

SPW IS NOW

# RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT

THE YOUTH-LED DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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# WE VOICE

Restless Development, Sierra Leone Quarterly Newsletter, August 2011



Day of the African Child celebrations In Moyamba District

## PROGRAMME EXPANSION

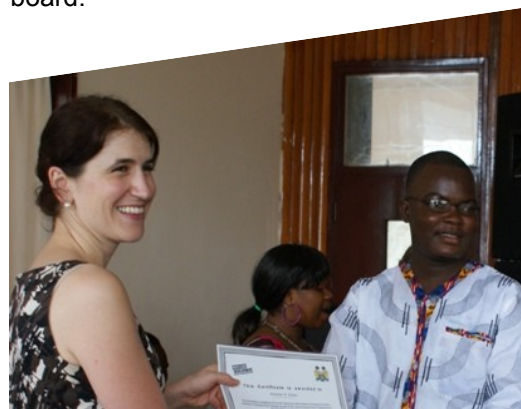
From October 2011 Restless Development's Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) will operate in 99 communities spread across 97 of the 149 chiefdoms of Sierra Leone covering each of the 12 districts.

Earlier this year, a grant from UNICEF created placements in 24 new communities in Kailahun and Kono districts. For the new round of Volunteer Peer Educator (VPE) placements beginning in October, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) is supporting expansion into a further 12 communities, bringing the total number of placements to 99.

The Youth Empowerment Programme serves rural communities by training VPEs aged 18-26 years to implement sustained behavioural change activities tackling sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and life skills. It targets both in-school and out of school youth.

## OUR NEW COUNTRY DIRECTOR

Restless Development in Sierra Leone is delighted to welcome new Cathrin Daniel who took up the reins of the agency in May. Cathrin, originally from Wales, UK, brings a wealth of international development experience and we are very happy to have her on board.



Cathrin, new Country Director, presents a certificate to a volunteer graduate

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# NEWS HIGHLIGHTS



Young Leaders have their voices heard at the Youth Dialogue Forum

## YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGE WITH POLITICAL PARTIES

Restless Development hosted a second quarterly Youth Dialogue Forum at the National Stadium in Freetown on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. The forum brought together 40 young people, policy makers and other stakeholders in a discussion around “Violence & Youth Participation in Politics”. Participants were encouraged to work together to come up with recommendations on the role that can be played by political parties, civil society and youth-serving organisations to ensure the 2012 elections in Sierra Leone are free from violence and have full young people participation. These recommendations will now be compiled and turned in to an advocacy tool for influencing the decisions of policy-makers and political parties.

## TRAINING OTHER YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

Members of five youth groups and the Student Action Group from Fourah Bay College took part in entrepreneurship training at the National Stadium in May. Topics covered included were

- How to start up a business,
- What makes a successful entrepreneur
- A case study of a successful Sierra Leonean business person.

We hope to step up our support to young entrepreneurs by, for example involving local business people in mentoring and supporting young entrepreneurs.

## OUR FIRST RADIO SOAP OPERA

Five Young Leaders (graduates of the Youth Empowerment Programme) and four members of the Student Action Group at Fourah Bay University have been working with Restless Development staff to create a radio soap opera aimed at young people. The soap opera uses the dramatisation of real life scenarios to communicate important messages and morals on various topics ranging from HIV stigmatisation and positive living to governance and peacebuilding. The first episode was recorded and edited at the AUCAYD studio. **It will be aired on SLBC, Eastern Radio in Kono and Kiss 104 in Bo from the last week in August.**



Restless RM&E Manager James S. Fofonah addresses the multi-stakeholder workshop

## FLASHBACK TO LAST QUARTER: MULTI-STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

A multi stakeholder workshop was held on 26th January attracting 13 representatives of international non governmental organisations, national non governmental organizations, the private sector and government. The aim was to create a platform to discuss issues affecting youth in Sierra Leone and transform ideas into action-together. Restless Development young leaders presented a drama performance on the state of the youth touching on issues of unemployment, teenage pregnancy, lack of voice and information and providing suggestions for how to tackle the issues raised.

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

## VOLUNTEER VOICES



Bintu F Mani (far right) and Bob Lamin (far left) are Volunteer Peer Educators (VPEs) placed in Bauya, Kongbora chiefdom, Moyamba district. Here they conduct community sensitisation activities on the Day

### BINTU, 22 yrs, from Kono

“I love working in this community. The people really appreciate my coming. I don’t think I’ll spend the rest of my life here but the time I’ve spent here has been very good for me and I’ve learned lots of lessons.

This is not the easiest community to work in. It’s sometimes difficult to get people to engage and we have not always had a good turn out for all our activities. However, it is great to see we have made some improvements which have been recognised by the elders. Most importantly there has been a drop in teenage pregnancy which is definitely partly due to our sensitisation work.

Personally I feel I have achieved a lot through this programme. Previously I was scared to talk aloud to big people, but this experience has made me improve my way of talking. I no longer have fear of standing in front of people.

The things I’ve learned through this placement I’ve never learned in my life. My plan is to go back to college and study for an accountancy diploma.”

### BOB, 24 yrs, from Bo

“It gives me joy to work with young people. I find it satisfying to be able to correct misconceptions and help young people make good choices.

Before I became a VPE I was quite a shy guy. The experience of being a VPE has really helped me improve the way I communicate. I now know how to talk to people and guide them towards making good decisions. I have benefited from exposure to the standards that Restless Development uphold and they have given me tools to succeed. I’ve learned how to mobilise communities, raise awareness, do sensitisation.”

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

## **THIS QUARTER IN NUMBERS**

**75,600** young people in schools received lessons on Sexual Reproductive Health and Life Skills.

We have recorded a **20% increase** (since the programme began) in the number of young people in target communities reporting using condoms the last time they had sex.

**14,129** condoms have been distributed by our volunteers in the communities over the last quarter.

## **COMING UP**

### **INTERNATIONAL CITIZENSHIP SERVICE (ICS) VOLUNTEERS ARRIVING**

As part of the DFID-funded International Citizenship Service, Restless Development will be hosting 10 volunteers from the UK in two groups for 3 months each from July 2011. The ICS volunteers will be assisting with the design of a comprehensive training manual for capacity building youth groups, strengthening our Monitoring & Evaluation systems and undertaking research on the issues affecting young people in Sierra Leone to feed in to a State Of The Youth Report due to be published later this year.

### **SECOND NATIONAL CAREER FAIR IN SEPTEMBER 2011**

Following the success of the 2010 Career Fair, Restless Development will be hosting a second careers fair in September 2011 giving young people the opportunity to interact with major employers in Sierra Leone and gain skills in preparing for working life.

### **GEARING UP FOR 2012 ELECTIONS**

With the presidential, legislative, local and municipal elections scheduled for the second half of 2012, Restless Development is making plans to deliver a campaign of civic and voter education, targeting young people and the wider electorate. 55% of registered voters in 2007 were under the age of 32 so young people are a very important constituency. Restless Development undertook a successful voter education campaign in Bo and surrounding districts in the run up to the 2008 elections. We are currently seeking the support of funders enabling us to scale up this programme to reach a national level of coverage.

**23,611** young people chose to access youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services in their community .

**75%** of the graduates of our Youth Empowerment Programme (around 600 in number) are now either in employment or higher education.

**7** brand new internship placements were created at the Ministry of Youth, Employment and Sport, the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. These, along with the placements at the National Aids Secretariat and with Restless Development itself, brings the total number of annual internship placements to 40.

**FIND OUT MORE**

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