



CONSTRUCTION
& DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP

NEWSLETTER

This month we explain what has been happening to the books you have generously donated.

Sorting the books

There are currently two important tasks being carried out in Sierra Leone to ensure that your books can be distributed to the 53 schools in Lunsar before the end of the year. The first of these is being carried out by the Reading Culture Committee in Waterloo led by Fannyann Doherty. The concept of book sorting sounds a simple one, but like most simple projects, there is more to it than first meets the eye. First of all, Rosetta Kargbo and John Mami have had to carry out an audit of all the schools in Lunsar which are to receive the books.

Their audit does more than just note the type of school and number of pupils, but also carefully reviews the condition of the school buildings themselves. That way, we also know whether it will also be necessary to provide some form of furniture - shelves or containers as kindly donated by Green-works.



Book sorting lead by Fannyann Doherty

The second stage is to sort the books so that each school receives books appropriate to the age and requirements of the children. As you can see from the picture above, it is just as well that the rainy season has come to an end, as it is far easier and more pleasant to sort and categorise the books out of doors. We continue to work on a basic rule of thumb of two books per child. Fannyann and her team have to go through the thousands of books you have donated and ensure that the right books go to the right school. Their task, this time round, has been made a little easier as some of the books have come ready sorted. However, whilst the Reading Culture Committee are grateful when this is possible, they are more grateful simply to receive the books themselves.

The final task the Reading Culture Committee have to carry out is to stamp the books with a CODEP stamp. This stamp does not go on the inside front cover or on the first page but within the book itself. The purpose of this is a simple one - to enable us to keep an eye on your books. This is a simple security measure that we can take to identify your books in the future. Finally, once the books have been sorted, the number of books being delivered to each school will be carefully recorded.



Successful participants at the literacy co-ordinator training

Training the Literacy Co-ordinators

As you know, CODEP recognises that the mere delivery of books to the schools, whilst a major step forward in itself, is not necessarily enough by itself. Therefore, we have been organising Literacy Co-ordinator Training which is attended by volunteers from the schools where the books are being delivered.

Following the successful session organised in Waterloo, this month there have been two more training sessions for the teachers from the 53 recipient schools in Lunsar. These took place on 18/19 October and 25/26 October respectively at the St Peter's Parish Hall in Lunsar Town. Those attending the training were welcomed by the Chairman, the Reverend Pat Abdulai.

For the initial round of training, we can cater for teachers from every type of school, big and small, primary and secondary. The training has two basic aims. The first, a consequence of the fact that for most of the schools, this is the first time they have been able to set a library up, is to help the teachers understand the basic functions of a librarian, including how to manage the library efficiently and also to learn how to make available the books to everyone, including teachers and pupils alike. However, more than that as the trainers - and CODEP are once again very grateful for the assistance of the Sierra Leone Library Board for their help in putting the training together - have explained, ultimately, the librarians are custodians of knowledge. The Literacy Co-ordinators are, we hope, going to be able to not just maintain and run the libraries but also to motivate and generate a genuine culture of reading, and hence literacy, in their schools.

At CODEP, we recognise that this initial training is but a first step. In order to help up understand what the next steps should be, we ask the participants at the training to fill in workshop evaluation forms. Two things are clear from those forms, the first is the willingness of the participants to learn. The part of the questionnaire which receives the lowest scores is "duration". Most of the participants felt that the training could have lasted for more than two days. All the participants request further similar courses and workshops. Second, the benefit of the books is clear as many participants make the point that they want to be able to put into practice what they have learnt, by seeing actual examples of libraries. Thanks to your generosity, that request will, we hope, be granted shortly.

Always expect the unexpected

One of the joys of visiting Sierra Leone is that you never know quite what is around the corner. Take the experience of Trustee, Jeremy Glover, who found himself on the Sierra Leone breakfast television programme - *Good Morning Sierra Leone* - on his recent visit. That was certainly not on the pre-planned itinerary and to be honest completely outside the scope of his wildest imagination prior to the trip. However, the CODEP team in Sierra Leone indicated that it was important that we take steps to spread CODEP's message to a wider audience in Sierra Leone and the next thing he knew arrangements had been made.....

It will perhaps come as no surprise that at first glance breakfast TV in Sierra Leone seems little different to its English counterpart. It starts a little later at 9am. But the basic format is familiar - two presenters, sofas, which are red, a round-up of the morning newspapers and the guests were drawn from a wide selection of interest groups including politicians, environmentalists, journalists and musicians. It was then the job of those presenters, including Doreen Kalokoh to link everyone together, something she was able to do with professional ease.



Trustee Jeremy Glover being interviewed

The presenters were not shy of asking difficult questions. Jeremy was challenged on whether there had been any consultation with the community in Waterloo. It was a valid question as one criticism often made of NGOs and Charities wherever they operate is that they do what they think is best regardless of the actual need. Here at CODEP, as Jeremy was able to explain, every step we take is in consultation with groups in Waterloo and beyond.

It was just as well that Jeremy got some broadcasting experience in, as later that week, as the picture above shows, TV cameras were there to meet the arrival of the container of books.

Of course, the use and ownership of television sets is far from widespread in Sierra Leone. So, there is no doubt, that the discussion programme which took place a few days later on the local radio in Waterloo, would have reached just as many people. The purpose of the radio discussion was to explain more about the work of CODEP within the local community.

The participants were Rosetta Kargbo, Leslie Whenzle (the head man of Waterloo), Alusine Sesay (Chairman of the Library Management Board), Alieu Badara Mansaray (from the Waterloo Partnership) and Paul Kamara (representative of the Waterloo Council) and we thank them for giving up their time to help.



The suggestion of an increased need for publicity was initially an unexpected one. However it certainly raises interesting questions and we can see that there are many potential benefits, including simply and most importantly spreading the message of what we are doing and what can be done. The idea here is that this will bring us into contact with groups or individuals who we can work together with in the future. It may also enable us to learn more about the best way to work with the people of Waterloo. We will keep you posted.

How you can help CODEP

There are many ways in which you can help us. At the prompting of our colleagues in Sierra Leone, we have focussed a little on publicity in our newsletter this month. Just joining our Facebook page or simply passing on this newsletter or telling your friends about our website all helps to increase awareness of what needs to be done.



You may also have ideas about how you can help us to raise funds to ship your books or provide further training for the literacy co-ordinators. Many schools have already participated in the successful Build on Books Sponsored Read. If you would like to know more about that, please email Lori@buildonbooks.com. Next month our friends at Fenwick Elliott are arranging a 5-a-side tournament, featuring the debut of the CODEP All Stars. Other people have arranged cake sales, ran half marathons or climbed very large hills. If you want to make a donation, please go to www.justgiving.com/cdp. The choice is yours. Just let us know how we can help.

Contact CODEP

If you would like more information about anything you have read in this newsletter why not visit our website - www.codep.co.uk, join our Facebook group or email Jeremy Glover, the editor of this newsletter - jeremy@codep.co.uk.