



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024

Including our accounts for 2023



*Baidu and Jenifer are two of SLEDT's sponsored secondary school students. They are pictured here in the coastal village of Shenge with textbooks and solar lights provided by the charity.*

## Our approach

We work in Sierra Leone, one of the world's poorest countries. Our vision is 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 and support for education.

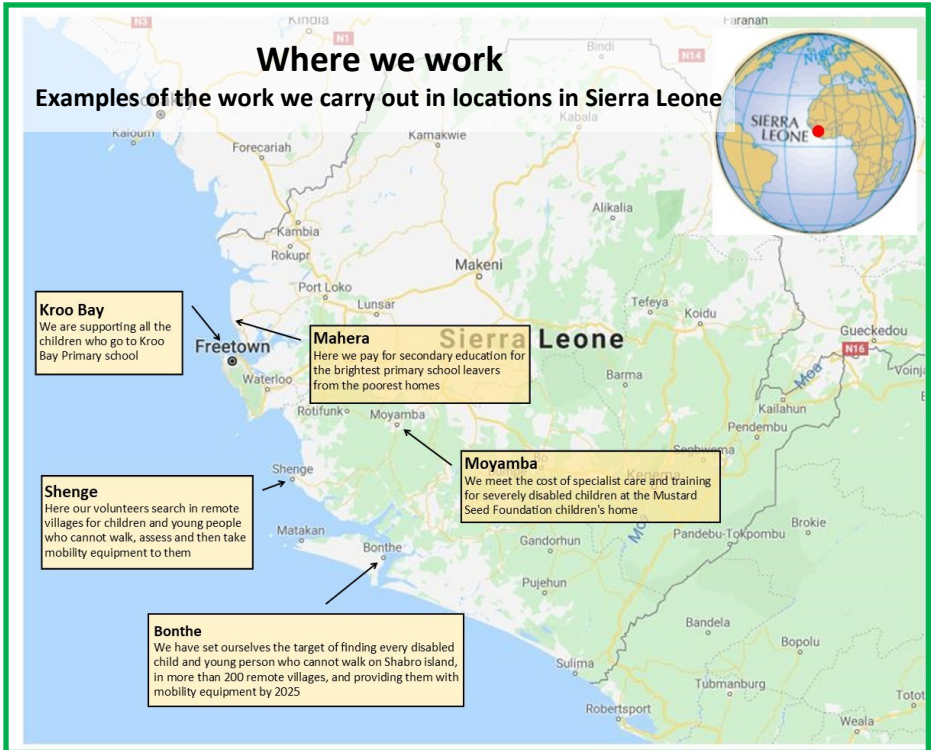
We are a small charity. We employ no paid staff, have no office and own no vehicles. Our UK-based trustees claim no travel expenses. Our Sierra Leone-based trustees and volunteers receive modest travel expenses but no fees or salaries. We keep running costs to an absolute minimum; even this report is 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 over 200 children and young people in the last 12 months.

## Our Objectives in 2024

We set ourselves the following objectives which we have met or will exceed:

- To pay all the educational costs for 75 high achievers in primary schools from poor homes who would otherwise be unable to succeed in secondary school.
- To provide mobility equipment for 35 disabled children and young people so that they can get to school and around their villages without crawling or being carried. We treat prosthetic legs as mobility equipment.
- To support care and training costs at Mustard Seed children's home in Moyamba so that 10 severely disabled children get the support they need.
- To pay for 2 blind children and 2 deaf children to get the benefit of residential education including, for the blind children, learning to read braille.
- To support 70 students in the final two years at Kroo primary school. This school serves the most deprived neighbourhood in Freetown.
- To support 9 of our successful secondary school 'graduates' so that they can go on to university or vocational training college.



Left: Bokarie with Yarahab with our Sierra Leonean volunteer Alusine (centre)  
Right: Balia in Pewulay with our volunteer Kandeh (right) and homemade cart

## In 2024 we achieved these things:



*Chernor Barrie, Trustee and Sierra Leone country representative, in Shenge with new secondary school student Baidu Jalloh*

### Sponsorship of secondary school students

We met the cost of secondary school education for 87 children and young people, of whom 37 are boys and 50 are girls. 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, and a solar light to ensure they can study in the evening, have been vital factors in their success at examinations. *(continue on Page 5)*

## Sponsorship of secondary school students *(continued from Page 4)*



*Isata in Lucking Town joined the secondary education sponsorship programme in September 2024*

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. 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 provide specialist support so that 3 blind and 3 deaf children can go to school at two different residential secondary schools.

## Mobility equipment for disabled children

We have provided mobility equipment for 61 children and young people who cannot walk or who walk with difficulty, including wheelchairs, mobility carts and pairs of crutches. 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 mud or sand or being carried by their mother. School attendance improves markedly and social life can be enjoyed with friends. For about £300 (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. *(continue on Page 6)*



*Idrissa Mansaray, aged 13 is now mobile*

## Mobility equipment for disabled children (*continued from Page 5*)



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.

We held a special appeal this year for funds to enable us to send donated mobility equipment by ship to Sierra Leone. Remarkably, 22 generous supporters donated £3,900 in just three days.

*(Pictured left)*

***Mohammed a young blacksmith in Pujehun now has a wheelchair***

## World Hope International

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. Many 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.

## Kroo Bay Education Project

Umu Turay, our Sierra Leone Deputy Chair, continues to lead our work in support of Kroo Bay Primary 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.



***Kroo Bay's junior football team say No to Drugs***

*(continue on Page 7)*

## **Kroo Bay Education Project (*continued from Page 6*)**

One of the most impactful initiatives we introduced this year has been the in-service training programme for teachers. Implemented at the beginning of the year, this training has significantly contributed to the improved results. The training has enhanced the teaching methods, strengthened student-teacher interactions, and helped the educators better address the individual needs of students.

This year has been one of significant accomplishments for the Kroo Bay project, with the students excelling in their academic performance, particularly in the National Primary School Examination (NPSE). Our efforts to support and monitor these students, combined with the introduction of in-service training, have yielded impressive results. The academic performance of the NPSE class this year has been outstanding. Out of the 50 candidates who took the NPSE, 32 students passed the exam and are now preparing to advance to secondary school. About 8 students scored above 280, with the highest score reaching 312, the highest ever recorded by the Kroo Bay project.

Through our ongoing monitoring efforts, we have been able to stay closely connected with the students and address their needs. However, one of our top-performing students, Lamin Sesay, has encountered significant challenges outside of school. After his house was demolished, Lamin and his family were relocated, and while he is currently living with a friend, his temporary housing has roof leakages. We are working to provide Lamin with zinc sheets to resolve this issue so that he can focus fully on his studies.

This year, we will evaluate this “whole school” approach and whether this should be rolled out to more locations.

## **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 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.

## Support for tertiary education

We are continuing to support our successful secondary school graduates as they have progressed to tertiary education.

Three of our successful secondary school graduates have completed their second year at university. Fatmata is studying social work, Alie political science and Zorokong pharmacy. Hassan is waiting for an acceptance offer to study Higher National Diploma in solar power installation at a technical college in Freetown.

Kandeh has proceeded to his penultimate year studying biochemistry; Mariama has also been promoted to the third year in her clinical psychology course at the University of Makeni and Alusine has completed his diploma course in peace studies and has opted to begin his bachelor's degree course.

Alhaji began a vocational training course in electrical engineering at Lunsar College. Bangalie is studying computer science at a college in Freetown.

Wulaimatu and Adama are now successfully in their second year of their respective nursing courses. Malal, a medical student, did spectacularly well to be promoted to pre-med two amid a failure rate that is at an all-time high. He is a star.

Yayah Jalloh is our Tertiary Sponsorship Programme Manager. He keeps in touch with our sponsored students and provides support to them.

## 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 an organisation in Freetown which produces washable reusable pads.

A group of girls on the island of Shabro (pictured left) are testing them for us for the next three months. If they like them this will become another part of our sponsorship package.

## 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. 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.

## SLEDT's carbon offset scheme

The charity offers a way to offset its carbon footprint by funding solar lamps to replace kerosene lamps.



*Yealie now has a solar light and she can study at home after dark*

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 dark evenings, and the whole family benefits from safe lighting, reduced air pollution affecting the lungs, and fewer house fires. Not having to buy kerosene is a welcome saving for the household.

On average, studies indicate a household kerosene lamp emits one third of a tonne of carbon per year of use so if it is replaced with a solar lamp, it means those carbon

emissions are prevented. After three years the 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 this scheme, and how carbon emissions can be calculated at <https://www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk/recent-news/carbon-offset>.

## The Sierra Leone Committee



*The Sierra Leone Committee at its meeting in Freetown in July 2024*

The Sierra Leone Committee is chaired by trustee and country representative Chernor Barrie. 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 to the Trustee Board 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.

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.

The committee members are:

- Chernor Barrie (Chair and Country Representative)
- Umu Turay (Deputy Chair and Kroo Education Project Manager)
- Foday Conteh (Trustee and Disability Adviser)
- Yayah Jalloh (Tertiary Sponsorship Programme Manager)
- Sulaiman 'Capay' Bah (Medical Adviser)
- Alie Turay (Visually Impaired Programme Manager)
- Alusine Kalokoh (Mobility Equipment Programme Manager)

The advisers to the committee are:

Abdul Sheriff, a disability rights campaigner and Chief Executive of DRIMS  
Roselyn Freeman, Chief Executive of Mustard Seed Foundation Children's Home

## Our Sierra Leone Volunteers



*Sierra Leone volunteers at a training day at Kent beach in January 2024*

In addition to Committee members our other volunteers are:

- Fatmata Sheriff
- Sulaiman Sesay
- Fatmata Kamara
- Zorokong Kamara
- Hassan Kamara
- Kandeh Bureh
- Alhaji Sillah
- Patrick Tawer \*
- Alpha Joseph

*\* Hearing Impaired Programme Manager*

Without our brilliant committee and 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.

Using the UK national minimum wage we have calculated that the 'value' of our volunteers' work exceeded £78,000 this year.



*Chernor on a boat taking solar lights and textbooks to students living in remote coastal villages*

## Our trustees and UK volunteers

We have 8 trustees, based in Sierra Leone and the UK, who decide overall policy and ensure that donors' money is used well:

- Kevin Curley CBE (Chair)
- Rachel Curley (Deputy Chair)
- Chernor Barrie (Sierra Leone country representative)
- Foday Conteh (Sierra Leone based trustee)
- Mike Martin MBE
- Katherine Curley
- Jacqui Finn
- Ben Attle

UK based trustees and volunteers receive no expenses.

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. Andy Higginson and Laurel Spooner have visited Sierra Leone and facilitated training and social events for the committee and volunteers. Both Andy and Laurel have also raised significant sums of money for us this year and recruited many secondary education sponsors

## Our donors

In 2024, our 69 'monthly donors' contributed approximately £30,000 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](http://www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk) and click on the donate button on the home page or use your smartphone camera to scan the QR code below. 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



## 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.

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

We always need old laptops and smart phones in decent condition to support our volunteers, tertiary students and blind students.

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



SLEDT is registered with Easyfundraising, which means you can raise FREE 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!

These donations really mount up and make a BIG difference to us, so we'd really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us. It's completely FREE and only takes a moment.

You can find our Easyfundraising page at <https://rb.gy/6ctsxr> or by using your smartphone camera to scan the QR code above.



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

*(Pictured left) Isatu from Songo is now able to go to school thanks to the provision of this wheelchair.*

## Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust

### Summary of financial activities for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

	<u>£</u> <u>2023</u>	<u>£</u> <u>2022</u>
<b>Income</b>		
Donations to the general fund	37,834	27,351
Donations to the tertiary fund	1,450	7,400
Special appeal to save Sulaiman Sesay's leg	-	2,530
Gift Aid	5,950	4,132
Amazon	19	-
Easyfundraising	66	-
Just Giving	2,169	-
Other operating income	-	245
Bank Interest	59	2
Refund	80	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b><u>47,627</u></b>	<b><u>41,660</u></b>
<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #008000;"/>		
<b>Payments</b>		
Support for secondary school students	20,652	11,953
Mobility equipment for disabled students and adults	9,376	5,525
Medical costs in emergencies for students	940	865
Support for students in tertiary education	3,645	2,284
Kroo Bay Education Project	2,899	743
Support for Mustard Seed Foundation children's home	470	2,184
Medical treatment for Sulaiman Sesay	-	3,157
Bonthe & Mania Project	5,153	-
Sierra Leone volunteers' expenses	2,483	389
Foreign exchange differences	6	1,486
<b>Expenses</b>		
Health and safety costs	-	50
Subsistence expenses	-	454
Trustees' travel expenses (returned as donations)	2,458	1,985
Printing, postage & stationery (returned as donations)	942	605
Administration costs	-	294
Phones for SL	388	-
Bank charges	959	632
Sundry expenses	-	(1)
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS AND EXPENDITURE</b>	<b><u>50,371</u></b>	<b><u>25,523</u></b>
<b><u>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</u></b>	<b><u>(2,744)</u></b>	<b><u>9,054</u></b>

## Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2023

	<u>£</u> <u>2023</u>	<u>£</u> <u>2022</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>11,239</u>	<u>13,983</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>11,239</u>	<u>13,983</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<u>11,239</u>	<u>13,983</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<u><b>11,239</b></u>	<u><b>13,983</b></u>
<b>FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</b>		
Balance at 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2023	13,983	4,929
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period/year	<u>(2,744)</u>	<u>9,054</u>
<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>	<u><b>11,239</b></u>	<u><b>13,983</b></u>

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## Our Finances in 2023

As required under UK charity law, our accounts for the year ending 31st December 2023 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.

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.



**Sierra Leone Education and  
Development Trust**

[www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk](http://www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk)  
Registered Charity No.1158253



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