



Annual Report

2014

Goderich Waldorf School

SIERRA LEONE, WEST AFRICA



Class teachers



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Background

2014 started with great optimism and expectations to share and enjoy the gifts of love and life as a school and Community. On January 5, 2014, children at the Goderich Waldorf School in Rokel, circled around lighted candles and offered prayers ushering in the blessings that the New year may bring. The teachers and staff had clear plans and 'magic wands' to make the dreams and prayers come true through their work.

The Rokel community, where the Goderich Waldorf school is located, has a little over 3,000 inhabitants. The school has a population of 217 children, 8 staff and 5 volunteers. At the beginning of the year, the faculty had planned to construct a teacher quarter, refurbish the school well and continue with the school poultry as tangible projects.

However, Since March of 2014, the largest and most urbanized Ebola epidemic in history has continued to devastate Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia. Beginning as a public health emergency, the epidemic has thrust affected countries into a complex social, humanitarian and economic crisis. Sierra Leone, the worst affected country in West Africa, recorded over 9,000 cases as of December 31, 2014 across the country. While the Western region and especially communities (Waterloo, Rokel, Hastings) near the Country's capital City, Freetown had the highest cases since December.

Meanwhile, The Government of Sierra Leone, UNICEF and other development partners have supported the production of radio programs in basic literacy, mathematics and social studies as an Emergency in Education approach. This is not the best of solution to children's learning in situation wherein most families do not have radios or can afford to buy batteries regularly to help their children listen to 'learning by radio slots'-It means again that majority of the children in impoverished families will not benefit from this emergency response. This is indeed not the best, but the only response in a health emergency that the world is grappling with.

Between December 23-29, 2014, The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) again urged organisations and communities to increase awareness on Ebola and take responsible actions to halt the spread of the disease before the end of the year.

Although, the invasion of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease in West Africa and especially Sierra Leone continues to terrorised everyone, we are thankful that the disease has not claim the lives of any immediate school family (Children and staff). What has been the most difficult for families is the long days (21days or more) of been in quarantined in their homes without basic support in some cases. Mostly, when people are identified as having contact with infected persons, the community is quarantined and marginalised or stigmatised for fear of possible transmission of the virus. Moreso, the authorities' response to support communities quarantined have been slow, making children to suffer the most.

Many families (43) whose children attended the Goderich Waldorf School have been affected when suspected communities are under quarantine. As a result, the school management responded in kind to the basic needs of some families. Given that household were experiencing immense hardships, available school funds received as donations for 2014 were used to purchase food supplies for 100 families(see 2014 funding breakdown below).

The donation was presented to the Ebola Response team (psychosocial Unit) and supplied to 100 affected families in the Rokel Communities.

Food items included:

- 100 bags (25kg) of rice
- 100 gallons of vegetable oil
- 100 packets cooking salt



Community Health Volunteers supplied Food (house- to -house) to some affected families

Situation of our 217 Children



Children are all at home and 90% are involved in house chores, taking care of their younger siblings and the elderly. They are at risk of child labour and missing out of school if the situation continues.

Children are traumatised at seeing dead bodies and areas they live in are being quarantined. ***'Images of ambulances, masked people and body bags are very prominent in the thoughts and drawings of children we came in contact with during this period'*** said a community health volunteer who participated in the food distribution activity.

Soap for washing to households for Children during the Ebola awareness sessions



Children Listening to Ebola Prevention messages during awareness raising sessions. Also a girl demonstrating home hand washing practice(chlorine/ water mixture) in Morouth Village, RoKel Communities.

In response to the national crisis, schools in the country are still closed, severely limiting students' access to essential education services and threatening to derail a decade of hard-won post-war education gains. With the prolonged closure of schools, many education activities and agencies are no longer operational.



Volunteers showing how to prepare chlorine/water mixture for hand washing and setting up of bucket with fore-sets in homes..

In view of the raging Ebola Virus Diseases (EVD) which will continue to affect the social, economic and educational development of the communities, the school faculty decided to contribute to efforts to creating awareness on EVD prevention, transmission and protection using health care workers who are mandated to lead and support community initiatives.

20 Community Health Volunteers and 5 Nurses were hired to reach the homes of 217 students and teach them on EVD and practical ways to prevent the disease focusing on individual, family and community responsibility..



Community awareness on Ebola Virus Disease and sexual Abuse prevention targeting girls in John-Top Village, Rokel Communities.



Four community members who survived the Ebola came together to share their terrible experiences as infected persons at the Ebola Treatment Unit(ETU). After recovery and discharged from the ETU, they complained of stigmatization and isolation in their communities. Meanwhile, they counted themselves blessed as survivors because Ebola has no cure with 90% fatality of infected persons.. They admonished audience to report at health facilities immediately if they feel symptoms or have any contact with infected or dead persons.



Awareness raising targeting different sections in the communities

During the community raising, a baby girl born at home by a mother who was afraid of going to health facility in fear of contracting the EVD. The mother was in labor for 6 hours and by stroke of luck the school team arrived and the nurses in the team helped to deliver the baby. The school bought wrappers and clothes as Christmas gifts.



Morlie X(16yrs) peeping through his window watching a suspected Ebola infected person (a neighbor) manifesting early symptoms. They were initially quarantined by the community and later moved to the ETU by the District's Ebola Response Team on December 22, 2014

School Population

Class	No of pupils in class	No of Boys	No of Girls
1.	51	29	22
2.	37	13	24
3.	45	23	22
4.	44	26	18
5.	40	21	19
	217	112	105

School population for 2013/14 school year

Challenges and how we addressed them

- Encroachment on school land property theft. A **lawyer has been hired for legal representation**
- Need to provide housing for Staff on the school land. **A modest single room house was built on the school land to accommodate a teacher**

Our focus for 2015

Our Goal in 2015 is to improve **safety** and child protection while carrying out school based quality basic education activities. The school will work with health care-workers, teachers from other schools and communities to define safe spaces which will support the resilience and well-being of children and young people through community organized, structured activities. Our objectives are (1) to support the implementation of guidelines for safe school opening,(2) support teachers' to fulfill their role in Ebola social mobilization and (3) psychosocial support to children and families. These objectives are in line with the Ministry of Education's plan to safeguard children while providing education during and after the Ebola crisis. Our response will require additional fund raising for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management efforts when school reopens in 2015.

Appreciations:

We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to all our partners and friends who kept us in their prayers and in many ways continue to support our work. I would like to recognize all children, parents and teachers that have sacrificed their very precious resources to support us through the WOW-Day initiative.

Because many '**visible and invisible**' individuals are personally investing their time to create awareness and support us through their institutions, I would like to list few of these institutions below as an expression of our appreciation to them on behalf of the children of the Goderich Waldorf School:

- Waldorf schools Worldwide supporting our initiatives through WOW-DAY
- Camphill Milton Keynes, UK
- Freund der Erziehung Kunst Rudolf Steiner e.v , Germany
- Ringwood Waldorf School, UK
- Dhana Trust,UK
- Waldorf High School of Massachusetts Bay, USA
- Melbourne Rudolf Steiner, Australia
- Christopherus Homeschool Resources,USA
- Kings Langley Waldorf School, UK



1. Hand pump water construction

2. Completed well with safe drinking water to school and community



3. One bedroom house for staff



Laundry and bathing soap provided to household in the Rokel community on December 23rd

Funding information for 2014

Funding Sources	Amount received for 2014 in Leones	Total Expenditure to date	Purpose	Period	Comment on the use of funds
Freund der Erziehungunst Rudolf Steiner e.v Germany	Le98,727,896	Le98,727,896	School running and salaries	January-December 2014 12 months	Funds were mainly used to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pay school personnel , volunteers and coordination costs, • legal retainer's fees • Health emergency food support to support families in extremely difficult circumstances • Construction of a modest staff shelter • communications
Waldorf High School, Massachusetts of Bay, USA	Le12,402,264	Le12,250,000	Discretionary	11 th March 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbished building and damaged school Hand pump well that provided drinking water for 300 households in the school community • Part of this money was used to purchase food supplies
Melbourne Rudolf Steiner, Australia	Le5,383,743	Le5,350,000	Discretionary	4 th December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase soap, chlorine, hygiene kits and transportation cost to supply basic food items to families in 3 villages in the Rokel communities
Total	Le116,513,903	Le116,327, 896			