He is a keen and able student.

Our Sierra Leone volunteers

Eight of our volunteers make up the Sierra Leone Committee which meets with Chernor Barrie in the chair. The Committee's responsibilities include selecting the children to receive support to go to secondary school and considering applications for financial help from our students. The Committee also recommends new projects for support to the UK trustees and supervises the work of our volunteers. The Committee brings the insights of Sierra Leoneans into the heart of the charity's decision making. It has an increasingly important role and is a key part of our future sustainability.

Our Sierra Leone volunteers



Our volunteers at a training day held in February 2023

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- Chernor Barrie (Chair)
- Umu Turay (Deputy Chair)
- Foday Conteh
- Abdul Sheriff
- Roselyn Freeman
- Yayah Jalloh
- Sulaiman 'Capay' Bah
- Alpha Joseph

Abdul Sheriff also runs DRIMS, a disability rights and advocacy organisation based in Bo. Roselyn Freeman also runs the Mustard Seed Foundation children's home based in Moyamba.

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Our Sierra Leone volunteers

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Without our eighteen brilliant volunteers we would not be able to achieve much in Sierra Leone. Our leading volunteer is Chernor Barrie, pictured left with volunteer Sulaiman. Chernor leads the team of volunteers and chairs the Sierra Leone committee. We call him our 'country representative' so that he has some status when visiting officials and local chiefs on our behalf. Chernor is studying law at FBC, the leading university in Sierra Leone. He really is a star with a huge, generous heart and permanent optimism whatever the challenge.

Umu Turay (pictured right) is the committee deputy chair and deputy country representative. She also leads our Kroo Bay Education Project.



In addition to the 8 Committee members listed on page 10, our ten other volunteers are:

- Fatmata Sheriff
- Alhusine Kalokoh
- Sulaiman Sesay
- Saidu Sesay
- Fatmata Kamara
- Alie Turay
- Zorokong Kamara
- Hassan Kamara
- Kandeh Bureh
- Alhaji Sillah

Sixteen of our volunteers are under the age of 28. Three are disabled people.

Our volunteers receive no fees. When they travel on our behalf we pay their travel and subsistence costs.

Using the UK national minimum wage we have calculated that the 'value' of our volunteers' work exceeded £75,000 this year.

Our trustees and UK volunteers

We have 9 trustees who decide overall policy and ensure that donors' money is used well:

Kevin Curley CBE (Chair)

Katherine Curley

Rachel Curley (Deputy Chair)

Chernor Barrie²

Mike Martin MBE

Jacqui Finn

Mike Clemson¹

Ben Attle

Ralph Steen

1: Mike retired in September after 10 years' service to the charity

2: Chernor is also the Sierra Leone country representative

Our work in the UK is supported by some great volunteers. Nuno Lopes looks after our website and his son Joshua manages our presence on YouTube. David Burnby edits and publishes this report. We discontinued our Twitter and Instagram pages after a review as there was no discernible benefit to the charity.

Our Donors

199 people have donated to our charity since we began. 61 people are 'monthly donors', giving us a donation every month direct to our bank, Triodos bank. In 2023 'monthly donors' contributed just over £20,000 to our funds, including gift aid refunds. This support is our foundation, enabling us to plan ahead in confidence.

We know that the best way to get support from a new donor is by word of mouth. Please ask one of your friends or family members to support our work. Show them this report. **Just £20 each month means that we can support another child.** Of course, we also welcome 'one-off' donations.

Would you also consider leaving us something in your will so that our work can continue into the future?

Mark Simms and Hannah Thoresby donated laptops from their companies. These will enable our university students to prosper. Few university students in Sierra Leone have a laptop. It will make a real difference to their performance.

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Our donors

(continued from Page 12)

One donor gave us £75 instead of sending Christmas cards. Another paid for a wheelchair instead of giving a wedding gift. Hannah and Andrew McGinlay gave us a generous donation instead of giving 'favours' at their wedding. Anita Vincent collected books and mobility equipment and sent them to Sierra Leone at her own expense. **We are doing amazing things with small amounts of money. It's only possible because you support us.**

If you like what we are doing please consider becoming a 'monthly donor'.

Simply go to **www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk** and click on the donate button on the home page. You will then see the details of our Triodos bank account to which you can transfer your donation.

If you prefer, please send a cheque payable to Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust to:

Kevin Curley CBE, 6 Cumberhills Road, Duffield, Belper
DE56 4HA



Scan to link directly to our donations page at www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk



Scan to link directly to our Facebook page

Our finances in 2022

As required under UK charity law, our accounts for the year ending 31st December 2022 have been subject to independent examination and the examiner's full report and complete financial statements can be downloaded from our website. A printed copy can be provided on request. We are grateful to Tom Geraghty & Associates for acting as our independent examiner on a pro-bono basis providing us with a significant benefit in kind. A summary of our financial activities appears on the following page.

We benefitted from record donations in 2022, thanks to some exceptional one-off donations including our first legacy of £3,000 and a generous individual donation of £6,000 to support our Tertiary Education programme. These donations contributed towards a record surplus of income over expenditure for the year providing a welcome boost to our cash reserve. The bedrock of our donations profile remains monthly standing orders which together with Gift Aid amounted to 46% of our overall income proving a solid financial foundation for our work.

Informed by Charity Commission guidelines we have reviewed our policy on reserves which we feel are at a prudent level to respond to any reasonable foreseeable contingency. It should be appreciated that in pledging to support students through their school education we are committing to a six year programme and must therefore carry sufficient reserves to be able to honour commitments in the event of income falling below the current level. Our reserve also includes the unspent portion of donations for supporting tertiary education students through their four year programme.



12 more children have been selected in Bonthe for sponsorship in secondary school. They and their parents met our volunteers Chernor and Capay (first and second right) as school opened in September to find out how we will support them and what we expect from them.

Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust

Summary of financial activities for the period ending 31st December 2022

	<u>£</u> <u>2022</u>	<u>£</u> <u>2021</u>
Income		
Donations to the general fund	27,351	21,687
Donations to the tertiary fund	7,400	1,450
Special appeal to save Sulaiman Sesay's leg	2,530	-
Gift Aid	4,132	29
Amazon	-	6
Bart Caulker Foundation - mobility equipment	-	3,205
Other operating income	245	-
Bank interest	2	2
TOTAL INCOME	<u>41,660</u>	<u>26,379</u>
<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #008000;"/>		
Payments		
Support for secondary school students	11,953	10,050
Mobility equipment for disabled students and adults	5,525	12,389
Medical costs in emergencies for students	865	-
Support for students in tertiary education	2,284	381
Kroo Bay Education Project	743	522
Support for Mustard Seed Foundation children's home	2,184	850
Medical treatment for Sulaiman Sesay	3,157	-
Sierra Leone volunteers' expenses	389	455
Foreign exchange differences	1,486	-
Expenses		
Health and safety costs	50	64
Subsistence expenses	454	-
Trustees' travel expenses (returned as donations)	1,985	417
Printing, postage & stationery (returned as donations)	605	-
Administration costs	294	-
Bank charges	632	396
Sundry expenses	(1)	(1)
Bank interest payable	1	-
TOTAL PAYMENTS AND EXPENDITURE	<u>32,606</u>	<u>25,523</u>
<u>SURPLUS</u>	<u>9,054</u>	<u>856</u>
CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND	<u>13,983</u>	<u>4,929</u>

Our full Financial Statements for the year ending December 2022 including the Independent Examiner's Report are available on our website or by request.



**Sierra Leone Education and
Development Trust**
www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk
Registered Charity No.1158253