



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2025

Including our accounts for 2024



*Mariama and Mohamed were found by our volunteers crawling in their villages and not going to school. Now they have new wheelchairs and have been admitted to primary schools.*

## 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 and support for 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 279 children and young people in the last 12 months.

## Our Objectives in 2025

We set ourselves the following objectives (2024 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 85 (75) high achievers in primary schools from poor homes who would otherwise be unable to succeed in secondary school.
- We will provide mobility equipment for 35 (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.
- We will support care and training costs at Mustard Seed children's home in Moyamba so that 10 (10) severely disabled children get the support they need.
- We will pay for 4 (2) blind children and 3 (2) deaf children to get the benefit of residential education including, for the blind children, learning to read braille.
- We will support 70 (70) students in the final two years at Kroo primary school. This school serves the most deprived neighbourhood in Freetown.
- We will support 13 (9) of our successful secondary school 'graduates' so that they can go on to university or vocational training college.
- We will provide solar lamps for evening study to all our sponsored students and to teachers and top-class children in several primary schools (new objective).
- We will develop and empower our volunteer team by providing training and giving volunteers the opportunity to influence our priorities and shape our work through the Sierra Leone committee (new objective).
- We will recruit and train 2 new female volunteers in order to improve the gender balance in our volunteer team (new objective).

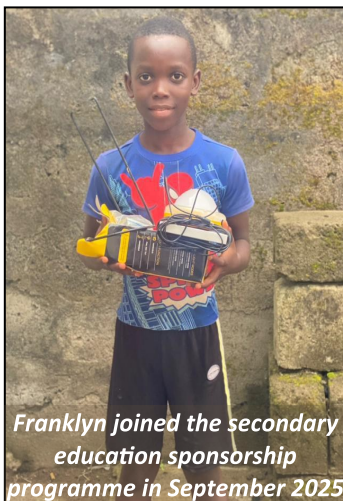
## Where we work

### Examples of the work we carry out in locations in Sierra Leone



## Over the following pages, we have highlighted some of the things we have achieved in 2025

### Sponsorship of secondary school students



*Franklyn joined the secondary education sponsorship programme in September 2025*

We met the cost of secondary school education for 83 children and young people, of whom 42 are boys and 41 are girls. Each one got 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.

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

*continued overleaf*

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## Sponsorship of secondary school students (continued)

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.

We held a special appeal this year for washable sanitary pads for our sponsored girls. 21 kind people donated £1,691. As a result every girl has been given two sets of washable sanitary pads. These should last for two years.

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. Most of our students come from homes without electricity. Even where electricity is connected the supply is very unreliable.

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 five primary schools. We now provide all the children in class 6 (the top class) at these schools with a complete set of textbooks. This enables all 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.



*Fatmata is a keen student in junior secondary school and uses her solar lamp every evening*

## Mobility equipment for disabled children

We have provided mobility equipment for 57 children and young people who cannot walk or who walk with difficulty - 39 wheelchairs, 10 mobility carts and 8 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 £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.



***Volunteer Alusine leads our mobility equipment programme. Here he delivers crutches to Hassan whose leg was badly damaged during a football match***

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 4 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.

## 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. 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.

We also work in partnership with Mobility Sierra Leone so that 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

Umu Turay, our Sierra Leone Deputy Chair, continued to lead 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, 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. 90 children in classes 5 and 6 (the top two classes) have benefitted directly from our support.



Umu is a civil engineer working for an international company in Freetown. Her workload has forced her to stand down and Zorokong (*pictured left*) is now leading our Kroo Bay project. He was sponsored for his 6 years of school education and is now studying pharmacy at university with our support. He has been a volunteer for 3 years.

We evaluated the Kroo Bay project this 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.

## Support for tertiary education

We are continuing to support our successful secondary school graduates as they progressed to tertiary education. We support 18 students – 14 in universities and 4 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 solar power installation, electrical installation, computer science and agriculture.

Alie Turay (*pictured right*) is our very first university graduate. He has a 2.1 in Politics and is determined to become a politician. We're confident he will succeed. Alie is also a volunteer who looks after our sponsored visually impaired children in Paul School in Bo, the second city.



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 is 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 6 years.

## 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, 12 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 £2200 for 12 months.

## 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. Chernor, our volunteers' leader, makes the difficult decisions when a student asks for help. In one case we paid for treatment so that an amputation was avoided. In another case we paid for a hernia operation.

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.



*When we asked the students we supported through 6 years of school what had helped them most they said textbooks and solar lamps*

### **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 carbon offset scheme

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 (*see picture on Page 8*).

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 affecting the lungs, 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.

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 this scheme, and how to calculate your carbon emissions at <https://www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk/recent-news/carbon-offset>



## 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 and every sponsored girl has now been given two sets which will last two years. This a permanent addition to our sponsorship package. Isata (*pictured left*) is getting a package of support for her secondary education including washable sanitary pads.

## The Sierra Leone Committee



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.

*A list of the committee members appears overleaf*

## The Sierra Leone Committee (continued)

### The committee members are:

- Cherner Barrie (Chair and Country Representative)
- Umu Turay (Deputy Chair and Kroo Bay Education Project Manager – stood down September 2025 but remains a volunteer)
- Foday Conteh (Trustee and Disability Adviser)
- Yayah Jalloh (Deputy Country Representative and Tertiary Sponsorship Programme Manager)
- Sulaiman ‘Capay’ Bah (Medical Adviser)
- Alie Turay (Visually Impaired Programme Manager)
- Alusine Kalokoh (Mobility Equipment Programme Manager)
- Mohamed Zorokong (Kroo Bay Education Project Manager from September 2025)

### 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

- Sulaiman Sesay
- Fatmata Kamara (Kroo Bay Education Project Deputy Manager)
- Alhaji Sillah
- Patrick Tower (Hearing Impaired Programme Manager)
- Alpha Joseph
- Adama Tarawalie
- Wulamatu Conteh
- Musa Foday Babah Sheriff
- Alpha Sesay

In addition to Committee members, our other volunteers are:

Without our truly committed 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. All our volunteers use motorbike taxis and ferries so we give them a motorbike helmet and a life jacket.

Using the UK national minimum wage we have calculated that the ‘value’ of our volunteers’ work exceeded £84,000 this year.

## Our Trustees and UK Volunteers



***Volunteers meet for a training day in Freetown with trustee Andy Higginson and donor Laura Spooner. Topics included supervising school students, dealing with family crises and safeguarding.***

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 and finance manager)
- Chernor Barrie (Sierra Leone country representative)
- Foday Conteh (Sierra Leone based trustee)
- Mike Martin MBE
- Jacqui Finn
- Ben Attle
- Andy Higginson joined us this year
- Katherine Curley stood down this year after 6 years' service to the charity.

*Continued overleaf*

## Our trustees and UK volunteers (continued)



***Rachel is our deputy chair and looks after our finances, producing monthly reports. She's also a keen runner. In 2024 she ran 3 marathons in 3 days on the Cornish coast with her sister Bridget and raised £2,500 for us.***

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. 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 committee and volunteers. Both Andy and Laurel have also raised significant sums of money for us this year 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 2025, our 82 monthly donors contributed approximately £34,000 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 scan the QR code on the right. 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.



Sir Bernard Jenkin MP hosted a fundraising event for us in the Palace of Westminster. Our trustee Andy Higginson did the organising and raised £6,000 for the charity.

Terence and Diana Finley have donated to us for many years. This year they donated £5,000 in support of the charity's work.

Woodleigh Impact donated £4,000 so that we could purchase mobility equipment for disabled children and young people.

## 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 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.



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 £468.



These donations mount up. £468 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 above.



*Children at James Memorial primary school in Lunsar show the letters and gifts they received from children at Wells Hall primary school in England. The two schools are twinned. Children in both countries are learning lots about their different cultures - and making friends.*

## Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust

### Income and Expenditure in 2024 (simplified version)

2023 figures appear in brackets

#### Income

Donations to the general fund	£48,913
Donations for mobility equipment for disabled children	£3,830
Donations to the tertiary fund to support students in universities and colleges	£7,970
Gift Aid on donations	£9,055
Easy Fundraising	£28
Refund from Triodos Bank	£30
Bank interest	£66
Foreign exchange gain	£507
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£70,399 (£47,627)</b>

#### Expenditure on charitable services

Support for secondary school students	£28,976
Mobility equipment for disabled children and adults	£13,792
Medical costs in emergencies for students	£1,108
Support for students in universities and colleges	£6,611
Kroo Bay education project	£2,685
Support for Mustard Seed Foundation	£3,694
Bonthe and Mania primary schools support	£825
Sierra Leone volunteers' training and travel costs	£3,360
Support for sight-impaired and hearing-impaired children	£1,079
Mofus primary school project	£1,325
Special projects recommended by volunteers	£112
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£63,567 (£45,624)</b>

#### Expenditure on running the charity

Trustees' travel expenses (all donated back to the charity)	£3,130
Printing, post and stationery	£496
Administration costs	£429
Bank charges	£1,024
Sundry expenses	£15
Refund of donations to general fund	£200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£5,294 (£4,747)</b>

**NET SURPLUS** **£1,538 (-£2,744)**

*Note that the actual costs of running the charity were 3% of our total income.  
Our balance at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025 was £8,670.*

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](http://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 2025 should be approximately £11,000.



*Newly sponsored students and their parents meet with our volunteers in Bonthe on the island of Sherbro. Our volunteers Chernor and Capay told them what SLEDT support means and what we expect from them in return.*



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

Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust

[www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk](http://www.sierraleoneaid.org.uk)

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