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WE VOICE

Restless Development Sierra Leone Quarterly Newsletter July-September 2011



A focus group discussion being carried out with Community Board Members outside the Youth Friendly Resource Centre

NATIONAL STRATEGY REVIEW

Over the last quarter, Restless Development has initiated a review of its National Strategic Framework (NSF), the document governing all the work undertaken by the country programme in Sierra Leone. The strategy was initially developed in 2007 and has evolved over that period to incorporate goals around livelihoods and civic participation and new approaches to achieving those goals including building a stronger youth sector and shaping policy and practice.

A wide range of stakeholders including beneficiaries, staff, partners and donors have been invited to participate in the review, and their input has been engaged through a number of participatory consultation activities including workshops, focus groups and one-to-one meetings. The revised NSF is nearing finalisation and is expected to be launched in November.

US EMBASSY SUPPORTS CAREER GUIDANCE

Restless Development is grateful to have received the support of the US Embassy in Freetown to carry out a programme of careers training in secondary schools. We have been conducting careers training in secondary schools since October 2010 as part of our employability and livelihoods work. The Embassy is enabling us to carry out an additional 6 schools workshops in schools in the Makeni and Bo areas between now and the end of the year.



Addressing junior secondary school students in Pujehun district

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NEWS HIGHLIGHTS



Prospective recruits learn more about working for the Sierra Leone Police at the National Careers Fair

INTERACTING WITH EMPLOYERS AND ENTREPRENEURS

Building on the success of the Careers Fair held in September last year, on 27th-28th September 2011 Restless Development joined forces with the University of Sierra Leone to organise a national career and jobs fair at the Atlantic Hall, National Stadium Hostel. The two day event attracted 100+ young people from across the country as well as 16 of the major employers from the private sector and government.

On the first day, young people were offered opportunities to learn how to prepare a strong CV and succeed at interview; they were exposed to entrepreneurial skills and business coaching and heard from a series of inspirational speakers including entrepreneur Mr Laurence Spencer Coker and Ms Josephine Beoku-Betts, a Fulbright Scholar currently lecturing at Fourah Bay College. On the second day, they were given the chance to interact with organisations to learn more about their recruiting requirements and procedures.

“This event has been a real eye opener to young people and graduates like us,” said Alex Fayia Joshua Bamda Kparam, graduate of Fourah Bay College.

YOUTH CONSULTATIVE FORUM

A one day national youth consultative conference organized on the 26th September 2011 at the Presidential Lounge, National Stadium, brought together 125 young people from all the 14 districts of Sierra Leone. The purpose of this event was to explore key issues affecting young people such as unemployment and lack of political representation in order to both devise a strategy for collective action and feed in to the National Youth Policy which is currently under review.

In attendance were representatives of the Ministry of Youth, Employment & Sport, the Ministry of Finance, political party representatives, the National Youth Commission and a number of CSOs. The event was organized by Restless Development Sierra Leone in collaboration with the All Political Party Youth Association and the Sierra Leone Student Union.



Key speakers at the National Youth Consultative Forum

LEARNING ABOUT ELECTORAL PROCESSES

On 4th August 2011, Restless Development organised for 15 young leaders and members of the Fourah Bay College Student Action Group (SAG) to undertake an educational visit to the National Electoral Commission headquarters. The objectives of the visit were to create a platform for young people to discuss issues affecting them during elections and to educate them on their role and responsibilities in minimising violence and ensuring a smooth election period.

Restless Development's Vision is to see young people taking a leadership role in addressing the most urgent issues facing the world

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR ICS VOLUNTEERS



Safi Jones (centre right in green), Michael Dumbuya (front right in stripy top) and a group of aspiring entrepreneurs during a business skills training workshop. Inset: Jorge Heras Munoz.

Between July and September 2011, Restless Development Sierra Leone had the pleasure of hosting five international volunteers under the International Citizen Service programme. During the three month they were with us, Safi, Michael, Oliver, Tom and Jorge supported the Youth Leadership and Advocacy Programme (YLAP) and the Research Monitoring and Evaluation (RM&E) Unit with the following key projects and activities:

Creation of National Youth Report - Oliver and Tom undertook a combination of field and desk research in order to understand the key issues affecting young people in Sierra Leone. Their findings will be summarised in a National Youth Report to be published soon.

Creation of Entrepreneurship Manual - Safi and Michael worked on developing an entrepreneurship manual for young people. As part of their research they ran a series of training workshops for young people on business skills and entrepreneurship.

Baseline Study of DYCs and CYCs - Safi and Michael were also tasked with conducting a baseline evaluation of District and Chiefdom

Youth Committees. They carried out extensive research and shared their findings at the National Youth Consultative Forum in September.

Monitoring and Evaluation Tools - with some previous experience in research, Jorge was in an ideal position to work with the RM&E unit to create a new M&E structure and develop M&E tools for the entire country programme.

The entire country programme team would like to express our sincere thanks to all the ICS volunteers for their fantastic contributions and for being such cooperative, friendly and valuable members of the team.



Tom Baylem (far left) and Oliver Nieburg (far right) with participants of a focus group.

Restless Development puts young people at the forefront of change and development in Sierra Leone

COMING UP

LAUNCH OF REVISED NATIONAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The launch of the revised National Strategic Framework is expected to take place in November and will be open to a wide range of stakeholders from target communities, donors and partners.

LAUNCH OF 198 VOLUNTEER PEER EDUCATOR PLACEMENTS

146 (73 male and 73 female) Volunteer Peer Educators have been recruited for the 2011-2012 round of VPE placements and will be entering their placements in early November following training. This will be the largest group of VPEs to be placed in Restless Development DFID-funded Youth Reproductive Health Programme. It will cover around over 70 chiefdoms in all 10 rural districts.

DISSEMINATION OF NATIONAL YOUTH REPORT

The National Youth Report developed by two of our ICS volunteers, will be launched in early November. It will be a useful reference for the National Youth Commission which is currently developing its youth strategy for 2012-2016.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICES

Two participants of an ICS-led entrepreneurship training workshop share their experiences:



My name is Hannah Clara Harding. I'm 28 years old and I formerly worked in a reputable bank. However, I felt the amount of time I spent doing other people's business was too much. I wanted to invest my time in my own business. Fortunately I heard over the radio an advert about the Business Bomba Competition. I entered the Bomba in 2010 with the support of my husband and submitted my business ideas about producing liquid cow's milk in Sierra Leone rather than importing it. I came in second position. This is the first workshop I have attended since receiving the award and I have been guided on solving some of the problems I had been facing, through the sharing of experience with colleagues.

My name is Abu Bakar Koroma and I'm 27 years old. I am a member of the Bombay Youth Organisation. I am currently a secondary school teacher but I have a strong interest in setting up my own business. I have found the Restless Development training very useful. I've learned about some of the problems of setting up a business such as access to capital and price inflations and how to overcome them. The facilitators have been very good. I am planning to share what I have learned with the members of my organisation.



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