

Sierra Leone Partners Conference for Education - 2017

Where We Were in 2015

Year One Goals from 2015:

Our goals were to engage in fact-finding to determine feeding program needs in all UMC schools, distribution and internal support needs and requirements, develop a mentoring process, and create a sustainability model; to develop guidelines and expectations for nursery/preschool education and work to understand in-country needs; to delineate needs for sanitation and clean water, use UMCOR work groups and other expertise to source materials and processes for rainwater collection, water purification, and sanitation; to determine what SL teachers consider to be incentives to remain at a school and consider funding processes for student/teacher needs that are identified, such as student fees, supplies, books, furniture, etc.; to determine with partners the communication needs; and to create an umbrella structure to ensure the education goals are met, establish process checkpoints, and consider others who should be in our network (and invite them).

Three-Year Goals from 2015:

Our goals were to establish pilot feeding programs and assess/redefine during the year; to establish pilot nursery/preschools and assess/refine during the year; to establish water purification and sanitation systems and provide training in _ number of schools; to purchase a road-worthy vehicle, procure identified communication devices for _ number of schools and provide training to repair and maintain as needed; to provide training in ESL strategies for teachers and encourage the use of English as the language of instruction in classrooms; and to strengthen the network structure and continue to invite like-minded people and groups.

Five-Year Goals from 2015:

Our goals were to expand the feeding programs to _ schools, continue to monitor/assess/refine and build sustainability plans; to expand nursery/preschools to _ number of schools; to expand water purification and sanitation systems and engage the community in training and monitoring and build a sustainability model; to expand teacher training in ESL strategies, continuing to encourage the use of English as the language of instruction in classrooms; to expand support of communication systems and create a sustainability model; and to continue to strengthen the network.

Entering the 2017 Conference

Africa Uplifted, Wisconsin – Julie Burma & Lance Burma

The rural village of Manonkoh, approximately 10 miles from Makeni, receives the focus of their work in SL. A clinic, a primary school and preschool, and a church are supported. Their sponsorship programs include school lunches, uniforms, and school supplies for children at the schools. An additional water tower was installed to extend running water to the school. Preliminary plans are being considered to build a new permanent preschool in 2018 to replace the current thatch structure. The church sponsorship has spawned an “unofficial” satellite, albeit meaningful, church in a smaller village next to Manonkoh led by a lay person. Currently, they are working on housing for teachers, a water tower, and permanent preschools. They have 7 teachers.

Camp Hill UMC, Indiana – Drew Robeson

CrossPoint UMC, Pennsylvania – Tom Wanich, Ken Mengel, & Ken Wyatt

Education Cures, Georgia – Kathryn Cyphers

Education Cures is working on training teachers. They have built a pre-K facility to train teachers, have started a tech program, and have trainings on cognitive processing.

General Board of Global Ministries, Georgia – Nancy Robinson

General Board of Global Ministries, West Africa – Mozart Adevu

Mission of Hope, North Carolina – Lorraine Garrison, Donna Hudson, Carter Jewell, Pam Moffett, Belinda Morrison, & Cynthia Vaughn

The Mission of Hope Medical Team decided in September 2017 that their goals for schools and youth in Rotifunk would be to provide school supplies as determined by Lorraine, through a partnership with Childcare Network; to fund and build toilets where needed; to fund and install wash stations at the Methodist schools; to repair wells at 2 Methodist primary schools and the high school; to pursue community health education through the primary schools; and to start a Boy-Girl Scout or similar program at the request of the Paramount Chief.

Oak Hill UMC, Texas – Saffa Koroma & Mike Trujillo

We are working with Leonard Gbloh and Joseph Promal in SL on a Leadership Training and Development Workshop for 52 principals and 200 head teachers. Topics include leadership, guidance counseling, financial management and accountability, creating a child-friendly school, and methods for positive reinforcement. Oak Hill UMC and the UMC of SL are working together on establishing a 50-50 partnership in this endeavor.

Those educators who are trained will then serve as resource persons to train teachers at their schools.

Operation Classroom, Indiana – Bob Coolman, Karen Jackson Gould, & Amy Zent

We are in the infrastructure-building stage of a \$1.1 million capital campaign to establish the first, of which we hope are several, entrepreneurial academy in Taiama called the Taiama Entrepreneurial Academy (TEA). We have been working with Bishop Yambasu, Joseph Smart, and others in SL, along with our board, for the past 3 years. The campus at Taiama has a small secondary school now, and the other buildings need to be rebuilt or rehabilitated, along with the electricity, water, and other needs. A donor gave funds to rehab a house as a Mission House with housing for 8. We have \$200,000 in donations to kick off the campaign. Our bishop blessed the campaign at our June Annual Conference, and we are now working to secure gifts from major donors before we go to churches.

We will have 14 UMC members from Indiana traveling to SL in November to continue the planning and work at the Taimama Secondary Campus. A guest house has already been renovated for use by work teams. The school will focus on agriculture, mechanics, and construction with a focus on business and entrepreneurial skills. It will be a boarding school for up to 160 secondary students from throughout SL. We hope this pilot will lead to our being able to work in co-mission with the UMC in both Liberia and SL to establish other Enterprise Academies. We hope the school will be rolling with its first class of 9th graders in the fall of 2018.

SEED & Serving Sierra Leone, Colorado – Les Law

They have 10 teachers and are paying for all of them to get their HTC certifications, and they are also working on building morale. They are working with Heritage UMC Highschool and have a sister school that provides funding. They have provided solar panels and 10 computers, rebuilt the building and bathrooms, and they have cabinets with locks and a 24/7 security guard to keep the computers safe.

Sierra Leone Partners in Education, Indiana – Marilyn Griffith

At the beginning of the year, it was reported that teachers from primary schools in the Bonthe Island and Kono districts would gather for 4-day training seminars conducted by teams trained a year ago by SL Partners. The trainers would pay forward their experience learning new methods of teaching language arts, library science, religious education, math, and classroom management shared in earlier seminars. They would also provide an opportunity to meet and plan together. SL's led by Mr. Leonard Gbloh would carry out the work begun in 2010 by SLP to help upgrade primary education in the school system. Prior seminars were held in West and East Freetown, Makeni, Bo, Taiama, Yonibana, Kenema, and Moyamba. The seminars will be in Kono, a large district with 60 head teachers, and Bonthe Island, probably the most underdeveloped area in primary education that is in great

need of major repairs. The costs for the 4-day seminar include a small stipend and meals for the team and participants, transportation to the sites, and all teaching supplies for teachers and students to take back to their classrooms.

We are no longer able to ship used books, desks, or supplies anymore. At the same time, we are aware that SL's children do not have access to their own West African textbooks and with funds from us, their books and supplies can be reasonably purchased in Freetown. This is good for all, since it supports the indigenous economy and culture and saves the cost of packaging, shipping, and unloading in both countries. We have raised \$4,500 which will cover some of the basics of one seminar. In the past, we have generally provided help in upgrading the facilities, including paint, bookshelves, steel door locks, or windows. There is a team of 25 going in January.

Sierra Leone UMC – Bishop John Yambasu, Leonard Gbloh, & Joseph Pormai

SLIMS Africa, Inc., Georgia – Richard Wernick

There are 4 campuses with 5,000 students. They are sending a team soon and their goals include a vocational training center to train teachers and also teach English to the students and their families. There is a Child Prosperity Center where 100 children can live being built in the Spring of 2018.

Other Reports:

Morrow UMC, Maplewood, NJ - Tim Roebuck

I can report that following a Spring 2016 visit to SL and after various meetings with Bishop Yambasu, he asked us if we could support the building of a school to replace a “mushroom” school, called Burma IV, located just outside Kenema in a growing community.

PEN Sierra Leone

PEN SL is a local chapter of PEN International. It runs a national school program which focuses on encouraging reading and writing among young people. The books for primary schools are written and illustrated by SL authors. Some have been purchased for the teachers in the Kabala area. PEN-SL is located in Freetown. They have a program that takes books to schools and has a teacher decide how to use them in their classroom. They also set up a library of books to be used by the students. CODE is a literacy organization based in Ottawa and has partnered with PEN-SL in Freetown to help local writers and illustrators produce books for children and distribute them at no charge throughout the schools.

Helping Children Worldwide / MERCY Hospital

The Child Rescue Center now supports over 500 children; some in residence, some in foster families, and some with their own families - offering spiritual education, tuition and educational supplies, and health care. Additional support is given to the most vulnerable of these families. The Promise Scholarship program provides approximately 15 students with university or tech-voc scholarships. The Family Strengthening Program is designed to provide training and counseling support to families whose children were placed in residential care, to help them transition back into families. A new microfinance program was launched in 2017 and 28 participants whose children are enrolled in CRC Programs participated in the first group. Participants were taught financial skills such as budgeting and saving, helped to develop a small business plan, and were given a small loan to launch or re-launch a small business. Graduates set up their businesses in July and have begun making weekly payments on their loans.

Education Agenda 2017

1. Welcome, Introductions (5)
2. How did we get here? A summary of our last meeting and goals (2)
3. Brief, **1 minute** reports from each organization to update the group (15)
4. Group: Which goals have we met or come close to meeting over the last 2 years? How were those goals achieved? (10)
5. Group: Which goals have been the most difficult? What limiting factors have we seen? (10)
6. Small Teams: Break into 3 groups of 4, trying to make sure you are not in the same group as someone else from your organization.

What are our priorities moving forward, and how can we quantify and measure those priorities? Alter previous goals or generate new ones, focusing on 3-5 that seem attainable. (25)
7. Small Teams: Report to the group your highest priority goals. As a group, decide upon the top 3-5 goals. (20)
8. Small Teams: Decide how to implement and measure those goals in the next year. Consider which groups should partner and how those partnerships can be established. (15)
9. Small Teams: Decide how to implement and measure those goals in the next 3 years. (15)
10. Small Teams: Decide how to implement and measure those goals in the next 5 years. (15)
11. Group: Discussion on bringing one year goals together. (15)

12. Group: Discussion on bringing 3 year goals together. (15)
13. Group: Discussion on bringing 5 year goals together. (15)
14. Small Teams: Each team will take either the 1, 3, or 5 year goals and create a physical timeline of how the implementation should look. (30)
15. Group: Report timelines and discuss any necessary revisions as a group. (40)

2017 Education Conference Goals

Overview of Goals:

1. Improve English language literacy.
2. Focus on Teachers - Retention, Certification, Training, and Pay
3. Educational Supplies - Shipping, Funding, and Finding
4. Vehicles - 2 at \$36,000 each (\$72,000 total)
5. Improved Communication Channel for this group

Specific Goals:

1. Improve English language literacy.
 - a. Education Cures will give us a 6 month report in May/June 2018 to let us know how their trainings are working from Wellington. They will be training teachers with classroom methods and English language literacy in the hopes that they will go home and share their knowledge with others. If they are successful, other organizations can send their teachers to Wellington for the training and bring that knowledge back to their schools.
2. Focus on Teachers - Retention, Certification, Training, and Pay
 - a. Ensure that all of the teachers within your organization's schools receive their certification (\$71 each per year for 3 years). Leonard and Joseph will work on bonding them to ensure that once they have received the training, they will return to teach in our schools.
 - b. Once your teachers have become certified, have them lead trainings for other teachers who would like to receive the certifications as well.
 - c. After the 3 year certifications, we hope to reach out regionally and eventually nationally to ensure that every teacher receives proper training.
3. Educational Supplies - Shipping, Funding, and Finding
 - a. Leonard will give us a list of SL purchases (books, curriculum, etc.) that we can and should purchase within the country. We will use this list to create

“Kits” - a standard set of supplies for whatever they deem a “standard classroom size” to be. We can then raise money by selling kits in America (i.e. - buy a kit / stock a classroom in honor of a friend for Christmas). This will streamline the basic classroom needs rather than having each organization ask each teacher for their classroom wishlist. We are hoping for a standard price of around \$100 in the hopes of being able to market and sell many kits.

- b. After we have established the items to include in the SL Education Kits and the prices, we need to establish which goods can NOT be purchased in SL and how we can combine resources to send supplies over.
 - i. PA has a warehouse and Christian Relief is helping with shipping costs. Bill can ship out of Goldsboro but can't hold the supplies there for long.
4. Vehicles - 2 at \$36,000 each (\$72,000 total)
 - a. We will create a video promoting the need for the SUVs. Mike Trujillo will lead this effort.
 - i. Operation Classroom will go over in November and get video of drivers talking about vehicle needs. Anyone else going in the winter of 2017 is encouraged to take pictures and video of the terrible roads and driving conditions.
 - ii. We can raise money through the Operation Classroom SL Advance, where the money is set aside and untouched until we meet our goal,
 - iii. We will learn from Kip Robinson about what he purchased last time (Toyota Land Cruiser) and how we should make these purchases.
 - iv. We hope to purchase one vehicle by the spring. In one year, we will assess our funds raised and determine how to proceed.
5. Communication Channel for this group
 - a. Whenever anyone goes to SL, post pictures to Facebook and Instagram using the hashtag #SLPC so that we can see all of the pictures and updates in one place.

- b. We have a Facebook group - Sierra Leone Partners Conference - where everyone can post updates and progress.
- c. We will send out a quarterly progress report. Every three months, organizations should email carterejewell@gmail.com with updates to add to the SLPC Education Newsletter.

We had a wonderful session and cannot wait to meet in Sierra Leone in 2019, but we also look forward to sharing our progress with each other over the next two years!