

Newsletter - June 2008

Quality & Quantity - What's new?

Enrichment programmes: Philosophy / Inquirers Club. Educaipedia. Life Line Building.

Community Service Credits. Newspaper Competitions. Life Skills Programme.

Current Affairs Programme. Drama & Debating.

An exciting new development is the appointment of an enrichment officer who is responsible for managing a number of extra-curricular programmes designed to broaden and deepen our students' educational experience. We are encouraging them to build portfolios that describe different aspects of themselves, their work, their thinking and their lives, so that they have a tangible product to leave school with as well as their qualifications. These endeavours have been met with enthusiasm by the students. We face an ever-increasing demand for schooling from eager young people, and strive to meet this demand while improving the service that we deliver.

Life Line Building - Delphine depicts the good and the hard things in her life using flowers and stones.



Thank you!

Our annual income continues to grow year on year. This is due to tireless fund-raising by committed staff and students at a number of schools and colleges, church members, and individual donors from around the world.

We're delighted to report that our gift aid claims are now quite substantial. Thank you if you have completed a gift aid form. If you have not, but pay tax in the UK and donate money to EducAid, then we ask you to complete the form available at www.educaid.org.uk and return it to the address on this newsletter.

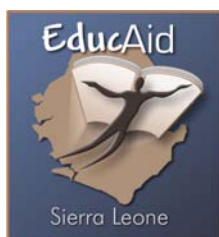
Love & do as You will!

Success after a five year battle.

It has taken five years of applying, 'lost' applications, and numerous petitions, but the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports has finally registered the schools in Rolal & Magbeni. The schools can now operate as exam centres.

Please pray for:

- Justice in Sierra Leone as the foundation for real and lasting peace and development
- An end to corruption which blocks development
- Women and girls with the courage to overcome the prejudices and stereotypes surrounding them and strive for more.



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Peaceful elections in 2007 but a long way to go . . .

Unlike Kenya and many other African countries, Sierra Leone has just held peaceful elections and, perhaps even more surprisingly, there has been a successful transfer of power. While this is fantastic, the socio-economic fruits of the new political climate remain elusive: Sierra Leone has dropped back to 177 out of 177 on the UN's Human Development Index, thus defining it as the poorest and least developed country in the world. Children and young people are almost always the most vulnerable within such environments and Sierra Leone is no exception. The face of poverty is at its most terrible in the inadequate provision of medical care. There is no government provision and the few NGO projects that do exist only touch the surface of the need. People die daily for every imaginable reason and for no reason at all. Poor medical provision is coupled with very poor educational standards and a lack of basic knowledge about health. EducAid's mandate does not currently include health care provision but we cannot pretend indifference to this terrible situation. Thanks to the academic successes of a number of our senior students and the generosity of friends of EducAid, four ex-EducAidians are now studying medicine.

What next?

Universal Primary Education (UPE) is the 2nd Millennium Development Goal and is extremely important. Sierra Leone has risen to the challenge by phasing in free primary schooling over the past few years. However, the exclusive focus on UPE will produce a generation of young people leaving primary school with an uncertain future. What is to become of the teenagers? There are many short-term programmes to train youngster—such as in tailoring, gara tie-dyeing, carpentry and other relevant crafts. While these programmes equip individuals with skills, they do not enable young people to have a voice or a real input into the country's decision making. EducAid, to our knowledge, provides the only free secondary education in the whole of Sierra Leone. This is why we think it is so important to maintain our status as one of the best schools in the country. After only three years of sitting the senior secondary exams, we now have students at colleges and university studying accounting, engineering, medicine and teacher training, among others. We also have a number of ex-students who serve as 'junior staff' in our schools, where they work with impressive commitment and diligence. This gives them an opportunity to put back into the system something of what they have received and, at the same time, gain valuable experience to enhance their CVs.

Women's Project Rolal. In 2007 we launched a remarkably successful women's project in Freetown and saw the number of girls in this group increase from 20 to over 100. Two of last year's leavers have started volunteering in Rolal and have established a women's project there. Rolal, in the Port Loko District, registers below average in statistics for poverty, especially maternal and infant mortality rates. Part of the reason for this is that the northern area of Sierra Leone has prioritised trade over education, and women's education in particular is regarded as a futile exercise. Within this context, the presence of an additional 40 girls who are willing to take up their books is very exciting.

G Mike and Issa - Caesar & Brutus in the first ever Krio production of Julius Caesar

