



**Schooling for Life Monitoring and Evaluation Report  
January - June 2017**

Prepared by:  
Daniel Kamara  
Programme Coordinator

Schooling for Life

October 2017



## **Table of Contents**

Introduction	3
Overview of Activities	3
List of Activities for this reporting period	4
<b>PILLAR ONE - SCHOLARSHIPS</b>	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal education progress</li> <li>• Application and Selection of New Students</li> <li>• Start of Due Diligence</li> </ul>	
<b>PILLAR TWO - SKILLS TRAINING CLASSES</b>	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills Classes</li> <li>• Workbooks</li> <li>• Staff Evaluation on Trainers</li> <li>• Training of Trainer Workshop</li> </ul>	
<b>PILLAR THREE – PERSONAL GUIDANCE</b>	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Guidance Sessions with Students</li> </ul>	
<b>OTHER ACTIVITIES</b>	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student/Guardian Meeting</li> <li>• Staff Capacity Building</li> <li>• Stress Management, Conflict Resolution and Organisational Management Training</li> <li>• Master Class for Students</li> <li>• Review Meeting with Students</li> <li>• Sharing Ramadan/Iftar Dinner</li> <li>• Visiting the Sierra Leone National Museum</li> <li>• Schooling for Life Opens More Internship Opportunities for Students</li> <li>• Work experience placements</li> </ul>	
<b>Successes</b>	15
<b>Challenges/Constraints</b>	16
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	17
<b>How Will Our Experience Be Transformed into Change</b>	18
<b>Activities Planned for July - December 2017</b>	19
<b>Schooling for Life Organisation</b>	20



## Introduction



Many young people in Sierra Leone cannot afford their schooling, or in most cases do not have access to quality tertiary education. The absence of guidance counsellors in high schools and colleges means that young people are not guided in their line of education irrespective of the many difficulties they face along the line. They are also not prepared during their upbringing or education for the behaviour that will be expected from them on the job market. A field research in 2008 in Magburaka and Freetown, and a follow up research in Freetown in 2012 conducted by the founder of Schooling for Life, Sjerly Pereira retrieved this information and became the groundwork for the development of the Skills for a Successful Future programme.

Schooling for Life is a youth focused organisation that was founded in 2012 in the Netherlands and in 2014 registered in Sierra Leone. The organisation, in its Skills for a Successful Future programme offers an intense three pillar programme; 1. Scholarships for the vocational education of the student's choice, 2. Social and practical skills training at a Schooling for Life training centre, and 3. Personal guidance by a professional guidance counsellor.

## Overview of activities January - June 2017

The report covers activities implemented from January to end of June 2017. Within this six-month period, the organisation planned and carried out the undermentioned activities as outlined in its Annual Activity Plan. It is worth noting that this list of activities cuts across all the three pillars of the Skills for a Successful Future programme. Therefore, activities are reported under their appropriate pillars; Scholarship, Skills Training and Guidance Counselling. Programme activities that do not fit into any of the three pillars but are related to the programme, are reported under "Other Activities". These Other Activities or extra-curricular activities, such as the visit to the Sierra Leone National Museum, Ramadan/Iftar Dinner, Student/Guardian Meeting are very significant to broadening the horizons and transforming the lives of students in the programme.



## **List of activities for this reporting period**

### **PILLAR ONE - SCHOLARSHIP**

- Formal education progress
- Application and Selection of New Students
- Start of Due Diligence

### **PILLAR TWO - SKILLS TRAINING**

- Skills training classes
- Workbooks
- Staff and student evaluation on trainers
- Training of trainers' workshop for one trainer

### **PILLAR THREE- PERSONAL GUIDANCE**

- Personal guidance sessions with students

### **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

- Student/Guardian meeting
- Staff capacity building training
- Stress management, conflict resolution and organisational management training for students
- Curriculum vitae, motivation letter writing and conflict resolution training for students
- Ramadan dinner
- Visiting the Sierra Leone National Museum
- Opening of more internship opportunities for students



## **PILLAR ONE - SCHOLARSHIPS**

### **Formal education progress**

Schooling for Life places students in the Skills for the Successful Future programme into various colleges and vocational institutes in Freetown. Currently, during this reporting period 5 students were placed at the College of Business and Information Technology (CoBIT), 9 students at BlueCrest College, 7 students at Milton Margai College of Education and Technology (MMCET): 3 students at Goderich campus, 3 students at Congo Cross campus and 1 student at Brookfields campus, 4 students at Government Technical Institute (GTI), 4 students at the Institute of Advance Management and Technology (IAMTECH), 1 student at Redeemers Nursing School.



We can inform on the following: The Nursing student has passed her introductory phase of the course and has advanced into the first year of the State Enrolled Community Health Nursing Programme (SECHN). Both Networking and Software Engineering students at BlueCrest have also progressed into their second year of study. The two Software Engineering students have decided to major in Web Development, which will require them to do a separate nine-month course in Web Development, replacing the last 6 month semester that they would have otherwise completed for software engineering. They have chosen to do so to add to their market relevant knowledge. This will also give them two certificates at the end of the course.

As exams were going on during the end of this reporting period, results will be reported upon in the next report.

### **Application and selection of new students for the class of 2017/2018**

The application process for the selection of new students for the 2017/18 academic year commenced in February 2017. In an effort to ensure that scholarships were awarded to deserving applicants, (that is, those who actually meet college requirements but do not have the resources to further their education), Schooling for Life outlined and followed rigorous application procedures and criteria for potential students to meet before being accepted into the programme. This change is as a result of lessons learned from the previous intakes. Schooling for Life experienced a great improvement with enrolment at TVET institutes after we had changed the selection criteria from BECE to WASSCE credit. This ensured that the selected students would have



attained a higher level of secondary education and therewith created a higher chance of being eligible to get in to their respective vocational institutes. According to the new criteria, students must now have passed the WASSCE with at least three credits including English Language, Maths and at least one subject that has bearing to the study the applicant wants to pursue. During the recruitment process, applicants were required to send in several documents that would verify their results, their motivation and their previous dedication to their education. At the close of the application date, 110 applications were received, 50 were shortlisted and invited for interviews. 30 applicants were selected and invited to take the written assessment on Maths, English Language and General Paper. At the end of it all, 15 students were shortlisted as potential new students. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, Schooling for Life has had to decide not to continue with the acceptance process of new students for the 2017/2018 Academic Year. If the organisation continues with the acceptance for next academic year, the youth who were shortlisted for this academic year, will again be shortlisted then.

### **Start of Due Diligence**

Schooling for Life commenced a Due Diligence exercise with all recognised vocational institutions in Freetown. The main reason for undertaking the venture is to get thorough information on all recognised vocational institutions in Freetown. In order to get the information needed, Schooling for Life developed a questionnaire taking into consideration all the areas the institutions would be assessed on to show quality of education. At the end of the exercise, Schooling for Life will conclude key findings, observations and comments on each of the institutions covered in the process. The findings from the exercise will give Schooling for Life an insight into which vocational institutions are most ideal for the placement of students in the Skills for a Successful Future programme. Due Diligence is an annual activity of Schooling for Life. As Due Diligence is conducted each year, more facts are discovered about vocational institutes during the year that will also be taken into consideration in choosing (new) institutes for new students. Based on the learning from the previous Due Diligence analysis and on-going experiences with institutes during the year, Schooling for Life will reconsider sending students to vocational institutions that do not meet the organisation's standards of a conducive learning environment. Due to the large number of institutions the Due Diligence covers, the exercise was not completed within this reporting period, but an analysis of the outcome of the Due Diligence will be set out in the next report when the exercise would have been completed.



## **PILLAR TWO - SKILLS TRAINING CLASSES**

### **Skills Classes**



Skills training classes form an important part of Schooling for Life's Skills for a Successful Future programme. Skills Classes falls under Pillar two of the programme, and attendance for Skills Classes is a must for all students. By the timetable for this academic year, second year students met twice a week; Classes taught were Work Ethics and English Language for the entire academic year, and Mathematics for the first semester. First year students met three times a week; in subsequent semesters they had Introduction to Soft Skills, Time Management class and Communication skills class. Alongside these topics they were taught English Language and Maths the whole year.

The new grading system (that is assessment through practicals, assignments, group work, presentation and class participation) that was introduced into the Skills Classes has made it easier for Schooling for Life to follow up on students' performances (both academic and character) in the Skills Classes. Initially, students were assessed through theoretical examination only, which made students to put premium on that examination and slack off during the semester. Also, this system has created uniformity in the grading system for all trainers.

However, as Schooling for Life puts emphasis on listening to the trainers and the students, it has become clear through the latter two that also the newly instilled grading system is not optimal. Even though practical and theory should both be examined, Schooling for Life will re-asses the percentages and fine tune the assessment count for the next academic year.

### **Workbooks**

As reported in the previous period, Schooling for Life has started a new adventure by developing workbooks for English Language and Maths skills training classes. With the support of Africell SL, all first and second year students received his/her own workbook to use as a tool for better practise and learning. The feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive. The students have used their workbooks not only to study themselves, do exercises and follow the classes, but also to tutor others in their communities. It is therefore helped Schooling for Life to support her students in paying their knowledge forward and extend our teaching beyond the organisation.





At the end of the academic year, an evaluation will be done by both trainers and students on the workbooks for Schooling for Life to know what should be adjusted for the next edition.

### **Staff Evaluation on Trainers**

The programme staff of Schooling for Life did an evaluation on trainers to point out their strengths and areas that needed improvement. The evaluation outcomes were based on staff's daily observations of Skills training as well as feedback asked from students at the end of the year. Students are the ones experiencing the training and are therefore the best evaluators. When observing Skills training, staff take notes on various things, based on Schooling for Life training methodologies, class management, ability to explain a topic and many more. During the year, Schooling for Life staff give the trainers feedback to give the trainers the opportunity to adjust while teaching, as opposed to the feedback becoming redundant at the end of the semester or academic year. It was therefore very positive to conclude that most trainers were positively evaluated by both students and staff on several aspects. Some areas mentioned to improve on were; the use of English Language as the medium of communication during training, focus on topics and avoid bringing unnecessary discussions and also proper time management. The feedback was very helpful and will be used as a guide for the next academic year.

### **Training of Trainers Workshop for the Communication Skills Trainer**

A Training of Trainers (T.O.T) Workshop is held when a new trainer is recruited to teach in the Skills for a Successful Future programme. Trainers have impact on different aspects of students' development, apart from teaching their own subject, and are therefore made thoroughly familiar with the ideology and training methods of Schooling for Life before, or at the beginning of teaching Skills training classes. In general, trainers are collectively trained at the beginning of the academic year, however, sometimes trainers come in during the academic year and will receive individual training. The training lasts three days and was led by the programme coordinator/trainer of trainers of Schooling for Life. In the first day of the training, the trainer was introduced to Schooling for Life and what we stand for. In going through the "Train the Trainer Course Handbook", all topics in the handbook were covered, including (but not limited to); "The Student and Learning", "Aggressive, Assertive, Submissive Behaviours", "Student Needs", "Different Styles of Learning", "Observing and Assessing your Students", "Observation versus Judgement" and "Teaching Theories".





### **PILLAR THREE - PERSONAL GUIDANCE**

Personal Guidance is the third pillar of the Skills for a Successful Future programme. This pillar plays a key role in ensuring that students in the Skills for a Successful Future programme are well guided as they progress in their studies. It is a must for students to attend personal guidance sessions with the trained and qualified guidance counsellors.

All students in the programme attend personal guidance sessions, which generally last for 45 minutes per student every two weeks. During these sessions, students are encouraged, guided and supported by the guidance counsellor to set personal development goals and explained how to achieve such goals, specifically and in general. Other topics treated in general are (but not limited to) character building, general conduct, positive and solution-focused thinking, studying methods and personal support in everyday constraints.

For this reporting period, students have made major progress with regards self-confidence, solution-focused behaviour, English Language and anger and stress management. As a result of the personal guidance sessions, students make major strides that are not only noticeable to themselves but also to the people in their surroundings..

**One amazing example:** One of the students came into the programme very shy, not being able to look anybody in the eye. However, over the years, exercises on confidence building and classroom support have been followed and she has made considerable improvements in building her self- confidence. She can now speak to the class unprepared and make eye contact irrespective of the audience. She participates in class and even volunteers to stand up.

**Another remarkable success:** a student who was hot tempered and could not manage his anger. It was disturbing him in every day life at home and with his peers. After having several conversations with the guidance counsellor, the student has now learned how to overcome and channel his anger, to express himself in a positive way without suppressing his emotions and has learned to be a supportive brother, tutoring his sisters and getting along with his peers.

Many more stories prove the importance and impact of the guidance sessions on the overall behaviour of the students in their everyday life, and their progress in their respective institutes and skills classes.

Unfortunately, there was one student who continuously ignored advise given to her. The student had been guided and advised on her anger management during her participation in the programme but failed to implement advise that was given, in combination with several warnings. As Schooling for Life is a training trajectory, students need to show progress and change. In absence



thereof and even more so, disturbance of others, a student cannot stay in the programme. Schooling for Life has had to expel the student from the programme for gross misconduct.

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

### **Student/Guardian Meeting**

At the end of every academic semester, Schooling for Life meets with parents/guardians of all students in the Skills for a Successful Future programme and the students themselves. The purpose of the meeting is to update guardians on the conducts and performances of their children in Skills training and their respective vocational institutions.

During this reporting period, one guardian meetings was held after the second semester. All guardians present were informed about the students' performance, information was given about the progress of all students and the approach of the end of skills training classes and guidance sessions for the second year students after next semester was discussed.

Schooling for Life gets students' grades from their respective vocational institutions as well as general feedback on their behaviour for the organisation to know their academic, as well as behavioural performances. At the end of every meeting, guardians have time to ask questions and make remarks.

Since the start, every meeting guardians have been indicating their appreciation for the programme, the change they see in the students at home, and how proud they are to see their children grow, both personally and academically.

### **Staff Capacity Building**

As part of strengthening the Schooling for Life staff and supporting their growth on, and off the work floor, several trainings were done in the second and third semester of the 2016/2017 academic year.

A one-day training on (professional) communication was organised and rolled out. The main purpose of the training was to improve the staff's communication skills in the office.

The objectives of the training were to enhance effective communication among staff in the office, to facilitate open communication in the organisation and the team, and to emphasise the importance of communication in general. At the end of the training, the trainer emphasised on the importance of the flow of communication in the work environment to reduce misunderstandings.



## **Stress Management, Conflict Resolution and Organisational Management Training.**

Stress Management, Organisational Management and Conflict Resolution play a central role in keeping the organisation together and also to keep the teamwork spirit alive. At Schooling for Life, we recognise the importance of keeping a stress-free office environment and equipping staff with the skills they need to tackle conflicts amicably. That was why a one-day training on these topics was organised and rolled out in March. The training was facilitated by an international facilitator.. The aim of the training was to train staff on effective stress management skills, effective conflict resolution strategies, and also to support staff in taking responsibilities in their work and ensuring quality within Schooling for Life. Staff indicated that the topics were new and interesting, as well as practical.

### **Master Classes for Students**

A unique feature of the Skills for a Successful Future programme of Schooling for Life is that students are not just offered the three pillars of the programme, but are also equipped with even more necessary skills they require to do well in life in general and professionally.



In addition to their regular skills training, students are offered master classes on topics that add value to the trainings they already receive throughout the year. In that regard, Schooling for Life organised two days of training for the students. Day one covered writing professional curriculum vitae, and writing a good motivation letter, and day two covered how to manage stress and conflict. These four topics covered in the training had been identified as some of the challenges our young people face in looking for jobs and in their daily life. During the training students were exposed to the most recent patterns of CV writing and also the features of a good motivation letter. The training on conflict and stress management prepared students for the challenges they would face both in their personal lives, and in their places of work. Many questions were asked, especially regarding the stress and conflict management and the students acknowledged at the end of the training that they had learned new skills that would definitely help them later in life.



## Review Meeting with Students

As the second year students have come to the end of their skills classes and personal guidance sessions, Schooling for Life had decided to hold a meeting with them to review what has worked well for them throughout the programme, what they have learned over the years and what needs to be improved to give students better support and preparation for their life after Schooling for Life. Students were asked to prepare their own points and shared them during the meeting. Students were very impressive in responding to questions in all subjects taught during the Skills Classes, their personal development and the impact they are seeing in their own skill set and behavioural change that is already giving them advantage in their places of work, work experience and internships. Students made salient recommendations on how to make the programme better in the next academic year and were inventive and determined in how they want to support Schooling for Life and pay their gained knowledge forward from now on.

**Success:** As Schooling for Life wants to achieve maximum growth in her ability to support the students, the feedback was invaluable. Some evident stories of change are in the following feedback: Students feel educated, more responsible, more included by their communities and families, more able to use their initiative, responsible for their own effectiveness, more social, and the list goes on. Students accounted for the fact that they already prove to be more employable through experiences of recommendations by (international) supervisors, and positive comments or responsibilities given in places work.

## Sharing Ramadan/Iftar Dinner



Schooling for Life recognises diversity and holds to the highest esteem the non-discriminatory principle towards staff and students. The non-discriminatory principle of the organisation is effective not only in hiring of staff or selection of students but also observing religious celebrations.

To demonstrate this, the organisation joined Muslim staff and students in observing the Holy Month of Ramadan by organising an evening dinner to break fast. The dinner was meant to bring together staff, trainers and students in breaking the fasting for the day. This event was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at the Africell /American



Corner, with sincere gratitude to Africell SL for hosting us there. What made the event successful and special was the representation and participation of all mentioned groups. During the event, students gave presentations on the importance of Ramadan and trainers explained their observations regarding the progress they see in the students. The top three students of both years were awarded prizes for their outstanding performances. The event was a memorable one as all staff and students both Muslim and non-Muslim had the chance to come together to break the fast.

### **Visiting the Sierra Leone National Museum**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2017, second year students visited the Sierra Leone National Museum accompanied by two Schooling for Life staff members. The purpose of the visit was to expose students to, and also to increase their interest in, national monuments and the history of their



country. Students were very impressed with the visit as it was the first time for them to visit the National Museum.

Students were welcomed by the museum tour guide, who ushered them into the permanent gallery for their first exhibit and carefully explained each artefact in detail.

During the entire sightseeing and learning exercise, questions were raised by students as they moved along. Through visits like these, Schooling for Life wants to broaden students' horizons and expand their knowledge to help them think in different ways. Students explained what they had learned during and from the trip during the feedback sessions at the office afterwards.

### **Schooling for Life Opens More Internship Opportunities for Students**

Schooling for Life has opened more internship opportunities to students who are successfully going through the Skills for a Successful Future programme. The creation of internship opportunities is to let students have a taste of what the work environment looks like and what is expected of them when they have a job. Also, those internships give students the opportunity to practice what they





have learned in their respective institutions and during their skills classes. The internships are open to students who study office-related courses such as Information Technology, Secretarial Studies, Accounting and Finance, Administration and Management.

As more students are taken in for internships and the second year students are preparing for internships in other companies or organisations as well, the organisation is working on improving adequate and necessary documents to monitor these internships and their effect, both for the student as well as for the employer.



From May to December 2016 Schooling for Life started with her internship opportunities with one intern at the head office of Schooling for Life. Over the period of seven months, the IT student learned how being an employee at an office asks for timeliness, precision, time management, professional behaviour and proactive planning and execution. After seven months, he had managed his own project as a final assignment, written a

report about it, supported Schooling for Life activities, learned how to write precise minutes and how to be a supportive colleague. Schooling for Life is proud to send such students out into the job market.

As a result of this success, as well as repeated requests from students, Schooling for Life has decided to continue supporting her own students through internships, and will accept new interns in the next academic year 2017/2018.

### **Work experience placements**

Apart from the opportunity to follow internships with Schooling for Life, the organisation has students in vocational areas that need more practical experience. Therefore, one student who is studying constructional engineering has been gaining practical experience on a construction site where he is being reported by his employer to show the learning, reliability and assertive attitude an employee should have. Over the period of the next academic year, Schooling for



Life is planning to have many more students share their work ethics and practical skills with the job market in Sierra Leone.

### **Successes**

- Schooling for Life received 110 applications this year, which double the number of applications that was received last year. This was due to the wider scope of outreach in advertising the recruitment of new students. More schools, communities, churches and mosques were approached and Schooling for Life students played a big part in the outreach into communities.
- The newly introduced career assessment during the selection process of the new students helped Schooling for Life to assess the study choices of the applicants, to analyse their interests and match them with a variety of career paths.
- After the Staff Communication Capacity Building Training, staff expectations were met and there was a strong learning process, based on training evaluation forms completed by staff.  
There was ample time given to staff to raise questions, clarifications, feedback and reflection after the training in order for them to process and implement the training even further.
- The Stress Management, Conflict Resolution and Organisational Management Training was also a success, as the content of the training reflected the needs of staff and therefore met the demands.  
Through this training, staff learned that giving feedback is an important activity in an organisation and learned about organisational management, focusing on the goal of the organisation and the importance of completing one's own work – while focusing on the problem and possible solutions that will serve the organisation.
- The recognition of the top 6 performing students during the Iftar Dinner encouraged others to work even harder to achieve the same.  
During the Iftar Dinner, trainers shared their overall personal experience with students, highlighting their overall performance, commitment and consistency. One trainer indicated that she is proud to represent Schooling for Life students outside the organisation because she knows that they will come through in skills and ethics.
- **Schooling for Life has successfully opened up internship positions within and outside the organisation. Two students have been interning with Afrigas, Sierra Leone. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive; the company has indicated that Schooling for Life students are proactive, assertive, hands on, on time and hardworking. Other Schooling for Life students have**





**found jobs next to their studies, receiving recommendations on their performance in work attitude and knowledge.**

- The evaluation exercise on trainers by both students and staff came up with useful feedback for both trainers and programme staff on what was going on well, and what needed to be improved.
- Schooling for Life continues to maintain strong partnerships with organisations and companies both internationally and locally.
- The workbooks that had been developed at the beginning of the year have been a great support to the trainers and the students of Schooling for Life. Trainers have indicated that the workbooks help them in sticking to the curriculum and their explanations to the students, as students can read and work ahead. The students are so positive about the workbooks that they have asked for additional subjects to be included. They are using the workbooks for their own learning, to do homework, but also to teach others and spread their knowledge. Schooling for Life will set out evaluations on the workbooks at the end of the academic year to make improvements and potentially expand the number of skills class subjects in the line of topics.

### **Challenges/Constrains**

- During the interviews and selection process, gender was taken into consideration. Unfortunately, girls who applied into the programme were unable to pass both the written test and the oral interviews. Only one girl made it through the selection process. Schooling for Life is focused on getting more girls into the programme to support them in achieving better futures.
- Finding institutions to place students in is sometimes a challenge. Some students meet Schooling for Life's academic requirements but fail to meet some institutions' departmental requirements. For example, one female applicant wanted to study nursing in one of the renowned institutions for medical studies but was not accepted because she did not meet the institution's entry requirements. Finding an alternative study that meets the applicant's skills and aspirations, combined with what is offered in national institutions makes it challenging to then accept the student as the organisation does not want to force applicants into a field they do not desire to pursue and also does not want to make false promises, creating unpromising futures.
- One student was expelled from the programme irrespective of the counselling sessions she had with the guidance counsellors. Schooling for Life had hoped that the student would follow the positive example of change of peers in her class, this was unfortunately not the case.



- Some courses are fairly new in the country and are therefore very expensive to follow. Examples of these are Digital Communication and Graphic Design. Though marketable, these courses do not yet have a track record in output and therefore value/cost balance is difficult to establish.
- Submission of documents such as lesson plans, curricula, marking schemes, exam questions and grades by the trainers to the office continues to pose challenges. Schooling for Life will use the break until the next academic year to reassess and evaluate new approaches and improve the process.
- There were clashes between students' classes at their institutions and the Schooling for Life Skills training classes. These clashes normally occur during examination periods. Schooling for Life tries to take several factors into consideration but also wants students to learn to manage time and develop work schedules. This will serve them in their future work environment.
- Training new trainers in the middle of the academic year poses difficulty, as daytime training is often not possible due to jobs. However, trainers do need to be trained and therefore trainings end up being reduced to after hour and weekend trainings, which is not optimal for the quality of the training.
- The development of the workbooks proved more work than anticipated. Due to that reason they were not ready when the academic year started.
- It has proven difficult and a lengthy process to get detailed grade information from public institutes. This needs to be a point of consideration for Schooling for Life for the next academic year in order to maintain updated knowledge of the students' progress.

### **Lessons Learned**

- As Schooling for Life prepares students for the job market, the training on CV and motivation letter writing was timely. These are the skills students need to stand out in their job search.
- The recognition of best performing students during the Ramadan Dinner served as a source of motivation to other students and will therefore continue to be a part of this event.
- Conducting a one-off Training of Trainers is not enough. Trainers seem to shift away from Schooling for Life methodologies as time progresses. Trainers need more contact time with the office and Schooling for Life thinks that they can learn from each other more when brought together in meetings.



- Having access to computers and networking toolkits increases the academic performance of Information Technology students. The practical experience students receive in their institutions is still not enough.
- It is a valuable exercise to have staff attend the skills classes on a regular basis. This gives staff the chance to monitor and evaluate the trainers' performance on a regular basis and give direct feedback, which can be used in an ongoing process, as opposed to only after their teaching period. Holding the evaluation exercise on trainers by both staff and students has given insight and learning points that can further be discussed for next academic year.
- The organisation needs to try and hire all trainers as much as possible at the beginning of the academic year to make sure that all trainers can be trained at the same time.
- The workbook evaluation needs to start in time in order for the work on the adjustments to not run past the start of the new academic year.
- The grading system as it was adjusted during the current academic year was not optimal and will need to be revised according to feedback from both trainers and students.

### **How Will Our Experience Be Transformed into Change?**

- A refresher Training of Trainers Workshop will be held in the next academic year to remind trainers of Schooling for Life methods of teaching with respect to meeting deadlines and Schooling for Life standards.
- Schooling for Life will organise end of semester meetings with all the trainers to discuss the past semester; what went well and what needs improvement and how this can be done. This way, the organisation wants to create a regular flow of feedback from the trainers to the organisation, to enhance reciprocal support.
- More internship opportunities will be created within Schooling for Life. Also, Schooling for Life will do a mapping and engaging of companies and organisations in the Western Areas of Freetown (urban and rural) for the creation of more internship opportunities for students in the Skills for Successful Future programme.
- In order to motivate students to work hard, and to recognise those who already do, recognition of best performing students will keep being done in extra-curricular activities.
- In order to attract more applications and eligible youth for the programme, outreach activities will be stepped up using all necessary avenues - social media, radio stations and newspapers. Current students have indicated to want to do outreach for Schooling for Life to pupils at



senior secondary schools. They have also asked to be trained by the organisation for this purpose. This will be taken into advisement to explore the options herein.

- Schooling for Life will initiate more collaboration with female focused schools and organisations in an attempt to attract more eligible female applicants.
- Workbook evaluation exercises will be an ongoing activity in the organisation's activity calendar. Schooling for Life will endeavour to adjust and update the workbooks to such an extent that this will avoid changes having to be made yearly.
- Schooling for Life will change the balance between practical and theory assessments in the Skills training grading system and create a template for trainers to use to facilitate the handing in of grades in time, as well as to encourage students to focus on all of the assignments and exams in the skills training classes throughout the semester.

### **Activities planned for June - December 2017**

- Registration of continuing students into their respective institutions
- Continuation of Skills training classes
- Guidance Counselling sessions with students
- Master Class
- Completion of Due Diligence
- Students' evaluations on trainers and workbooks for Maths and English
- Development of Work Ethics Workbook
- Other activities



## **Schooling for Life Organisation (during reporting period)**

### **Schooling for Life Board**

Walter Remmerswaal - Chairman

George van der Heijden - Treasurer

Heleen Rijkens – Secretary

### **Staff and Volunteers**

#### **Sierra Leone- paid staff**

Sjierly Pereira – Country Director

Daniel Kamara –Programme Coordinator Trainer of Trainers

Edward Massaquoi- Senior Finance Officer

Memuna Stevens – Guidance Counsellor/Programme Assistant

Mohamed Nabieu – Office Admin Assistant

#### **The Netherlands Volunteers**

Rana van den Burg – Communication and Administration

Dries Arnolds – Website

Barbara Heutink – Social Media

#### **Contact information**

[www.schoolingforlife.net](http://www.schoolingforlife.net)

[info@schoolingforlife.net](mailto:info@schoolingforlife.net) (NL)      [admin@schoolingforlife.net](mailto:admin@schoolingforlife.net) (SL)

#### **Bank Information**

Bank account the Netherlands, Rabobank,

IBAN: NL49RABO017149022

Bank account Sierra Leone, United Bank for Africa,

Leones Account: 5401-1003-000593-1

