



MBSSE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Friday, September 2nd 2022

ISSUE 20



Minister for Basic and Senior Secondary Education Dr. Moinina David Sengeh

IN THIS ISSUE

Largest Education Outcomes Funding Program in the World Launched In Sierra Leone, \$18m USD

800 Out-of-School girls re-integrated in 2022

MBSSE trains stakeholders on Comprehensive Sexuality Education Curriculum rollout

National School Health Policy Endorsed by Cabinet of Sierra Leone

Largest Education Outcomes Funding Program in the World Launched In Sierra Leone, \$18m USD

The Education Outcomes Fund (EOF) has on Thursday 1st September launched the Sierra Leone Education Innovation Challenge (SLEIC) which is the largest ever outcomes fund for education focused giving, helping 134,000 children in 325 public primary schools in Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone Education Innovation

Challenge (SLEIC) is an \$18M USD program, co-financed by the government of Sierra Leone and international donors that will fund five, child and education focused organizations to improve children's literacy and numeracy outcomes in state primary schools, with a particular focus on improving girls

education outcomes.

Sierra Leonean Education Minister Dr. David Moinina Sengh joined Madam Emma Spicer of the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) in launching SLEIC at a ceremony in Freetown announcing the start of the program.

"The Government of Sierra Leone is excited about partnering with EOF to launch the Sierra Leone Education Innovation Challenge. The program will directly support children across the country and generate important evidence on which innovative education interventions can help drive foundational learning outcomes for all children. It is a perfect example of how we leverage innovation to transform our education service delivery and financing to deliver on the government's promise of free quality school education for all," Dr. Sengh said.

Using an outcomes-based approach, organizations involved will be paid once their interventions have shown improvements in children's literacy and numeracy. They are a mix of local and global providers, including National Youth Awareness Forum, Rising Academies, Street Child, EducAID and Save the Children. The program will be rigorously evaluated to understand their impact on learning, enabling evaluators to identify the approaches that are most effective.

The approach utilizes social impact bonds whose model has been successfully implemented in other sectors on a smaller scale. EOF has taken the steps in its programmatic approach to help scale up the output of impact bonds for its programs.

The program has sustainability at its core. The interventions are designed to be both affordable

and scalable so that the government can incorporate them into future education policy and scale up the most impactful approaches to a national level after the program finishes in 2025.

"We face an unprecedented global learning crisis that requires a different approach to funding education programs and measuring their impact. Access to quality education improves lives and livelihoods. Education equals opportunity. We are working with the Sierra Leonean government to develop programs that are evidence-driven, enable innovation, and most importantly, measurably improve the quality of education for children and young people in the country," according to Amel Karboul, CEO of EOF.

In 2018, the Sierra Leonean government made education more accessible through their Free Quality School Education (FQSE) policy that eliminated school fees in public schools which helped improve attendance and increased school access for 700,000 students. They now aim to improve the quality of education through SLEIC, and are providing \$1.5 million USD in funding for the program.

Though a child in Sierra Leone can expect to complete 8.9 years of school, they only acquire 4.5 years of actual learning given the current education challenges in the country. As recent as 2014, 87% of Primary 2 students (ages 7-8) were considered illiterate.

Governments around the world have shown interest in this approach, with EOF developing a broad pipeline of opportunities beyond Sierra Leone to support learning and employment outcomes for 10 million children and young people around the world.



800 Out-of-School girls re-integrated in 2022

The Minister of Basis Education, Dr. Moinina David Sengeh, has said that we often hear about Government policies on paper but now Radical Inclusion which, according to him, is one central policy of Government that seeks to ensure that everyone and especially those historically and systematically left behind are given the same access to quality education.

He noted that radical inclusion prioritizes pregnant girls and parents learners, kids with special needs, the poor and those in remote areas maintaining that everyone at MBSSE and beyond has embraced the policy fully in practice underscoring how we hear it everywhere and the (less fortunate) children of Sierra Leone are grateful!

He said one such champion is Dr Olive Musa whom is the Director of Non-formal and Adult Education at the Ministry leading (silently in the background) on several projects including the deployment of 202 Adult Literacy Centers around the country and ensuring that Literacy Organizers and Volunteers continue teaching literacy, numeracy and life skills in additional 60 Community Learning Centers.

"I tell her she does the Lord's work because her unit is often under-resourced," the Minister jokingly stated.

Dr. Moinina David Sengeh revealed that just in 2022, through the Out of School Girls Integration program with UNFPA Sierra Leone, Dr Musa and her team reintegrate 800 learners (11-18 yr olds) in schools in Kambia, Moyamba, Koinadugu and Pujehun.

He said that prior to integration; the girls get literacy, numeracy and sexual and reproductive health training, adding that they get a package



that includes shoes, bags, uniforms, books etc. They meet with a nurse and other counseling professionals before going back to school.

The Minister disclosed that for the 200 girls integrated back to school in March, 100% of them completed their school year and is primed to return next week. 600 other girls will start school on September 5th in those four districts.

He said there are several other partners who are working on integrating girls saying others like Purposeful are helping with data, new thinking and creating spaces for them including grants thanking them all for their supports.

"Yes, we achieved gender parity in four years, Yes, we have over an additional one million learners since President Bio's Free Quality School Education," the Minister said.

He emphatically pointed out that it is not the final number noting that the country has over 230,000 out of school children alone in Primary School maintaining how there is more work to be done pledging commitment to do it with total support.

The Minister said one thing that is clear is that everyone and especially his team are not just believers but they are champions of #RadicalInclusion because it is the Just thing to do!

MBSSE trains stakeholders on Comprehensive Sexuality Education Curriculum rollout



The Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) in partnership with United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA) and IrishAid has on Tuesday 30th August at Occasion Resort Lakka held a stakeholders training on community engagement on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).

The training targeted key stakeholders like line ministries, civil society groups, Paramount Chiefs, International Non-governmental Organizations, the media, teachers, Marie Stopes Sierra Leone, among others. The rationale of the training is to ensure that the key stakeholders accept the rolling out of the CSE curriculum in schools and take the message to the public.

Madam Nadia Rasheed, Country Representative, UNFPA Sierra Leone described the stakeholders meeting on community engagement as a key point in the journey to advance CSE under the leadership of MBSSE and in line with the recommendations of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Taskforce.

She said UNFPA was proud to co-chair the taskforce, alongside the Chief Education Officer (CEO), and they were delighted with the progress that has been achieved to date.

"We recognized that CSE is critical to empowering young people, enabling them to advocate for their health, well-being and dignity, and protecting them from coercion, unintended pregnancy and sexual transmitted infections. CSE provides a necessary toolkit for knowledge, attitudes and skills to help young people make choices in a meaningful way, while also advancing gender equality and human rights," she said.

According to her, globally, UNFPA's three overarching goals are to: end the unmet need for family planning; end preventable maternal death; and end gender-based violence and other harmful practices, noting that CSE is a key contributor to all three of these transforming goals.

The Senior Education Advisor, Embassy of Ireland, Sierra Leone Mrs Cecilia Brown said the Embassy's primary objective is to ensure that women and girls, living in poverty, contribute to and benefit from a more inclusive, resilient and equitable Sierra Leone.

She said the occasion is very important for the children of Sierra Leone, especially girls and for them as development partners, adding that the Embassy appreciates the commitments and enthusiasm of partners and it is their hope that the curriculum will positively impact in bridging the existing knowledge and skills gap on comprehensive sexuality.

The Chief Education Officer (CEO) in the MBSSE Professor Yatta Kanu stated that the MBSSE is not only returning pregnant girls to school, but also providing them with the tool to succeed which is Comprehensive Sexuality Education.

She said CSE is so important and integral to the ministry's work in reforming education in Sierra Leone.

According to her, the four principles that guide the work of the Ministry are encompassed in the CSE, noting that the four principles are; access, equity, comprehensive safety and quality education.

During the validation exercise of the CSE curriculum in Freetown, the Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education Dr. David Moinina Sengeh regarded the CSE curriculum as an important milestone in his Ministry's ambitious agenda to contribute to the Government's Human Capital Development aspirations as articulated in the Medium-Term National Development Plan.

"One of the most effective ways to keep learners in school is to empower them with the knowledge that enables them to make informed decisions about life choices. The role of CSE in this regard enables the protection of learners against unintended pregnancy by providing them with the necessary skills to develop effective decision making and communication skills, explore values and attitudes and be made aware of risk reduction skills," he said.

He said the implementation of the CSE involves not only teachers but also parents, schools, communities, service providers, traditional and religious leaders, civil society organisations, and other relevant stakeholders.

Augustine Sankoh

Strategic Communications Analyst MBSSE
asankoh@education.gov.sl

Public education on Public Education:

National School Health Policy Endorsed by Cabinet of Sierra Leone

Today, the Cabinet of #SierraLeone led by @PresidentBio passed a truly progressive and transformational policy on School Health. Lots of aspects are already being implemented by Govt and partners but it's focus on mental health, social well-being, SRH etc are examples of how we are #TransformingEducation

The Policy comes with a full package including a Strategy, M&E and Implementation frameworks involving everyone involved with children in and out of school. In the foreword, my colleague Minister and I wrote; "This policy and strategy are therefore a call to action - a call to level out the inequities that exist in society with regards not just to education and health, but other social drivers such as poverty and gender issues... We have a duty of care to our children."

While we've had a National School Health Programme since 1963 at the Ministry of Health, this is the first comprehensive school health policy that brings together all stakeholders with clear roles and functions for providing holistic health services for our children.

Many many people worked hard to make this happen. The folks at both Ministries of Health and Basic Education and in particular Mrs Patricia Bah at the MoHS Secretariat of Teenage Pregnancy.

The success of this policy will depend on our teachers, our schools and parents/communities.

If nearly 50% of our 19 year olds have begun childbearing; and nearly 50% of all maternal deaths



are 19 year olds; and majority of our 19 year olds should be at the end or recently completed secondary school, you don't need to be a scientist to understand why this is transformational.

These are moments when the history of our country are being written and what a true privilege to be part of the team writing and implementing those foundational policies.

The journey is exciting but there's nothing more special than walking this course with truly exceptional people equally if not more eager for change.

#KamJoinWi
#PaolaSaloneMusBetteh

**Get in
touch**

Contact Us

+232 78 316 181
info@mbsse.gov.sl
www.mbsse.gov.sl

Our Location

New England Ville,
Freetown,
Sierra Leone