

Sierra Leone Education and Development Trust

AGM Sunday 31 January 2021

Achievements in 2020 (compiled by Chernor Barrie, volunteer Country Representative and Kevin Curley, Chair of the Trustees)

1 Children sponsored to go to secondary school : 19 (including one student privately sponsored by a donor) The number fell in 2020 because covid closed schools and stopped our work for several months

2 Henry supported to go to a residential school for the blind to learn braille

Henry is supported by one of our donors

3 Mobility equipment delivered to adults, young people and children:

12 mobility carts or 'PETs' (an adapted tricycle ridden with the hands)

15 wheelchairs

18 crutches

1 Pa sticks

4 Graduates

Hassan Mahera – electrical + solar installation vocational training

Alie – driving licence and training

Hassan Plantain Island – fishing net and life jacket

A small loan to Ishmael who has opened a stationery shop (he is making monthly repayments to Chernor) funded privately by a donor

Fatmata, Alie Turay and Zorokong have left school and are qualified to go to University. They are searching for places. Supporters have come forward to sponsor them, as a result of the consultation. All now have sponsors and we have three more sponsors waiting for students to support

5 Medical cases

Sulaiman (17) – assessment of leg badly damaged in bicycle accident – doctors recommend amputation but Sulaiman refuses

Sheku (18) – treatment of badly damaged foot

Cecilia (approx. 26) – amputation of foot damaged by bullet in civil war c2000 and never treated – to receive artificial foot

Steven (9) – amputation of diseased foot – to receive artificial foot

Mamie (14) – unsuccessful treatment of permanent open sores on foot disabled by polio – the sores will not heal

Lamin (late 30s) – treatment of badly damaged foot

We think our intervention saved the lives of Sheku and Lamin and Cecilia whose feet were badly infected when we found them and they were receiving no treatment.

This area of work is problematic. Some cases are very expensive. It is favoured by the Sierra Leone committee. Volunteers – including me – find it very difficult to refuse help to someone when we are introduced to him/her in a village, sometimes by a Chief, and family members plead with us.

Note: at the AGM in January 2021 trustees agreed that we would no longer fund medical cases usually except when our own sponsored students had medical emergencies. One trustee is researching other charities that help with medical cases.

6 Other work

We continue to support the salaries of two care workers at Mustard Seed Children's Home in Moyamba who focus on care and training for disabled children and enabling them to go the primary school on the same site. Salaries are very low in Sierra Leone – about £700 for 12 months for each worker.

We provided a full set of mattresses, protected with plastic covers, for disabled children in Grafton Orphanage

At the beginning of the pandemic we supported our poorest students with food and soap for their families. We felt it was important to improve the nutritional status of our families as covid began. The Sierra Leone committee also paid for soap and protective clothing for some local hospitals and Mustard Seed Foundation. Cases are climbing now in Sierra Leone. Official figures show about 30 cases each day and 77 deaths in total (as at 26 January 2021).

7 Here in the UK

Michael Batchelor (recruited by Hannah Curley) has moved our website from 'Bolt' to 'Joomla'. It is now much easier to edit. He has improved the home page and written a simple guide to editing which any volunteer will be able to use. He will remain involved pro bono.

David Burnby published 'Our work in 2020' pro bono and will publish 'What we achieved in 2021' later this year. Ralph Steen printed lots of copies at his own expense.

Our Facebook page is busy and has attracted £200 in donations. A marketing consultant, Laura May, gave us some free time in November and wrote a lot more posts than usual but this had no effect on 'likes' or donations. LinkedIn has brought us 3 donated laptops. I rarely use Twitter for the charity.

Donated laptops have been promised by supporters for Fatmata, Alie and Zorokong after appeals on Facebook and LinkedIn. Getting them to Sierra Leone is a challenge.

Jan and Rob Whaley have sent a generator worth £5,500 (including shipping costs) to a workshop for disabled people in Bo.

Our Christmas Appeal raised £5,400 including gift aid, the best ever result. It also attracted 5 more monthly donors so that we now have 42, guaranteeing income of £12,000.

Total income in 2020 was £20,312 compared to £13,109 in 2019.

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Receipts and payments in 2020

Receipts

Donations from individual supporters including gift aid	£19,647
Triodos bank interest	£2
Easy fundraising	£163
The Bart Caulker Foundation	£500
TOTAL	£20,312

Payments

Support for secondary school students	£4,192
Support for disabled students and adults	£7,708
Support for Mustard Seed Foundation children's home	£2,475*
Website hosting fee, domain names and other fundraising costs	£202
Triodos bank charges including foreign transfers	£359**
Sierra Leone volunteers' travel expenses and subsistence costs	£298***
COVID-19: food, soap, protective clothing, emergencies	£3,282
Registration with Ministry of Welfare , postage, copying, phone	£469****
TOTAL	£ 18,985

Funds held at Triodos bank at year end	£5,684*****
Funds held in Sierra Leone at year end	£623

Accounts have been prepared in accordance with UK charity law and Charity Commission guidance.

Further notes:

** This amount includes advance payment of part of the salary of a care worker who supports severely disabled children*

*** We have to pay a foreign payment charge of £25 each time we transfer funds to Sierra Leone*

**** Our ten wonderful volunteers receive no payment for their work. We meet their travel costs when they are visiting students and transporting disability equipment. Sometimes they travel to remote villages and on those occasions we also meet the cost of simple overnight accommodation and food. We also refund their phone costs.*

***** Registration of the charity with the Ministry of Social Welfare in Sierra Leone is essential to enable our volunteers and UK visitors to explain the charity's status to Immigration Officers and local Chiefs. It is the equivalent of Charity Commission registration in England.*

****** At the end of 2020 we had £5,684 in our Triodos bank account. The policy of the trustees is to reserve £5,000 so that we can fulfil our commitments to the students we support in the event that income falls in the future.*