

Sierra Leone School Construction Project

Chaloner (Canada) Children's Charity – Street Child of Sierra Leone

Project overview

This project will carry out major school improvements in some of the most remote rural communities in Sierra Leone. Targeting up to 100 communities where children currently have no access to effective schooling, the project will support the development or improvement of appropriate school structures, ensuring that children have access to safe and effective learning environments. In some communities this may mean building a new school from scratch, in others renovation of dangerous and dilapidated structures which are not fit for purpose. The project will also ensure that classrooms are appropriately resourced with furniture, blackboards and teaching materials.

Street Child of Sierra Leone will work in partnership with communities to maximise the investment in infrastructure, ensuring strong community engagement throughout. Communities will commit locally available materials and unskilled labour towards the construction of their schools, creating a sense of community ownership whilst also maximising the reach of project provided resources. The project budget will cover imported materials and skilled labour required for construction as well as transportation of materials to remote locations. Allowance has also been made to secure the land survey documentation which each school requires in order to seek government approval.

Summary of progress

Since December, the project team have identified and carried out needs assessments of 100 rural primary schools across Sierra Leone. First community engagement visits have taken place across all schools, with plans developed in partnership with the communities. 33 of these schools require full construction, whilst 67 require urgent renovation work.

The initial phase of construction will target 24 schools across 5 clusters (listed in the table below). Those communities most advanced with preparation of bricks and local materials have been selected for the first round of construction support. Budgets have been developed for all of these projects, and MoUs have been signed with each community. The planned first phase includes 7 full construction and 17 renovation projects. Community engagement will continue throughout construction.

Phase 1 construction communities:

Village	Chiefdom	District	Construction	Renovation
Kpewama	Valunia	Bo	No	Yes
Njalihun	Valunia	Bo	No	Yes
Kangallu	Valunia	Bo	Yes	No
Foya	Valunia	Bo	No	Yes
Kpakimbu	Valunia	Bo	Yes	No
Ganya	Tambakha	Karene	Yes	No
Karamokorsoria	Tambakha	Karene	No	Yes
Tomparay Ferry	Tambakha	Karene	No	Yes
Salakunda	Tambakha	Karene	No	Yes
Laya	Tambakha	Karene	No	Yes
Isaia	Diang	Koinadugu	Yes	No
Badala	Diang	Koinadugu	No	Yes
Foria	Diang	Koinadugu	No	Yes

Koromantor	Diang	Koinadugu	No	Yes
Diang Sokralla	Diang	Koinadugu	No	Yes
Yardu Kongoh	Sandor	Kono	Yes	No
Chendeya	Sandor	Kono	No	Yes
Kayima	Sandor	Kono	No	Yes
Mbaoma	Sandor	Kono	Yes	No
Rowullah	Lokomasama	Port Loko	No	Yes
Masom	Lokomasama	Port Loko	No	Yes
Lungi Lol	Lokomasama	Port Loko	No	Yes
Gbom Makassa	Lokomasama	Port Loko	Yes	No
Shekuya	Lokomasama	Port Loko	No	Yes

Background stories for each of the 24 phase one schools

Cluster 1: Diang Chiefdom, Koinadugu District

Isaia, DEC Primary School

The school in Isaia was established in 2017 to prevent the high numbers of children dropping out of school. Diang is a mining area and, as children previously had to travel from Isaia to Badala to access primary school, it has been common for children to work in the mines rather than attend school. The school was operating under a thatch structure, however last year the community began constructing a 2 classroom building with mud blocks. One section of that structure has fallen down and the building is not safe or conducive for learning. The school presently has a total enrolment of 72 pupils and runs from classes 1 to 3. The school is not approved by government and the 3 teachers are untrained.

Koromator, RC Primary School

The school in Koromator was established in 2001 and currently has an enrolment of around 300 pupils. There are 6 teachers in total - 2 trained and 4 untrained. Three catchment villages send their children to this school. The School is not Government approved, although the community have started the registration process. The school building needs urgent renovation as it has a leaking roof, damaged windows and doors, and the floors are broken and dusty.

Foria, RC Primary School

The school in Foria was founded in 1976 and today has a total enrolment of 282 pupils. There are 5 teachers, 2 of whom are fully trained, 1 currently in training, and 2 others are untrained. There are 5 catchment villages that send their children to this school. The school has a 3 classroom building which has a leaking roof, damaged ceiling, and cracked walls in 2 classrooms which are extremely unsafe.

Diang Sokralla, MOF Primary School

The school started operations in 2002 originally as an Arabic school, but has now switched to teaching in English and adopted the national curriculum. The school floor is badly damaged, the walls are cracked and the roof is leaking during the rain. These repairs will create a much more conducive learning environment for the 147 children who attend the school. The school serves 3 catchment villages and is run by seven teachers - 2 trained, 2 in training, and 3 untrained.

Badala, RC Primary School

The school in Badala was established in 1988 and today has a total of 262 pupils and 4 teachers, of which only one is trained. There are two other villages that send their children to this school. The school has one 3 classroom structure built with mud blocks. The school building has a badly leaking roof, damaged ceilings, cracked walls and damaged floors.

Cluster 2: Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District

Mbaoma, Lutheran Primary school

The school in Mbaoma was originally founded and built in 1972 by a team of Lutheran missionaries but this school was destroyed during the war. Today, the school operates in a partially broken old mud structure, making the learning environment very challenging for children. The school runs from class 1 to 6 and there are 5 teachers, 4 of whom are currently on training pursuing a teaching certificate. The current school enrolment is 270 pupils.

Yardu Kongoh, KDEC Primary School

This community is located in a remote hilly area off the main road to Kayima. The community is operating the school inside a thatch structure which they have to rebuild every year and which is generally unsafe for children as the floor is dusty and rugged. Three other villages send their children to this school which runs from class 1 to 4 with two teachers.

Kayima, Sarah Islamic Primary School

This school was established in 2011 out of a growing need to reduce overcrowding in the then existing UMC primary school, as the only primary school in the chiefdom headquarter town. The school is not Government approved but the community is working very hard to meet the minimum requirements for approval by the Ministry of Education. The school structure is largely unfinished as the floors are not paved and the interior not painted, making the environment very dusty. The windows are also not properly in place.

Chendeya, SIC Primary School

Founded in 2002, this community school was the initiative of the local people who built the structure using local materials and also made the furniture on their own. However, the school is now in bad shape and needs overall repairs as the floors are all broken, walls have cracks, windows and doors are all not in place, and the roof leaks. The school consists of 3 classrooms with an office and runs from class 1 to 6 with 5 teachers. The current enrolment of the school is 276 pupils. With the exception of the Head teacher, the others are untrained.

Cluster 3: Tambakha Chiefdom, Karene District

Ganya Community Primary School

The initiative to start a community school in Ganya was born in 2008. For several years, the community had held a school under a mango tree in a corner of the village. In 2014, the community, through the support of Street Child of Sierra Leone, was able to build a 3 classroom school. Unfortunately just two years later, during a particularly bad rain season, a heavy wind storm destroyed the school and some 10 houses in the village. The school was shut down for a whole season and, after the rains in 2016, the

teachers restarted the school under the mango tree, with children sitting on large stones. For the last two years the community has been desperate to build a structure to house the school and there was a big celebration in the village last month as the chief and the teachers signed an MOU with SCoSL/CCCC for the construction of a new school.

Laya Community Primary School

Laya community was previously supported by SCoSL to build a 3 classroom structure to house the community school. This school has served the community well, however the structure now requires some extensive repairs, including replacement of zinc roof sheets which have been destroyed or worn out and repaving of the damaged floors. The classrooms also require plastering, painting, replacement of some windows and doors and additional desks and benches for children to learn at. Over 120 children attend this school run by 3 volunteer teachers.

Karomokorsoria Community Primary School

This community school was built in 2014 with the support of SCoSL using local building materials and now requires some major repairs which the community has not been able to carry out. The floor has become damaged and dusty and the walls have sustained major cracks, making an ineffective and unhealthy learning environment. Some doors and windows additionally need to be re-fixed. The entire community, including all of the children in the school, were delighted to learn that SCoSL and CCCC are going to support the much needed renovations of the school.

Tomparay Ferry, RC Primary School

The community at Tomparay Ferry, one of the first supported by SCoSL in Tambakha, was supported nearly 10 years ago to construct a tarpaulin school which was later transformed to a more permanent building. The school has 3 classrooms and a store room, however the building needs a considerable amount of renovation to make the classrooms safe for children. The repairs will include fixing doors and windows, plastering the interior walls of the classrooms, fine paving the floors and painting the entire building. This school has a current enrolment of 92 children is run by two teachers.

Salakunda Community Primary School

This school is situated at the South-western edge of Tambakha, serving 4 village communities. Over 150 children are currently accessing the school run by three teachers, two of whom are trained. The 3 classroom building, with an office and store room, was built 7 years ago and now requires renovation to improve the learning environment and ensure the safety of the children who attend. There is a need to fine pave the floor to prevent dust, replace a few broken zinc roof sheets, fix the ceiling in two classrooms and then paint the entire building.

Cluster 4: Valunia Chiefdom, Bo District

Kpewama, UMC Primary School

This school is run in a 3 classroom building with an office and storeroom. The school runs from class 1 to class 6, with 5 teachers. The current enrolment of the school is 195. This community is located 15 miles away from the main road, and it is very difficult to reach. The school was founded in 1972 and has never had any significant renovations. The classroom floors are very dusty and damaged, windows and doors are broken, and the blackboards have been destroyed by termites. There are three other villages are sending children to this school, and it was a big relief for the community when they signed the MoU and developed the plan for these much needed renovations.

Foya, RC Primary School

This school was built in 1974, and since then it has never been rehabilitated. The school needs overall renovations including roof, walls, floors, doors and windows. The school has a large catchment area, with 5 other villages sending children here for education. The school has a current enrolment of 202 children and is run by 5 teachers. The condition of the school is terrible, with the classrooms posing a danger to children attending. The roof could collapse at any moment because the boards are rotten. The community stakeholders and the school management committee were very grateful at the proposed assistance to rehabilitate the school structure.

Kpakimbu, SLC Primary School

The school was opened in 2011 through the initiative of the community. There is a current enrolment of 148 children coming from 3 different villages. Because of the poor and unsafe condition of the school, many parents now refuse to send their children. The school has 5 teachers, and all of them are untrained - 4 have recently enrolled in a distance teacher training programme. The school is run by the community and it operates from class 1 to 5. There is a need to build a bigger 3 classroom structure, using more blocks and more mortar. The community believe that this much needed support will significantly boost the enrolment and attendance of children.

Kanjallu Community Primary School

The community is currently running the school in Kanjallu in an unfinished private building. The school runs from class 1 to 4. The lack of building is preventing many parents from sending their children, which, with the nearest school 3 miles away, means that many children are missing out on an education. The news of the proposed support to build a school structure was hugely celebrated in the village and all of the surrounding villages were also represented during the signing of the MoU.

Njalihun Community Primary School

The school in Njalihun is a community school that was built by a local man. The school runs from class 1 to 5, with 4 teachers. 4 other villages send children to the school. The structure has been in need of repairs for over 6 years now, however the community have not been able to gather the resources. The renovation will include paving, painting, strengthening doors and windows, and fixing the locks to secure the building.

Cluster 5: Lokomasama Chiefdom, Port Loko District

Gbom Makasa, SLMB Primary school

This school was founded by the community in 1998. It started in a make shift structure located between 2 villages, the Gbom village and the Makasa village. SCoSL were able to support the construction of a 3-classroom structure in 2014 and 3 teachers were also trained. Unfortunately, the roof of the school was destroyed by heavy wind during a storm and the school is currently operating in a makeshift structure that is not conducive for teaching and learning. There is therefore an urgent need for a new structure. The school runs from class 1 to 6 and 3 villages send their children here to attend the school, with a total enrolment of 160.

Rowullah, DEC Primary School

Founded in 1996 by stakeholders of the village, the school in Rowullah started in a makeshift structure constructed by the community people. Through the help of SCoSL, the community built a 3-classroom

school building, however the windows, doors and floors all now require urgent repairs. Currently the school has 7 teachers. Only 2 of them are paid by the government, and the rest are community supported-teachers. Children come from 4 villages to access the school, with a total current enrolment of 116.

Shekuya, Kankalay Islamic Primary School

Founded in 2010 by the current Head Mistress of the school at Shekuya was running in a thatch shelter until SCoSL supported the construction of a 3 classroom community structure in 2014. The roof of the building has become damaged by the weather and is now leaking, requiring repair before this leads to further damage. Some of the classroom windows and doors also need to be replaced and walls plastered. The school has 5 teachers including the Head Mistress, and only the Head Mistress is paid by the Government while the others are community teachers. Out of the five teachers, 3 are trained. There are 265 students enrolled currently, from class 1 to 6.

Masom, Kankalay Islamic Primary School

The school in Masom was founded in September 2006 by the community. The school is built in the middle of two villages- Masom and Madick to ensure that children from both communities can access education. There are 3 teachers in the school, and it runs from class 1 to 6. The building currently has no doors or windows, and the floor of the classes are unpaved, creating a very dusty and unhealthy environment. The plastering is incomplete, as is the roof, with an urgent need to weatherproof the structure. There are 118 children enrolled currently.

Lungi Lol, Kankalay Islamic Primary School

The school at Lungi Lol was founded in 1987 and is Government assisted. The central location means that children are coming from 11 villages to access the school, with an enrolment of 302 children. The community has constructed 7 classrooms to allow space for the high enrolment, but there are no doors, the school is not plastered and the floors of all of the classrooms are not paved. There are 7 teachers running the school.