

**To the Memory of Mr. BIS Konneh**  
(Former UNESCO Secretary General)

## A Foreword

It is a great pleasure to produce the first Handbook of the Sierra Leone National Commission for UNESCO (SLNatCom for UNESCO), for UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Association in Sierra Leone.

This hand book embodies the legal basis of the National Commission, its functions, past activities, accomplishments and activities planned for the immediate short term in 2019.

Along with other National Commissions in the region and globally, the SLNatCom for UNESCO works to advance the ideals and objectives of UNESCO: Promote peace, tolerance and harmony, improve dialogue, communication, information spread and education.

The Commission has been dormant in Sierra Leone for over 3 years now due to the illness and passing of the former Secretary General, the Late Mr. B. I. S. Konneh, to whom this Handbook is dedicated. In the immediate short and medium terms, the Commission aims to focus on activities that promote the delivery of Free Quality Education and peace building, strengthening the Secretariat, enhancing our relationship with local and international partners. We plan to carry out a number of programmes and activities, including publishing and distributing this Handbook among the 35 UNESCO Clubs and 2 Associations in the country, conducting Literary and Debating Competitions, engaging in sensitization and advocacy through the electronic media on female empowerment, drug and substance abuse. Where possible, we plan to also engage in capacity strengthening of Arabic and STEM teachers in collaboration with other partner agencies. The Free Quality Education for All (FQEFA) is the best opportunity that the government has offered to the people of Sierra Leone. For us at the Commission, Free Quality Education for All (FQEFA) provides opportunities for excelling at the values we espouse deeply: using communication for development, promoting tolerance, peace and independence through education.

In executing these planned activities, we look forward to the cooperation and full support (both technical and financial) from our line Ministries: Ministry of Basic and Secondary and Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, Ministry of Tourism and Culture and Ministry information and partner Agencies.

Overall assignment presentation	MLA heading; unique title; professional presentation	MLA heading; appropriate title; neat presentation	Incomplete heading; average title/presentation	No heading/title; no attention to presentation
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Specific Assignment Directions	Exceeds all requirements specified for this assignment	Meets all requirements specified for this assignment	Meets some of the requirements specified for this assignment	Meets few/no requirements specified for this assignment
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Language Use: the extent to which the assignment reveals an awareness of audience and purpose				
Description	Creative, concrete language; uses literary devices and rich sensory detail	Assignment uses concrete language. literary devices and sensory detail	Some use of concrete language, literary devices, and sensory detail in assignment	Little use of concrete language, literary devices or sensory detail in assignment
Word Choice	Uses sophisticated precise vocabulary	Effective word choices	Some effective word choices	Few effective word choices
Sentence Variety	Well-varied sentence structure throughout	Good sentence structure and variety	Occasional use of sentence variety	Little sentence variety
Voice/Sense of Audience	Unique voice; strong sense of audience	Evident awareness of voice and audience	Some awareness of voice and audience	Mechanical/unsuitable voice; unaware of aud.

Conventions: the extent to which the assignments exhibits conventional grammar/spelling/word usage				
Grammar/Punctuation	Smooth, fluid error-free punctuation./grammar	Mostly correct grammar; errors do not interfere with communication	Errors occasionally interfere with communication; verb tense errors	Grammatical errors are awkward and interfere with communication
Spelling and Word Usage	Correct spelling; error-free word usage	Mostly correct spelling and word usage	Errors in spelling and word usage	Misspelled and misused words throughout

I hope you find reading this Handbook an enjoyable and a rewarding experience.

Mohamed Combo Kamanda  
(Executive Secretary)

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## Appendix 5 Creative Writing Rubric

### Creative Writing Rubric: Criteria for Grading Creative Writing

A	B	C	D / F	
Meaning/Content: the extent to which the assignment exhibits sound understanding/interpretation/analysis				
Story Structure	Establishes strong plot/setting/ character/ point of view	Establishes plot/setting/ character/ Point of view	Some elements of story structure; little blending of dialogue and narration	Few/no story structure elements present
Character -isation	Develops complex characters through dialogue, narration and action	Develops characters through dialogue, narration and action	Some character development	Characters are not developed
Development: the extent to which ideas are elaborated, using specific and relevant evidence				
Ideas	Develops ideas clearly and fully; uses a wide range of relevant details	Develops ideas clearly; uses relevant details	Develops ideas briefly; uses some detail	Uses incomplete or undeveloped details
Organization: the extent to which the assignment exhibits direction, shape, and coherence				
Designing Organ-isation	Maintains a clear focus; exhibits a logical, coherent structure through appropriate. transitions	Maintains a clear focus; exhibits a logical sequence of ideas through appropriate transitions	Establishes but does not always maintain an appropriate focus; some inconsistencies in sequence of ideas	Lacks an appropriate focus, but suggests some organization

Student presentations to the relevant groups involved in the issue (local council, hearings, commission, etc.)

Ensure adequate time to complete presentations, and plan a short debriefing period at the end of each class to review, correct errors, or clarify misconceptions

### **Debriefing**

Accept that there may not be a “right answer” or one that will satisfy everyone.

Encourage some form of resolution to a problem and seek compromise if possible.

Encourage students to reflect and “make peace” with classmates.

### **MEET THE STAFF**

NO.	POSITION	NAME
1	Secretary General	Dr. Mohamed Combo Kamanda
2	Deputy Secretary General	Adikalie Sheku Kamara
3	Principal Programme Officer	Vacant
4	Senior Programme Officer	Vacant
5	Programme Officer 1	Mr. Winston Mella Jalloh
6	Programme Officer 2	Patrick Lamin Blango
7	Confidential Secretary	Miss Zinzi Fannella Felix-George
8	Finance Officer	Vacant
9	Officer Assistant	Mr. Musa Amara Lukay
10	Driver	Mr. Ernest Blango Jnr

### **Secretary General**



Dr. Mohamed Combo Kamanda(PhD & MA Ed from the University of Southampton in the UK, BA Ed with a distinction in Teaching Practice from the University of Sierra Leone) is a trained, qualified teacher trainer and former lecturer of Language and Literature in Education, Linguistics, English Language, Literature, communication skills and African Studies. As well as having taught English and Literature both at home and in the UK, he had served as

Chief Examiner of Language Arts in Sierra Leone. He has a vast experience in creative writing, published and directed plays for stage performances and currently (serves as Chief Editor of Sierra Leone Writers Series), and organized debates on contemporary issues at local, national and international levels. He has also worked as a consultant for Communication Skills at INDEPTH Network Sites in Ghana and Thailand and for Development Education for the Africa Centre Department of Peace Studies in Bradford University, UK.

## **Deputy Secretary**



Adikalie Sheku Kamara is a trained and qualified human rights and peacebuilding practitioner with vast experience in national and international issues relating to peace, security, human rights and development. He is a PhD candidate at the University of Bradford in the UK and has worked as a Research Associate at the John and Elnora Ferguson Centre for African Studies (JEFCAS) - University of Bradford. He has also worked with GOAL IRELAND as a Community

Facilitator attached to the Street Children's programme in Sierra Leone, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone offices in Freetown and The Hague. He has participated in several research projects on Transitional Justice, Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Reconciliation. His current publication "A Trauma-Informed Approach to the Protection and Support of Witnesses in International Tribunals: Ten Guiding Principles" is published at the *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 2017.

## **Programme Officer 1**



Mr. Winston Mella Jalloh is a social scientist, programs and policy leader and communication. He holds a B.A. (specialized Honors) in political science from York University, and an M.A. in International Relations and Global politics from the University of Windsor in Canada, where he served as a research and teaching assistant. Mr. Jalloh also graduated with a Diploma in Cultural Studies from

Fourah Bay College (USL).

He has worked in the not-for-profit sector for over a decade, and his experiences include program management and community engagement. He has been a leader especially in matters relating to program design, content, delivery and public education.

Winston has served at both the national and international levels. An avid reader, Mr. Jalloh has a working knowledge of French.

Determine the format or strategy for the discussion (formal debate, persuasive speeches, structured controversy, panel discussion)  
Have students write an individual position paper (can be revised at end of exercise to see if views or understanding of issue have changed)

## **Discussion of Controversial Issues**

Ensure students understand the issue and can restate it in their own words.  
Assist students in finding reliable information from a variety of sources  
Assist students in making the distinction between fact and opinion and between informed opinion and bias.  
Help students classify information into appropriate categories  
Acknowledge that there may be diverse views on the issue  
Listen to each view and respect the student's rights to voice without interruption  
Allow time for all views to be presented fairly, questioned and discussed

## **Information Gathering Strategies**

A Gallery Walk of headlines, articles, and pictures to familiarise students with the topic  
A sharing circle could be used for initial input by students (allow them to pass)  
Brainstorm and list what students already know about the issue  
Seek to balance information on the various perspectives  
Invite guest speakers to the class representing the various perspectives  
If appropriate, plan a field study to view the problem first hand  
Assist students in finding and evaluating information sources  
Have students make use of pro/con discussion charts to become familiar with other viewpoints

## **Presentation of Controversial Issues**

Panel discussion  
Town-hall type meeting  
Role-play of a situation related to the controversial issue  
Writing news articles, editorials, letter to the editor or cartoons, to highlight different viewpoints  
Persuasive speeches representing the different viewpoints  
Conducting a formal debate or structured controversy  
A television interview to reflect each viewpoint



## **Appendix 4**

A Guideline for Dealing with controversial/conflicting issues

A controversial issue is one which results in a dispute and disagreement, due to differences of opinion. In Sierra Leone of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, there abounds countless controversial issues. As citizens of a democracy, students will often be confronted with diverse viewpoints and may require value clarification, negotiation and compromise. Aside from knowledge-based outcomes about the issues themselves, the activities of UNESCO Clubs will result in a number of skill outcomes including learning to articulate viewpoints clearly, listening to and understanding others opinions and the art of turn-taking in dialogue.

Dealing with controversial issues may become highly emotional, particularly if they involve values, beliefs and ethical principles. Issues surrounding questions of resource use and management, land use, distribution of food resources, economic activities, preserving the environment, climate change, traditions and cultural practices may lead to controversy in the classroom. Controversies surrounding these issues are difficult to avoid; however, teachers and students must keep in mind that it is the quality of the argument that is important, rather than who is perceived as victorious. Sometimes referred to as creative or structured controversy, the focus on quality argument in a non-threatening and objective setting can promote rigorous debate, lead to a deeper understanding of the issues, and a greater respect for decision-making processes.

### **When Controversy Arises**

Clarify the nature of the conflict and the potential implications.

Plan how to deal with discussion and debate of the issue

Be sensitive to the students and the community's feelings

Determine if any student or family will be personally affected

Discuss the issues and plan strategies with a colleague or the principal.

Ensure that information is available to support all sides of the argument

Avoid taking sides, remain neutral and objective.

### **Preparing for Discussion and Debate**

Clearly define the issue

Identify outcomes and establish a purpose for the discussion or debate.

Establish parameters and rules for the discussion (could include student input)

Remind students that the discussion is focused on the issue, not on personalities (personal attacks should not be tolerated)

## **Programme Officer 2**



Mr. Patrick Lamin Blango is a trained and qualified civil engineer and ICT Technician. He has worked with local and international organizations and companies including; Children's Aid Direct UK, Universal Holdings an ICT firm, and LondonMining Company. He has vast experience in the Audio Visual field, which he has exhibited in most of our programs and workshops. Most recently, he

served in the office of the Chief Minister at State House as the Personal Assistant to the Chief Minister before joining the UNESCO Commission.

## **Confidential Secretary**



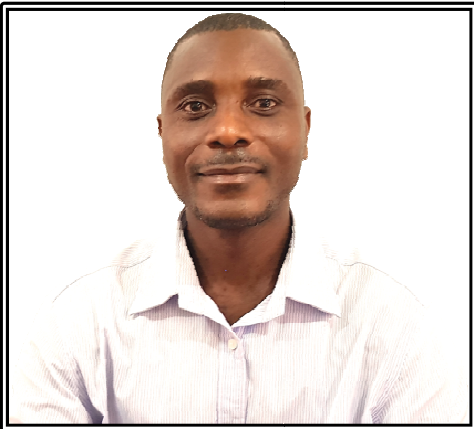
Miss Zinzi Fannella Felix-George is a trained Business Administration practitioner and she specializes in Human Resource Management. She has worked in the Administrative and clerical departments of different reputable organizations in Freetown. She has been working with the UNESCO National Commission for 12years now and has vast knowledge and experience about the Commission and UNESCO as a whole.

### **Office Assistant**



Musa Amara Lukay attended the St. Michael Primary School, and later enrolled at the Government Independence Memorial School. A student of accounting, he has worked for Mask Line Clearing and forwarding agency. Mr. Lukay has been working with the Commission as Office Assistant for the past three years.

### **Office Driver**



Mr. Ernest Blango Jnr is a Professional and well experienced driver with a mechanical background. His contribution to the commission has created an ease of movement with regards personnel and correspondents. In addition to his role as a driver, he is very supportive in other office assignments that aid the commission's smooth day to day operations.

opponent. Speakers should speak slowly and clearly. The judges and members of the audience should be taking notes as the debate proceeds. A typical sequence for debate, with suggested timelines, is as follows:

The first speaker on the affirmative team presents arguments in support of the resolution. (5 – 10 minutes)

The first speaker on the opposing team presents arguments opposing the resolution (5 – 10 minutes)

The second speaker on the affirmative team presents further arguments in support of the resolution, identifies areas of conflict, and answers questions that may have been raised by the opposition speaker (5 – 10 minutes)

The second speaker on the opposing team presents further arguments against the resolution, identifies further areas of conflict, and answers questions that may have been raised by the previous affirmative speaker. (5 – 10 minutes)

The rules may include a short recess for teams to prepare their rebuttals. (5minutes)

The opposition team begins with the rebuttal, attempting to defend the opposing argument and to defeat the supporting arguments without adding any new information. (3 – 5 minutes)

First rebuttal of the affirmative team (3 – 5 minutes)

Each team gets a second rebuttal for closing statements with the affirmative team having the last opportunity to speak. (3 – 5 minutes each)

There cannot be any interruptions. Speakers must wait their turns. The teacher may need to enforce the rules.

### **Post-Debate Discussion and Assessment**

When the formal debate is finished, allow time for debriefing and discussion. Members of the audience should be given an opportunity to ask questions and to contribute their own thoughts and opinions on the arguments presented. Members of the debate teams may also wish to reflect on their performance and seek feedback from the audience, including the teacher.



### **Appendix 3**

#### **A Guideline for Conducting a Debate**

A debate is a discussion or structured contest about an issue or a resolution. A formal debate involves two sides: one supporting a resolution and one opposing it. Such a debate is bound by rules preciously agreed upon. Debates may be judged in order to declare a winning side. Debates, in one form or another, are commonly used in democratic societies to explore and resolve issues and problems. Decisions at a board meeting, public hearing, legislative assembly, or local organization are often reached through discussion and debate. Indeed, any discussion of a resolution is a form of debate, which may or may not follow formal rules.

#### **Structure for Debate**

A formal debate usually involves three groups: one supporting a resolution (affirmative team), one opposing the resolution (opposing team), and those who are judging the quality of the evidence and arguments and the performance in the debate. The affirmative and opposing teams usually consist of three members each, while the judging may be done by the teacher, a small group of students, or the class as a whole, or by external officials selected for the purpose. In addition to the three specific groups, there may be an audience (made up of class members) not involved in the formal debate. A specific resolution is developed and rules for the debate are established.

#### **Debate Preparation:**

Develop the resolution to be debated

Organize the teams

Establish the rules of the debate, including timelines

Research the topic and prepare logical arguments

Gather supporting evidence and examples of position taken

Anticipate counter arguments and prepare rebuttals

Team members plan the order and content of speaking in the debate

Prepare the room for the debate

Establish expectations, for assessment of debate.

#### **Conducting Debate:**

Debate opens with the affirmative team (the team that supports the resolution) presenting their arguments, followed by a member of the opposing team. This pattern is repeated for the second speaker in each team. Finally, each team gets an opportunity for rebutting the arguments of the

### **CHARTER OF NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO**

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

‘The purpose of UNESCO is to contribute to Peace and Security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, Science and Culture in order to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the worlds, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the charter of the United Nations.’

#### **NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO** **(Established under Article VII of the Constitution)**

#### **Article I – Purpose and Functions**

The function of the National Commissions is to involve in UNESCO’s activities, the various ministerial departments, agencies, institutions, organisations and individuals working for the advancement of Education, Science, Culture and information by:

Contributing to the maintenance of Peace and Security and the common welfare of society

Playing an ever increasing role in UNESCO’s work and particularly in the formulation and execution of its programmes

#### **Article II – Role of National Commissions in their Relation to Member States**

In general, National Commissions:

Foster close liaison between state agencies and services, professional and other associations, universities and other centres of research and education, and other institutions concerned with education, the sciences, culture and information.

Co-operate with the delegations of our government at the General Conference and at other intergovernmental meetings concerned by UNESCO, by preparing the contributions of our government to the work of these meetings.

Follow the development of UNESCO’s programmes and call the attention of the appropriate agencies to the potential benefits of international co-operation.

Contribute to national activities related to UNESCO's programmes and to the evaluation thereof.

Provide a channel for disseminating information obtained from other countries on matters of domestic interest in education, the sciences, culture and information.

Encourage at the National level, interdisciplinary dialogue and co-operation between institutions concerned with education, sciences, cultural and information with a view to helping to bring intellectual resources to bear a certain priorities for development.

### **Article III – Services Rendered to UNESCO by National Commissions**

The National Commission ensures the permanent presence of UNESCO in Sierra Leone and contributes to the organization's effort to promote international co-operation in the field of intellectual activities.

National Commissions are important sources of information for UNESCO on national requirements and priorities in regard to education, science, culture and information.

National Commissions disseminate information:

To the Mass Media and general public, on UNESCO's objectives and programmes and activities

To individuals and institutions concerned with any aspect of UNESCO's work.

## **Appendix 2 (Tentative Heritage Site)**

### **Western Area Peninsula National Park**

The Western Area Peninsula and the adjacent Banana Islands have lush rainforest, pristine beaches, breath-taking, steep mountains, a unique and long-standing culture and great history. The Western Area Peninsula, which is part of the Upper Guinean Forest Ecosystem, is located on the west coast of the country and is home to roughly 1 to 1.5 million people (20% of the country's total population).

The Western Area Peninsula National Park (WAP-NP), occupying the centre of the peninsula, covers about 17,000 hectares of closed forest. The beauty and natural significance of WAP-NP is still well preserved. Hosting a range of hills with a highest peak at 971 meters, the forest vegetation can be described as still 60% pristine and has a manifold wildlife bordering directly to the coastline, making WAP-NP truly unique in West Africa. The Reserve is one of the eight biodiversity hot-spots of the country and hosts 80-90% of Sierra Leone's terrestrial biodiversity. Being a non-hunting reserve, rare animals are found such as Jenkins duikers and chimpanzees. Furthermore, to its crucial role as a biodiversity hot spot, the peninsula creates an inspiring image as the ocean meets the mountainous forest. Beaches in shining white colour are an attraction for national and international visitors. In addition to the natural significance the Western Area Peninsula has also been host to a dynamic and interesting human history when Freetown, Sierra Leone's present day capital city, was founded there as a settlement for black men freed from slavery in England and America. The Western Area Peninsula holds many tangible and intangible cultural resources around this history.

## Appendix 1 (Tentative Heritage Site)

### **TIWAI ISLAND WILDLIFE**

#### **Community Conservation Initiative**

Tiwai is a community conservation programme, managed by the Tiwai Island Administrative Committee (TIAC), which represents both communities, government, Universities & conservation organizations. All funds raised go towards running the project as well as supporting the Community Development Fund, to help finance community initiated programmes.









The Moa river journeys from Guinea, close to the tip of the river Niger, travelling south across Sierra Leone & flushing out in to the Atlantic Ocean. The wide open river hosts a cluster of islands, including Tiwai. You can take a river tour in canoe or motorboat, watching birds fly overhead or river turtles surface. For explorers, night tours search for the elusive and extremely rare pygmy hippopotamus.

At the tip of Tiwai's northern edge lies one of two stretches of sandy beach. Access to the beach is seasonal, as in the rainy season, the sandy mounds are hidden underwater. You can enjoy a cooling swim in the fresh water ... look out for river otter paw prints as they sometimes like to play on the sand.

Webs of trails weave through the Tiwai forest, allowing visitors and researchers to explore up to 50 km of walking paths. If you move silently through the forest, you can glimpse some of the rarest & most colourful primates in the world, such as the Diana & Colobus monkeys.

## **What We Promote**

No.	Concept	Image
1.	Universal respect for justice	
2.	Respect for the rule of law	
3.	Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms	
4.	Promote peace and security	
5.	Gender equality	
6.	Equality of religions, languages and ethnicity	

## **SIERRA LEONE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO:**

### **A Historical Background**

UNESCO is the only UN Agency to have a global network of National Cooperating bodies known as National Commissions for UNESCO. National Commissions make part of the overall Constitutional architecture of the organisation.

Set up by their respective governments in accordance with Article VII of the UNESCO Constitution, National Commissions operate on a permanent basis, for the purpose of associating their governmental and non-governmental bodies in education, sciences, culture and communication with the work of the organisation.

Presently, there are 199 National Commissions for UNESCO across the world. We constitute a truly global family with an authoritative network of stakeholders, partners and experts. This network plays an important role in coordinating with partners' activities and the promotion of UNESCO'S visibility at the country level.

Since its establishment in 1973, THE Sierra Leone National Commission for UNESCO has worked with line ministries and several other bilateral organisations to promote UNESCO and the Commission's projects in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone joined UNESCO in 1962. Between the years 1976 and 1980, the country was represented on the UNESCO Executive Board (the highest decision-making body in the Organisation) by Mr. Arthur T. Porter. Since then, Sierra Leone's representation on this August Body has not been very effective; we have been operating from our Permanent Delegation office in Brussels: the Embassy of Sierra Leone.

Over the years, we have had 6 Sierra Leoneans working in UNESCO with Mr. William Conton rising to one of the highest positions as Assistant Director General UNESCO.

Although UNESCO stands for the promotion of International Peace and understanding through its fields of competence: Education, Science, Culture and Communication, its impact is greatly felt in the education sector. In Sierra Leone for example UNESCO has assisted in the following areas: Assistance in expanding the Milton Margai Teachers College.

	political process.	
July 2019	Using Procurement Procedures for printing the UNESCO Handbook for Clubs & Associations	Completed
July 2019	Print the UNESCO handbook	In progress
September 2019 to November 2019	Distributing UNESCO Handbook to UNESCO Clubs and Associations. UNESCO School Clubs Debate Competition. Contemporary issues to debate: The Commission of Inquiry is a witch hunt exercise irrelevant and unnecessary for national cohesion and development. The first step to nation building is developing its human capital, not road network Investing in football only breeds hooliganism, violence and more crime in society Our secret societies are bastions of our cultural heritage and should be honored and preserved, not pillaged by Western intruders For an effective ECOWAS integration all member countries should adopt a language policy that makes the learning of French and English compulsory at JSS and SSS Creative Writing Competitions The Commission of inquiry Free Quality Education (FQE)	<i>See Appendix 1 and 2 for a guideline on debating controversial issues in society</i>
September 2019 to January 2020	Commencement of the National Peace & Civic Education (NaPeaCE) project	In Progress





**Adults in a Literacy Class:** You're not too old to learn

### **WHAT NATCOM PLANS TO DO IN IMMEDIATE SHORT AND MEDIUM TERMS**

Time line	Activity	Feedback
January 2019	Produced and posted project proposal on Capacity Strengthening for Arabic teachers at JSS & SSS.	Evaluation Not successful: To await 2020
February 2019	Produced a draft of the UNESCO booklet for UNESCO Clubs and the wider Sierra Leonean readership.	completed
March 2019	Developed proposals for printing and distributing the UNESCO Booklets to Clubs and Associations.	In Progress
March 2019	Submitted proposal to the Ministry for Printing and Distributing UNESCO Handbooks to the 35 UNESCO clubs and 2 Associations in the country.	Achieved – proposal funded by REDiSL
April 2019	Developing proposals for funding to conduct inter secondary school debate and essay writing competition	In Progress
May 2019	Conducted a Leadership and Mentorship workshop for Sitting MPs and Councillors.	Completed
May 2019	Regional launch of <i>Salamatu</i> : A documentary DVD produced by MOPAD for UNESCO for promoting Women's empowerment and participation in the	Completed

Construction of Bunumbu Teachers College for the training of Poly-valent teacher's nationwide.

Provide equipment for the establishment of the Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography under the University of Sierra Leone.

Financial assistance for setting up the SLENA Office, etc.

The work of UNESCO is coordinated by the National Commission for UNESCO chaired currently by the Hon. Minister of Technical and Higher Education (Professor Aiah Gbakima) and administered by the Secretary General.

The Commission interacts with the Headquarter Office in Paris through the Regional Office in Abuja. From time to time the Director pays official visits to Sierra Leone to make follow-up on programmes executed by UNESCO.

### **SLNatComfor UNESCO's main Programmes from 2003 to 2018 have been as follows:**

#### **Educational Promotion**

The Commission has been working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education. Recently, we conducted a survey of Arabic Teachers and the general teaching staff in which the following were observed:-

There is a low level of awareness on primary education nationwide. The government's flagship programme: The Free Quality Education is a welcome relief that will robustly reverse this trend.

Inadequate primary schools in the rural areas e.g. a chiefdom comprising about 70 villages and with a population of 3,800 school-aged-going children has only 5 primary schools!!

Some parents prefer to send their children (ages 5-7) of school going age to live with relatives in bigger towns, both for economic and security reasons.

The Commission's focus on education has therefore been on the rehabilitation, supply of furniture and other sustainable projects to rural community schools with funds provided by UNESCO

#### **Vocational Training for Teenager/Young Adults**

The eleven year old rebel war affected the rural areas in Sierra Leone; it halted all economic activities and educational programmes as well. These seriously affected our growing teenage/youth population in a country, among whom illiteracy levels are surprisingly high. The Commission catered for this group with special focus on child ex-combatants. Added to this group

are the orphans left behind by the Ebola menace, who as a result of stigmatization, continue to face exclusion from education and training.

Vocational training targeting these constituencies has greatly helped and will continue to help minimize petty crime rate and discourage prostitution among teenage girls, who are often potential victims of HIV/AIDS.

### **UNESCO Clubs**

#### **UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations**

The UNESCO Clubs, UNESCO Centres and UNESCO Associations are groups of volunteers of different ages and socio-professional status, who become activists in the service of UNESCO's ideals. The activities carried out by the Clubs, Centres and Associations are varied and usually depend on the interests of their members, as well as the financial resources and means of action available. These initiatives foster the dissemination of UNESCO's principles and objectives in civil society. The UNESCO Clubs make it possible to publicize the values represented by the organisation in local communities. Clubs can play a key part in educating citizens, contribute to dialogue between cultures and generations for sustainable development.

The National Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Association (NAFUCA) is the national body responsible for coordinating and overseeing the activities of UNESCO clubs and association in Sierra Leone. There are thirty-five UNESCO clubs and one association in the country with membership of 1000 males and females aged between 10 – 35 years.

The present UNESCO Clubs movement in Sierra Leone started in 1975, when Mr. H. L. Tucker of the Ministry of Education introduced the idea of UNESCO Clubs to various institutions of learning. It was, however, not until April 1986 that the UNESCO clubs movement took a new dimension, and this was mainly through the efforts of Mrs. Cass, in collaboration with the National Commission for UNESCO.

A National Federation of UNESCO clubs was established in December 1986. On 7<sup>th</sup> May 1987 it was formally launched and then affiliated to the World Federation of UNESCO clubs, centres and Association (WAFUCA). As an organisation through the National Commission for UNESCO.

### **AIMS AND ROLES OF UNESCO CLUBS**

In order to promote universal peace among nations worldwide, UNESCO's national clubs, supervised by the Commission, help to promote education, Science, Culture and communication for the rule of law in societies.

From time to time, UNESCO Clubs hold seminars where contemporary controversial issues are debated by members. The clubs rely on UNESCO for funding when projects are approved.



A Debate Scene

#### **Support to Higher Education:**

Deserving Sierra Leoneans have, over the years, benefited from UNESCO awards through the Commission and continue to do so whenever such opportunities arise. Some of these beneficiaries are Science Students who on their return, help to impart knowledge to our pupils and students in various institutions.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, the Commission also hosts cultural shows and has plans for visiting Tentative HERITAGE Sites Centres.

#### **Support to Rural Women's Literacy Programme**

In order to empower rural women, the Commission has in the past catered for funding for the promotion of deprived rural women through vocational training skills such as: tailoring, soap making, gara tie dyeing, etc.

Teenage girls considered as early school leavers because of unwanted pregnancy and poverty, also benefit from these programmes. In collaboration with other line ministries/agencies, the Commission continues to support UNESCO's initiative in these areas.