

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2026

Including our accounts for 2025



Mark Koroma has joined our secondary education sponsorship programme and studies at home with a solar light. It's dark in Sierra Leone by 6.30pm every day and our students do not have electricity at home. We also give all our students a small phone so that they can communicate easily with the volunteer who supervises them.

Our approach

We work in Sierra Leone, one of the world's poorest countries. Our vision is of a society in which the children and young people of Sierra Leone have overcome the barriers to their education and advancement in life. Through our work, we hope to contribute to the development of Sierra Leone by empowering children and young people to achieve their full potential through access to education.

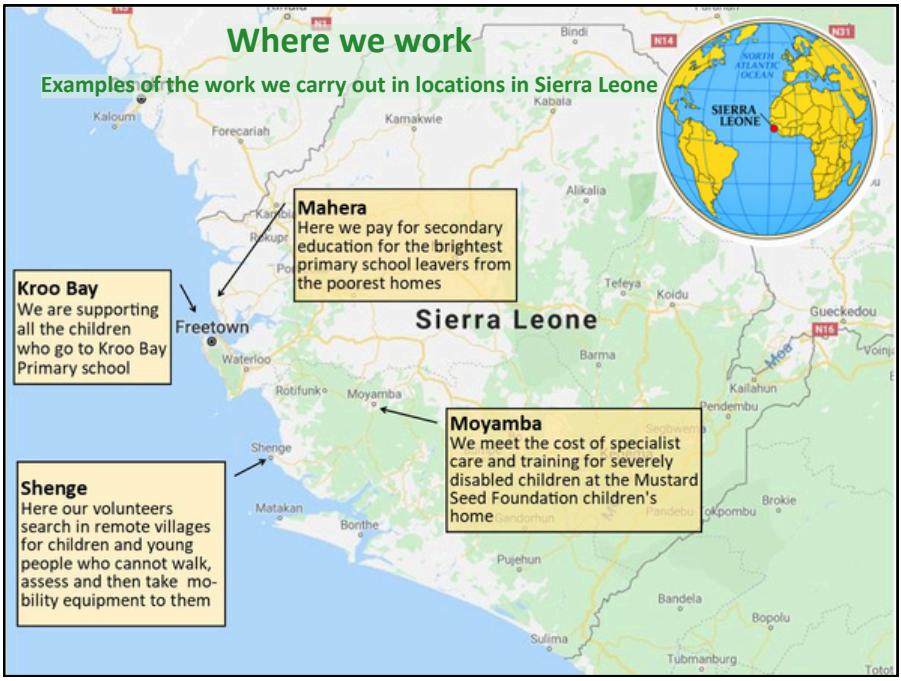
We are a small charity. We employ no paid staff, have no UK office and own no vehicles. Our UK-based trustees claim no travel expenses. Our Sierra Leone-based trustees and volunteers receive modest travel expenses but no fees or salaries. We keep running costs to an absolute minimum; even this report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

We cannot abolish poverty in Sierra Leone. But we have brought education, dignity and the hope of a better future to 264 children and young people in the last 12 months.

Our objectives in 2026

We set ourselves the following objectives (2025 objectives appear in brackets). We have exceeded the target figures in most cases as the report explains:

- We will pay all the educational costs for 90 (85) high achievers in primary schools from poor homes who would otherwise be unable to succeed in secondary school.
- We will provide mobility equipment for 40 (35) disabled children and young people so that they can get to school and around their villages without crawling or being carried.
- We will support care and training costs at Mustard Seed children's home in Moyamba so that 15 (10) severely disabled children get the support they need.
- We will pay for 6 (4) blind children and 3 (3) deaf children to get the benefit of residential education including learning to read braille and use sign language.
- We will support 80 (70) students in the final two years at Kroo primary school. This school serves the most deprived neighbourhood in Freetown.
- We will support 20 (13) of our successful secondary school 'graduates' so that they can go on to university or vocational training college.
- We will support 10 (10) disabled children to whom we have given mobility equipment so that they can go to school.
- We will provide solar lamps for evening study to all our sponsored students and to teachers and top-class children in several primary schools.
- We will introduce a range of support measures to reduce the risk of our sponsored school students becoming pregnant (new objective).
- We will empower our volunteer team by providing training and giving volunteers the opportunity to influence our priorities and shape our work.



Examples of things we have achieved in 2026



Mohamed has joined our secondary education sponsorship programme. He lives in Bonthe on Shabro Island and uses his solar lamp every evening.

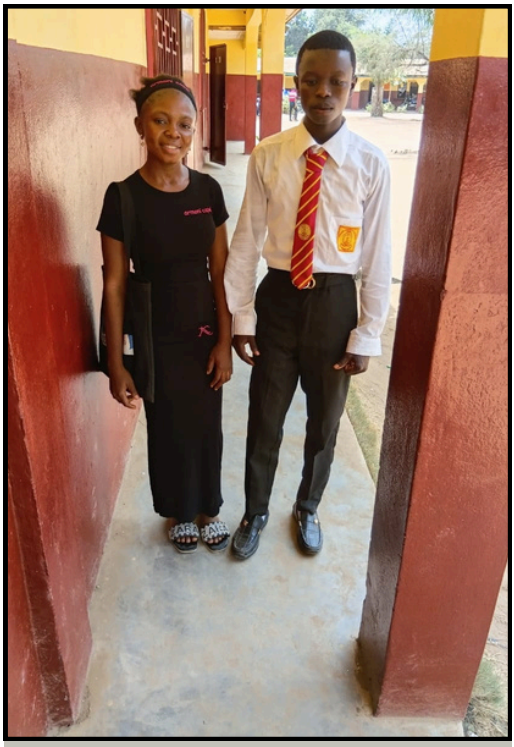
Sponsorship of secondary school students

We met the cost of secondary school education for 103 children and young people, of whom 48 are boys and 55 are girls. Each one achieved a top score 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. We give every child a solar light and the girls washable sanitary pads. Our programme has grown significantly with 30 new pupils starting Junior Secondary School this year. *(continued overleaf)*

Sponsorship of secondary school students *(continued)*

Our volunteers, with guidance from trustee Andy Higginson, help our sponsored children to get admission to some of the top performing secondary schools in Sierra Leone. This has increased the cost of the programme because some of these schools expect parents to pay for special activities and school trips and to buy 'parade' uniforms. We ensure that family poverty does not exclude any of our children from full participation in the life of the school.

Our students have told us that having a set of textbooks for all their subjects, and a solar lamp to ensure they can study in the evening, have been vital factors in their success at examinations. Most of our students come from homes without electricity. Even where electricity is connected the supply is very unreliable.



Adama has been a volunteer with us for five years. She is nearing the end of a nursing degree course. Here she is pictured with Paul who joined our secondary education sponsorship programme last year.

Sometimes we have met other needs so that education is not impaired. For example, we have paid for mosquito nets to help our young people avoid getting malaria. Sometimes we provide our students with a small table and chair so that they can study at home. Typically, **it costs £400 to sponsor a child's secondary education for one year.**

We select our sponsored children mostly from nine primary schools. We now provide all the children in class 6 (the top class) at most of these schools with a complete set of textbooks. This enables the children to prepare well for the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) and improves their chance of gaining entry to a junior secondary school. Practical support with textbooks also motivates the teachers.

Examples of things we have achieved in 2026 *(continued)*

Unplanned pregnancies

In the last three years four of our sponsored school girls have had unplanned pregnancies leading to severe disruption to their education. In January our volunteers came together and agreed an Unplanned Pregnancies Action Plan. Actions include giving every sponsored girl the 'morning after' pill to keep at home and every student who is sexually active a supply of condoms. We have received valuable advice and support from the charity Marie Stopes in Freetown. It's not easy for some of our volunteers to discuss sexual health with the girls and boys they supervise and further training is planned. Some parents and carers do not support contraception. We know that many of our sponsored students are sexually active by the time they are 14 and we are determined to do what we can to protect the girls from unwanted pregnancies.

Mobility equipment for disabled children

We have provided mobility equipment for 36 children and young people who cannot walk or who walk with difficulty - 28 wheelchairs, 3 mobility carts and 5 pairs of crutches. This is a lower number than last year because it was difficult to buy wheelchairs in Freetown at some times of the year. 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. 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 the mud or sand or being carried by their mother. School attendance improves markedly and social life can be enjoyed with friends. **For about £250 (for a wheelchair) 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.



This wheelchair means that Sonita can now go to school. Most Headteachers refuse admission to disabled children who are crawling.

(continued overleaf)



Volunteer Patrick searches in villages in the Shenge and Moyamba areas for children who cannot walk. After assessment he takes mobility equipment to them. Here he is with Nabi in Mofus, a village deep in the forest.

Mobility equipment for disabled children *(continued)*

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 of infants or school age children because it is clear that parental mobility also assists the children in the family.

We provided specialist support so that 6 visually impaired and 5 hearing impaired children can go to school at two different residential secondary schools. We have also for the first time provided financial support to 10 disabled children from poor homes to whom we have given mobility equipment so that they can go to school. One of our donors also sponsors specialist education for two autistic boys.

World Hope International and Mobility Sierra Leone

We are working in partnership with World Hope International in Freetown. They provide us with some paediatric wheelchairs and help train our volunteers in basic physiotherapy skills and assembling of wheelchairs. Some of the disabled children we support are being assessed by the World Hope International team so that they receive the right types of mobility equipment.

We also work in partnership with Mobility Sierra Leone so that some disabled children can benefit from 'mobility carts'. These are adapted tricycles which children can ride with their hands. We are especially grateful to Lamin Mansary, the chief executive of Mobility Sierra Leone for his warm cooperation.

Kroo Bay Education Project

Fatmata Kamara is leading our work in support of Kroo Bay Primary School. Kroo Bay is the most disadvantaged community in Freetown. Our support consists of a set of textbooks for every child in the two top classes, reading books, previous examination papers, solar lights for evening study and extra tuition from teachers ahead of the national exams. We also fund some in-service training for teachers. 80 children in classes 5 and 6 (the top two classes) have benefitted directly from our support.
(continued overleaf)

Kroo Bay Education Project *(continued)*



We evaluated the Kroo Bay project last year. Each year since our intervention began the number of children attending the school has increased. Importantly, more children are now exceeding the national threshold for entering secondary school.

Fatmata (pictured far right above) is the first girl we sponsored back in 2011. 13 years later she has graduated from university with a degree in social work. Now, as a qualified social worker, she is pictured here distributing donated books to the top class at Maynard primary school.

Support for tertiary education

We are continuing to support our successful secondary school graduates as they progressed to tertiary education. We support 20 students – 17 in universities and 3 in vocational training colleges. Most are studying 'vocational' courses in universities including nursing, social work, medicine, clinical psychology, pharmacy and biological sciences. In colleges they are studying tailoring, computer science and agriculture.

Our support package includes tuition fees, internet charges, photocopying, textbooks and a solar light for evening studies.

Each tertiary student is sponsored by a donor or a group of donors in the UK. **It costs £50 per month to sponsor a student.** Please tell us if you can help.

We have been able to equip all our tertiary students with a laptop and laptop bag thanks to your donations. Please remember us if you are parting with a laptop or smart phone in good condition.

Yayah Jalloh, our Country Representative, is also our Tertiary Sponsorship Programme Manager. He keeps in touch with our sponsored students and provides support to them. He has been a volunteer with the charity for 7 years.

Examples of things we have achieved in 2026 *(continued)*

Mustard Seed Foundation Children's Home

We continued to support the Mustard Seed Foundation's children's home in Moyamba. This is one of only two homes in Sierra Leone which cares for disabled children who are orphans or who have been abandoned by families. Of the 39 children who live at Mustard Seed, 15 are severely disabled. We paid for extra care workers to support these children and train them in simple personal tasks such as going to the toilet.



Steven lost his leg several years ago. He's doing well at school and is a striker in the Bo amputees' football team.

Medical costs

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. Yayah, our volunteers' leader, makes the difficult decisions when a student asks for help.

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.

Our contribution to reducing carbon emissions

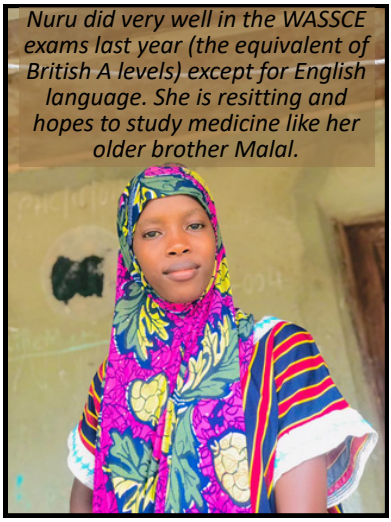
The charity offers a way to offset any part of your carbon footprint by funding solar lamps to replace kerosene lamps, candles and torches needing expensive batteries.

The solar lamps are a very important part of our work in supporting a child's education. They enable our students living without an electricity supply to study in the evenings, and the whole family benefits from safe lighting, reduced air pollution and fewer house fires. Not having to buy kerosene, candles or batteries is a welcome saving for the household.

Experience has shown that the solar lamps last at least four years provided children take care of them.

On average, studies indicate a household kerosene lamp emits one third of a tonne of carbon per year of use so if you replace it with a solar lamp it means you are preventing those carbon emissions. After three years your lamp will have saved approximately one tonne of carbon from being added to the atmosphere while three lamps will achieve that in the first year. You can find out more about how our solar lamps contribute towards reducing carbon emissions by scanning the QR code (left).

Examples of things we have achieved in 2026 *(continued)*



Nuru did very well in the WASSCE exams last year (the equivalent of British A levels) except for English language. She is resitting and hopes to study medicine like her older brother Malal.

Twinning two primary schools

We have twinned James Memorial School in Lunsar with Wells Hall School in Sudbury, Suffolk. The children have made new friends and enthusiastically exchange letters and gifts. They are extremely interested to learn of the very different lives of their friends at school and at home. Some may take this forward in their adult lives. The UK school has donated books to the school in Sierra Leone. The children in the UK donated £1 each on non-uniform day which funded solar light installations in two classrooms in Sierra Leone, the first lighting at the school.

Sanitary products for sponsored girls

Our sponsored school girls in Sierra Leone cannot afford to buy sanitary pads. Often they miss a few days' school each month. Now we have found a women's cooperative in Freetown which produces washable reusable pads (pictured right). Every sponsored girl has been given two sets of washable pads which will last two years. This a permanent addition to our 'support package'.



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

Our volunteers

Our volunteers meet together several times each year. Their responsibilities include selecting the children to receive support to go to secondary school and considering applications for financial help from our students. They also recommend new projects to the Trustee Board. The volunteers bring the insights of young Sierra Leoneans into the heart of the charity's decision making. They have an increasingly important role and are a key part of our future sustainability.

Underpinning all the charity's work is our profound belief that those closest to service delivery, volunteers, service users and local partner organisations, must be enabled to have a strong influence on the work of the charity. Their understanding of social conditions and local culture must be at the forefront of our work.

(A list of our volunteers and advisors appears overleaf)



Volunteer Alpha discussing our 'agreement' with sponsored schoolgirl Kadiatu in Makeni. All our volunteers are given motorbike helmets and must wear them whenever they travel.



Umu supervises several of our sponsored girls including Mariama from Kroo Bay. Umu has been a volunteer for eight years She is a civil engineer.

Without our truly committed volunteers we would not be able to achieve our work in Sierra Leone. Our volunteers receive no fees. When they travel on our behalf we pay their travel and subsistence costs. All our volunteers use motorbike taxis and ferries so we give them a motorbike helmet, rainwear and a life jacket.

Using the UK national minimum wage we have calculated that the 'value' of our volunteers' work exceeded £102,000 this year.

Our volunteers *(continued)*

The Volunteers are:

- Yayah Jalloh (Country Representative, Trustee and Tertiary Sponsorship Programme Manager)
- Mohamed Zorokong Kamara (Deputy Country Representative, Trustee and Finance Officer)
- Mohamed Mansaray (Mobility Equipment Manager)
- Fatmata Kamara (Kroo Bay Education Project Manager)
- Foday Conteh (Trustee and Disability Adviser)
- Chernor Barrie (Trustee and Adviser)
- Chernor Sulaiman 'Capay' (Capay) (Medical Adviser)
- Alie Turay (Visually Impaired Programme Manager)
- Patrick Tower (Hearing Impaired Programme Manager)
- Mariama Kamara (Deputy Tertiary Sponsorship Programme Manager)
- Umu Turay
- Sulaiman Sesay
- Alpha Joseph
- Adama Tarawalie
- Walaimatu Conteh
- Musa Foday Babah Sheriff
- Alpha Sesay
- Alhaji Marrah

The Advisors to the Charity are:

- Abdul Sheriff, a disability rights campaigner and Chief Executive of Disability Inclusion Sierra Leone
- Roselyn Freeman, Chief Executive of Mustard Seed Foundation Children's Home

Our trustees and UK volunteers

We have 10 trustees, based in Sierra Leone and the UK, who decide overall policy and ensure that donors' money is used well. They are:

- Kevin Curley CBE (Chair)
- Jacqui Finn (Deputy Chair)
- Rachel Curley (Finance Manager)
- Chernor Barrie (Sierra Leone based trustee currently studying in the UK)
- Foday Conteh (Sierra Leone based trustee)
- Andy Higginson
- Paul Brown
- Nuno Lopes (Website Manager)
- Yayah Jalloh (Sierra Leone based trustee)
- Mohamed Zorokong (Sierra Leone based trustee)
- John Puzey

UK based trustees and volunteers receive no expenses.

(continued overleaf)

Our trustees and UK volunteers *(continued)*

Our work in the UK is supported by some great volunteers. Nuno Lopes looks after our website. David Burnby edits and publishes this report and Ralph Steen prints it. Andy Higginson and Laurel Spooner have visited Sierra Leone at their own expense and facilitated training and social events for the volunteers. Both Andy and Laurel have also raised significant sums of money for us and recruited many secondary education sponsors. Laurel takes a special interest in providing solar lamps to students. Andy now oversees the secondary education sponsorship programme, relating directly to the volunteers who select and supervise the students.

Our donors and fundraisers

In 2026, our 91 'monthly donors' contributed approximately £38,000 to our funds, including gift aid refunds. This support is our foundation, enabling us to plan ahead in confidence.

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 or scan the QR code on this page with your device. You will then see the details of our Triodos bank account and you can set up a standing order.

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

Woodleigh Impact donated £8,000 so that we could recruit 20 new children to join the secondary education sponsorship programme.

We held a successful special appeal this year for solar lamps. Lamps cost £30 each and can last four years.

Jude Owen and her fellow teachers at West Town Academy Primary School in Peterborough collected 2,100 donated books worth £14,000 from their children's families. Jane Geraghty sorted them and shipped them to Sierra Leone at her own expense. They made their way to children in several primary schools which feed students to our secondary education sponsorship programme.

We are doing amazing things with small amounts of money. It's only possible because you support us.

Other ways to help

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 £25 each month means that we can support another child at secondary school.** Of course, we also welcome 'one-off ' donations and smaller monthly donations.

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

We always need laptops, laptop bags and smart phones in decent condition to support our volunteers, tertiary students and visually impaired students. Laptops need to be in good working order with two hours' battery life as most of our students don't have easy access to electricity. They go to 'charging centres' where they pay to charge their phones and laptops.

Do you like to walk, run or do other things for sponsorship? Please consider nominating SLEDT as your chosen charity.

easyfundraising

SLEDT is registered with easyfundraising, which means you can raise donations for us every time you shop online. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself. **To date easyfundraising has brought us £580.** This is the easiest fundraising imaginable!

These donations mount up. £580 sponsors another child at school or pays for two wheelchairs. So we would really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us. It's completely free. You can find our easyfundraising page by scanning the QR code on the left.



Volunteer Mohamed supervises several of our sponsored school children. Here he is with Gabriel who has secured a place in Form 1 at Prince of Wales school in Freetown, one of the country's best state schools.

Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust

Income and Expenditure in 2025 (summary version)

(2024 totals appear in brackets)

Income

Donations to the general fund	£52,376
Donations to the special appeal for washable sanitary pads	£2,000
Woodleigh Impact grant for wheelchairs	£4,000
Donations to the tertiary fund to support students	£7,950
Gift Aid refund from HMRC	£11,617
Travel expenses donated by trustees	£7,846
Refund from Triodos Bank	£30
Bank interest	£84
TOTAL	**£85,903 (£70,399)**

Expenses

Sponsored secondary school students	£21,904
Mobility equipment for children and young people who cannot walk	£9,233
Sponsored students in universities and colleges	£12,154
Kroo Bay primary education project	£3,130
Mustard Seed Foundation home for disabled children	£3,943
Provision of solar lights to students	£1,795
Medical expenses in emergency cases	£1,551
Volunteers training and travel costs in Sierra Leone	£3,910
Support for blind and deaf students	£2,788
Funding for small education projects recommended by volunteers	£5,250
Trustees travel expenses (donated back to the charity)	£2,600
Printing, postage and stationery (donated back to the charity)	£1,382
Administration costs	£1,428
Bank charges in UK and Sierra Leone	£1,054
Sundry Expenses	£118
TOTAL	**£72,240 (£68,681)**

SURPLUS	**£13,663 (£1,538)**
Funds available at 1st January 2026	**£26,537 (£12,874)**

Notes

1. *Trustees have designated £15,000 of the funds available to meet costs of the tertiary sponsorship programme in future years.*
2. *Administration costs including bank charges totalled £2,600 or just 3.5% of our total expenses.*

We are grateful to Tom Geraghty and Associates for carrying out an independent examination of our accounts on a pro bono basis. Their report and financial statements can be downloaded from our website www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk

Trustees have reviewed our reserves policy. We have decided that we should aim to have two months' running costs in reserve in case we suffer a drop in income. We have commitments to sponsored students which last 6 years in the case of school students and 4 years in the case of university students. We estimate that our reserves at the end of 2026 should be approximately £10,000 in addition to the £15,000 designated for sponsorship of university and college students in future years.

Making a difference. Changing lives.



Mariama comes from Mahera, a small village about 20 miles from Freetown. Kandeh, one of our volunteers spotted her potential ten years ago. She had done very well in primary school but did not go on to secondary school because of her family circumstances. She lived with her mother and several siblings and life was tough. Kandeh found her sitting around in the village and talked to her about her hopes for the future. Our funding - your donations - enabled Mariama to go back to school where she flourished. Excellent performance in her WASSCE exams (the equivalent of British A levels) led to a place at Makeni University where she decided to study clinical psychology. One of our Scottish donors paid her university fees for four years and she has now qualified.

The Sierra Leonean government is investing in clinical psychology services and Mariama has a very good chance of getting a job. Your donations of £5,200 over ten years have enabled Mariama to leave behind a life of poverty and frustration in the village, achieve her educational potential and become a qualified psychologist. Already she is a role model for other girls and young women and an inspiration to her family and her community. What is more, she is a volunteer with our organisation and leads on our work to help girls avoid unplanned pregnancies. Thank you for supporting Mariama.



Children at the community primary school in Kissy Town celebrate receiving lots of books donated by children at West Town Academy primary school in Peterborough.

SIERRA LEONE
EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT TRUST

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