Schooling for Life

Monitoring and Evaluation Report

January - June 2019

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September 2019

Contents

Introduction

Schooling for Life is an educational organisation that empowers youth through the Skills for a Successful Future programme. The Skills for a Successful Future programme is divided into three pillars; scholarships, employability skills training and personal guidance.

The reporting timeline for Schooling for Life is on a six-month basis. This Monitoring and Evaluation report covers activities planned and implemented from January to June 2019. Within this reporting period, Schooling for Life has implemented various activities that fall within or are related to the three pillars; pillar one covers all activities that have to do with the formal education (scholarship) pillar of the Skills for a Successful Future programme, pillar two covers all activities that are related to the employability skills training, while pillar three covers activities that fall in the personal guidance pillar. There are other activities that are directly related to the pillars as they address the development of the students or the programme, but do not fall under the three pillars directly. These activities are reported under "Programme Related Activities".

At the end of every reporting period, the organisation evaluates what went well and what can be improved upon going forward. This report will therefore cover those aspects whilst taking into account subjects that needed to be improved upon, based on findings from the previous reporting period, which were:

- Conduct outreach well in advance of the opening of the application process to ensure maximum impact

- Develop curricula and workbooks for additional subjects

- Ensure a clear explanation to various institutes prior to visit for due diligence on the purpose of visits

- Consider providing feedback to some institutes on what the organisation is looking for, so that they can take the necessary actions to effect those changes

- Consider giving students who are put on probation specific tasks to fulfil during their probationary period to earn back their scholarship

- Approach more employers to explore the possibility of internship opportunities for students

- For the training of trainers workshop, the organisation will try to hold the training in advance of the start of the academic year, in order to be able to facilitate the full three day training

- Provide an extended personal guidance for one semester for batch two students

- SfL will review how to facilitate extra personal guidance for batch three students due to the delay in their start of personal guidance

- Find a suitable guidance counsellor in order to be able to start the guidance sessions as soon as possible

- Develop an internship strategy that will be put in place to build more relationships with companies and organisations for internship opportunities.

Some of these points were taken into consideration over the reporting period under review, but others, such as those addressing events that are not complete, such as due diligence or not yet started, such as the personal guidance, will be taken into consideration next reporting period. In that light, during the covered period in this report, the following was done as a follow up from the previous report:

- Curricula for Time Management and Communication skills classes were developed

- When institutions were called for due diligence, clear explanations were given on the purpose of due diligence prior to the visit

- Although we did not give institutes feedback about why they were selected or not, and due diligence is still ongoing during the reporting period, some institutes received an explanation on what Schooling for Life is looking for, so that they can take the necessary actions to effect those changes

- Students who were on probation were given specific tasks to fulfil during their probationary period to earn back their scholarship

- More employers were approached to explore the possibility of internship opportunities for students

- A suitable guidance counsellor was hired in order to be able to start the guidance sessions as soon as possible.

Overview of activities January - June 2019

- ☐ Outreach training of students for the recruitment process
- ☐ Application and selection process of new students
- ☐ Continuation of English and Math skills classes for batch three
- ☐ Start of Time Management and Communication skills classes
- ☐ End of semester student/guardian meetings with batch three students
- ☐ End of semester group guidance meetings for batch two and three students

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- End of semester meeting with trainers
- Start of the due diligence process
- Ramadan Dinner

PILLAR ONE - Scholarships

Enrolment

Schooling for Life's academic year is contingent on the college calendar and therefore there are some students who have finished pillars two and three of the Skills for a Successful Future programme but are still pursuing their diploma. The first group of students to enter the Skills for a Successful Future programme is referred to as Batch one. The second group of students who were accepted into the programme are referred to as batch two students. The most recent group of students, who entered the programme in the 2018-2019 academic year are referred to as batch three students.

Schooling for Life had 24 students enrolled in various tertiary technical vocational institutions in Freetown during this reporting period. Nine batch one students completed their formal education during the last reporting period and therefore only one batch one student is enrolled in formal education in this reporting period. This student is in a Nursing programme which is longer than the standard diploma programmes of two years. Most of the batch one students have entered into the job market.
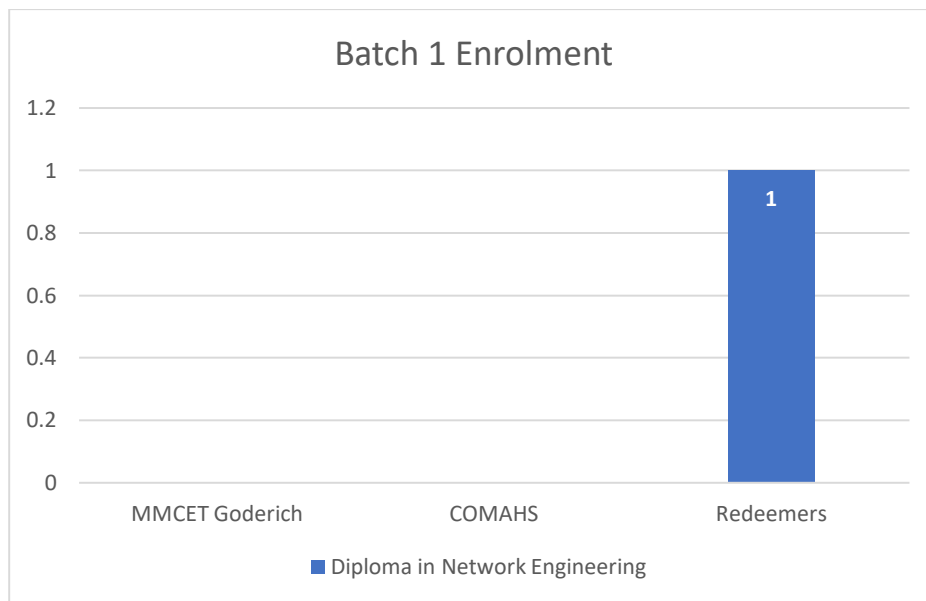

Figure 1 Batch 1 Enrolment. Only one student is still enrolled in college

The four batch two students at the Institute of Advanced Management and Technology (IAMTECH) graduated on April 20th; two studied Business Administration and two, Banking and Finance.

The four students at Government Technical Institute (GTI) have completed their NCTVA exams and their final exams in college. They are preparing to begin their final year projects and dissertations.
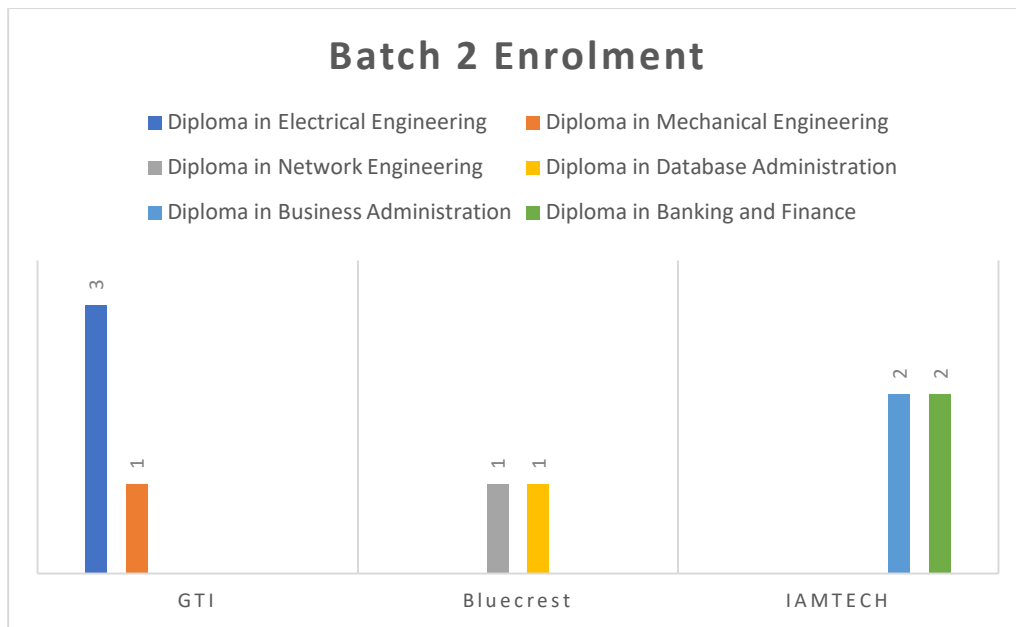

Figure 2 Batch 2 Enrolment

Three batch two students at Milton Margai College of Education & Technology (MMCET), Goderich campus, studying Social Work, completed their studies and took the National Council for Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards (NCTVA) exam last reporting period. In June, all three batch two social work students graduated from their college and received their certificates from MMCET, completing their formal education. This is why there are no batch two students currently enrolled at MMCET.

All thirteen batch three students are completing their first year of studies. The four I.T. students at Bluecrest College passed their Basic course and selected their area of focus, Network Engineering [see figure 3]. They had their matriculation on March 15th and successfully completed their first networking course, N+, and passed their exam with excellent scores. They are now enrolled in the Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) course, their second to last course before completing their formal education (second pillar).
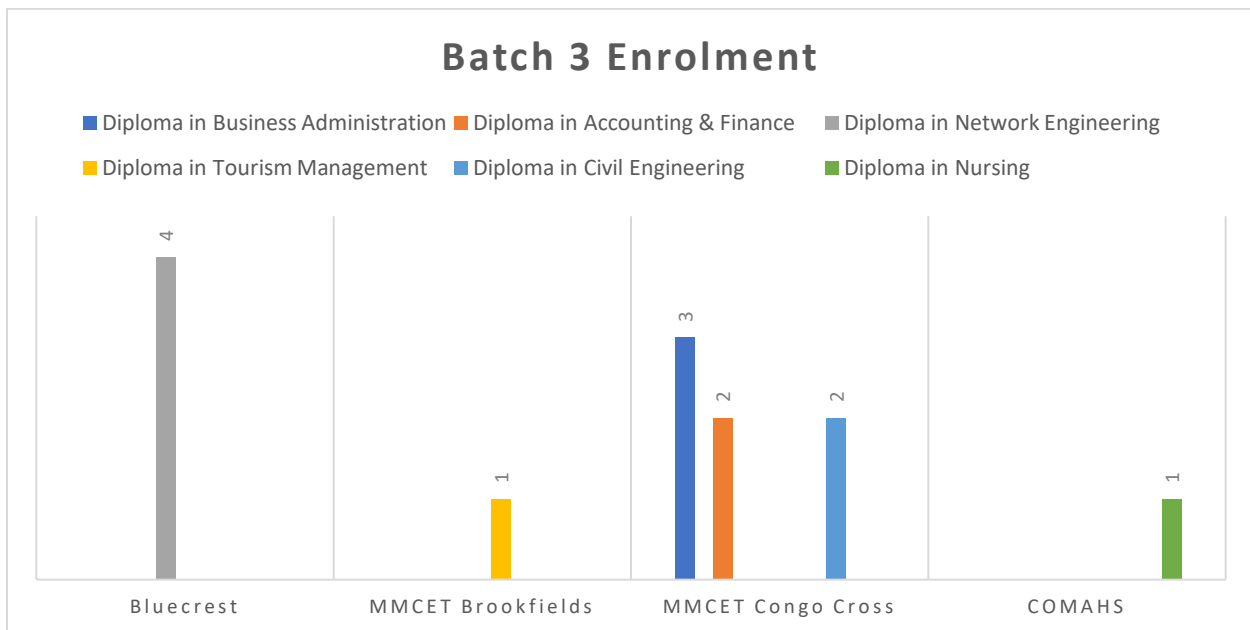
Batch 3 Enrolment

Legend:
- Diploma in Business Administration
- Diploma in Accounting & Finance
- Diploma in Network Engineering
- Diploma in Tourism Management
- Diploma in Civil Engineering
- Diploma in Nursing

Bluecrest: 4 (Network Engineering)
MMCET Brookfields: 1 (Tourism Management)
MMCET Congo Cross: 3 (Business Administration), 2 (Accounting & Finance), 2 (Civil Engineering)
COMAHS: 1 (Nursing)

Figure 3 Batch 3 enrolment

The eight batch three students at MMCET had their matriculation on February 9th and were officially accepted into their studies: three in Business Administration, two Accounting and Finance, two Building and Civil Engineering, and one Tourism Management. The one batch three student at the College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences (COMAHS), studying Nursing, passed her entrance exams and had her matriculation on May 10th and is now officially enrolled in the Nursing programme.

The majority of batch three students (8) are enrolled at MMCET across two different campuses, studying engineering, business administration, tourism, and accounting and finance.

Students' progress in institutions

As outlined in the last reporting period, three Batch two students that were enrolled in the I.T. college COBIT, were put on probation due to behavioural issues. After assessing their behaviour during their probationary period, Schooling for Life management expelled two from the programme because the organisation did not see significant changes in the students' behaviour. One more student from the same batch and study was expelled for the same reason during this reporting period. One student's probation was extended due to the motivation he showed to change his behaviour. During the extension, the student was given tasks to complete in order to earn his reinstatement into the programme. Last reporting period, this was a solution proposed in order to ensure that students who are on probation can be guided back into the programme.

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Due to this batch' one student being on probation and three expelled during this reporting period, the number of students enrolled at Bluecrest, the I.T. college, is significantly lower than the previous reporting period. In the previous reporting period, seven batch one I.T. students also completed their studies, which changed the number of students enrolled in the I.T. college from 16 to six.
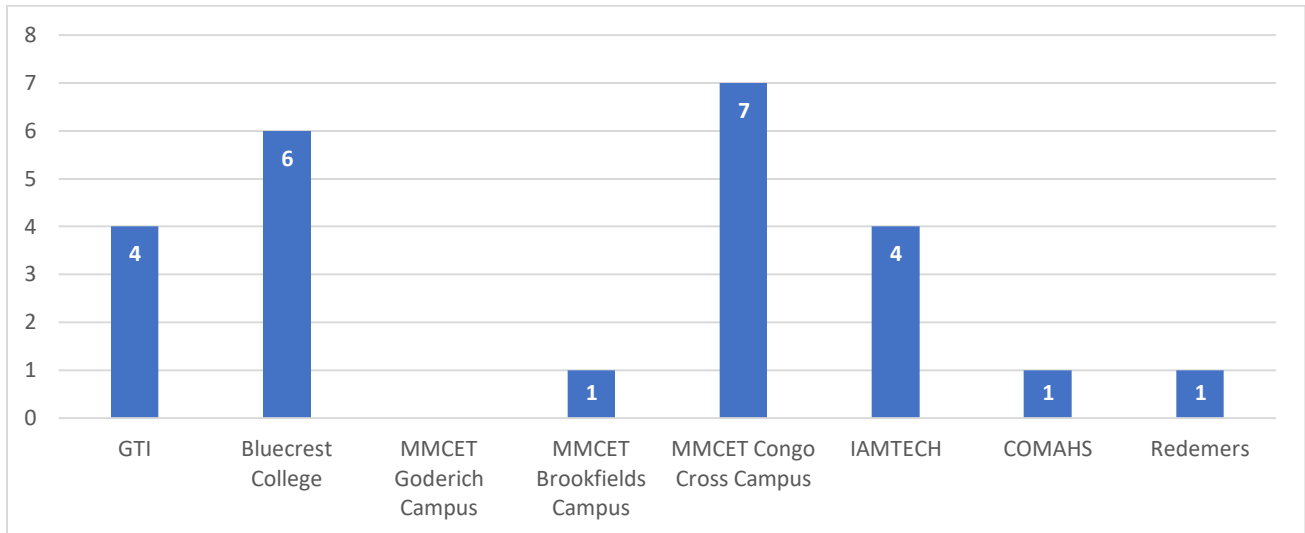

Figure 4 Student enrolment per College Jan-June 2019

Towards the end of the reporting period, it was reported that the tourism department at MMCET Brookfields campus was having challenges around lecturers not holding classes on campus. The Schooling for Life management is discussing ways to address issues that arise at institutions in a way that does not prove to be a further challenge to our student(s), enrolled in those institutions.
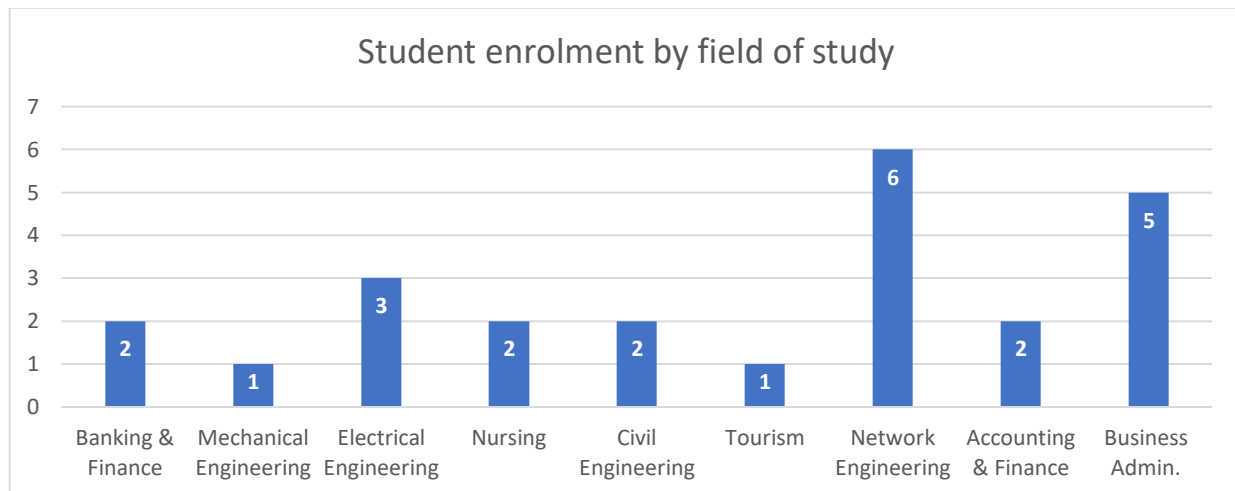

Figure 5 Student Enrolment by Course of Study

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During this reporting period, there were more students enrolled in Network Engineering (6) than any other course of study, with Business Administration having the second highest student enrolment (5).

Successes
- Four batch two students graduated from IAMTECH; two in Business Administration and two in Accounting and Finance
- Three batch two students graduated from MMCET in Social Work
- Six of our batch one students received their professional diploma in Information Technology: Network engineering

Challenges
- Three batch two students were expelled from the programme due to behavioural issues that the organisation was not able to sort out with them
- Engagement with the MMCET Brookfields campus on the issue of lecturers not teaching was difficult due to the administration not being receptive to feedback nor open to explanation

How Will Our Experience Be Transformed into Change
- The organisation plans to address certain student behavioural issues by developing a strategy around how students can embrace Schooling for Life values more
- More research will be done on institutions to make sure that there are several viable options for students in case of emergency situations where students have to be transferred

PILLAR TWO – Employability Skills Training

Skills classes

The batch one and two students had already finalised their pillar two and three of the programme and therefore skills classes were conducted only for batch three students this reporting period.

Progress of Students in Skills Classes

Schooling for Life assesses applicants to the programme on their English Language and Mathematics skills during the Assessment Day of the selection process. During their two years in the Skills for a Successful Future programme, students receive English language classes for two years and Mathematics for a year and a half. Students' growth in these two subjects can be tracked for a long period of time, whereas the per semester subjects, such as Soft Skills, can only be assessed per term and overall. The overall performance of the student is assessed through assignments, group work and presentations all of which make up 30% of the student's grade and their end of semester exam is 70%.

Math Progress

When Mathematics scores from Assessment Day are compared to the first and second semester of the first year of Mathematics skills, there is a significant improvement in students' scores.

The batch three students had an average score of 40.13 in their Assessment Day Mathematics assessment. After their first semester of skills classes, students had an average score of 80.21, which is double the average from Assessment Day. In the second semester the average score in Mathematics declined slightly to 65.58, as the degree of difficulty increased, but it was still more than 25 average difference.
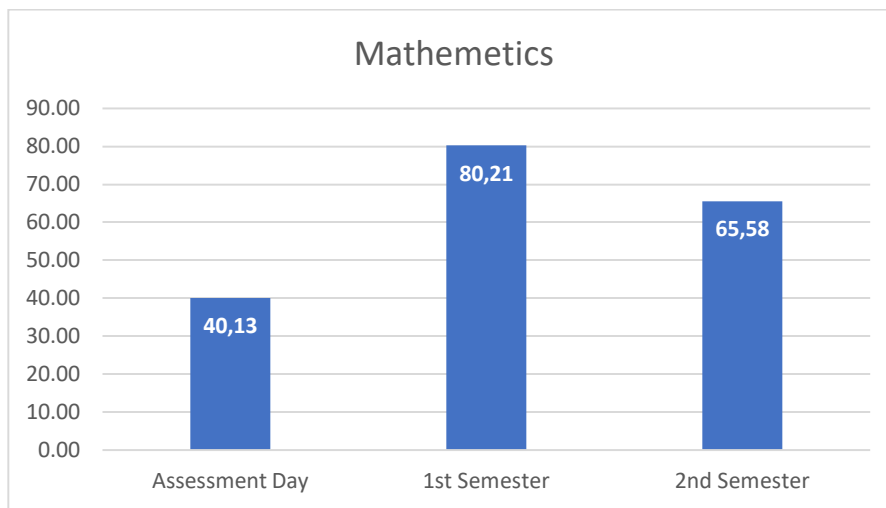

Figure 6 Progress of students in Mathematics

Comparing the Mathematics scores of the two semesters to the Assessment day shows that being part of the Mathematics skills classes greatly increases the Mathematics skills of students once in the programme.
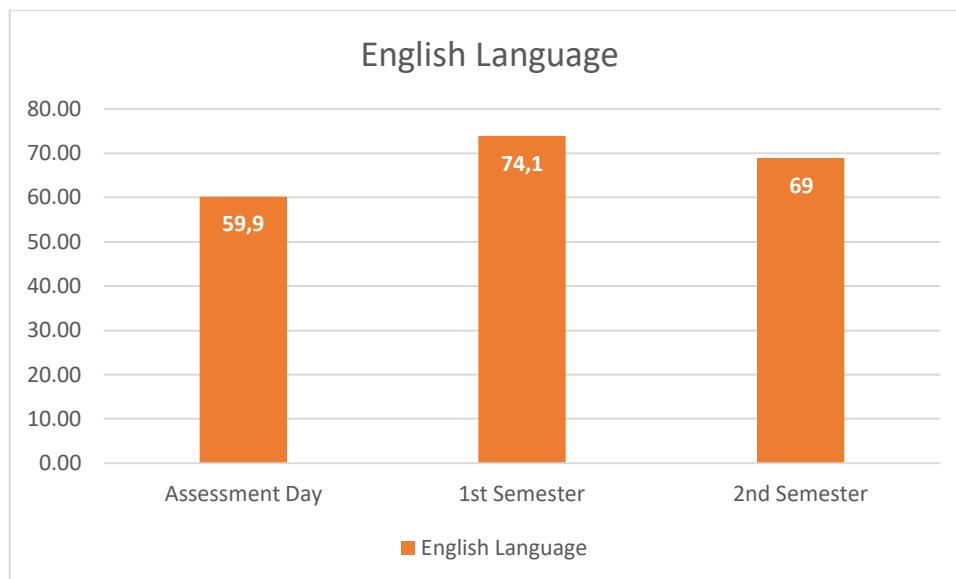
English Progress

Figure 7 Progress of students in English language

The average score of the batch three students on Assessment Day for English language was 59.9. After the first semester of skills classes, the average score was 74.1 in the first semester and 69 for the second semester. Although students entered into the programme with a fair basic score in English language, there is an increase in students' understanding of English language concepts, once students are in the programme. Comparing the Assessment Day scores to the average in the two semesters shows that student scores increased over 11 points overall after the first two semesters in English language.

Figure 8 Overall progress two semesters
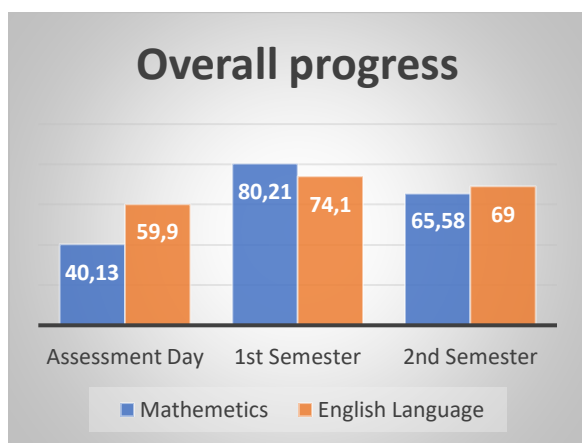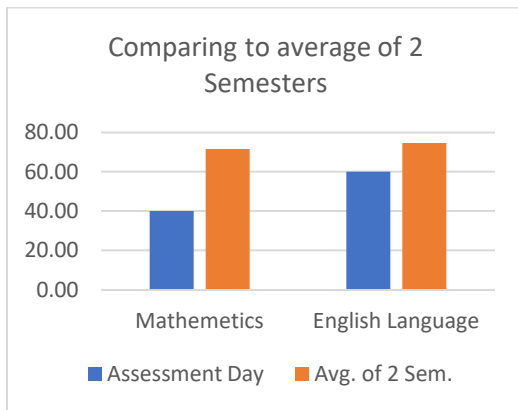
Figure 9 comparing Assessment day to combined averages of 2 semesters
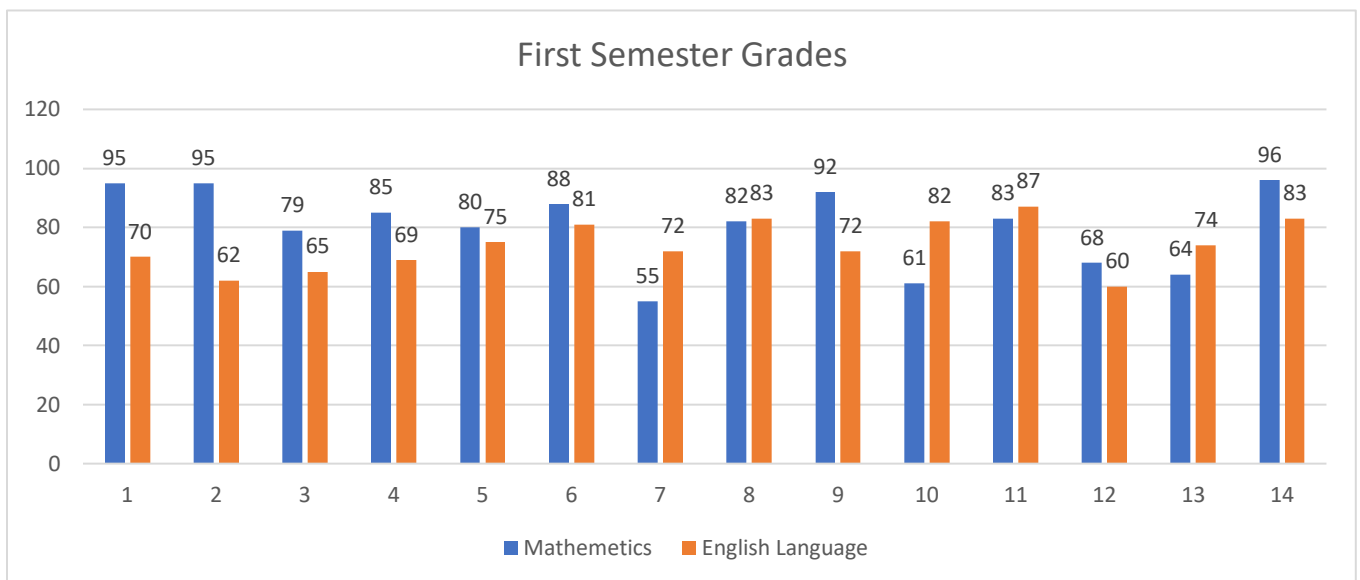
Figure 10 Closer analysis of individual grades in 1st semester

In the first semester the lowest grade was 55, which was in mathematics. The lowest English grade was 60 and the highest grade in English was 87, a 27 points difference. The highest grade in Mathematics was 95; a 40-point difference.

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2nd Semester grades
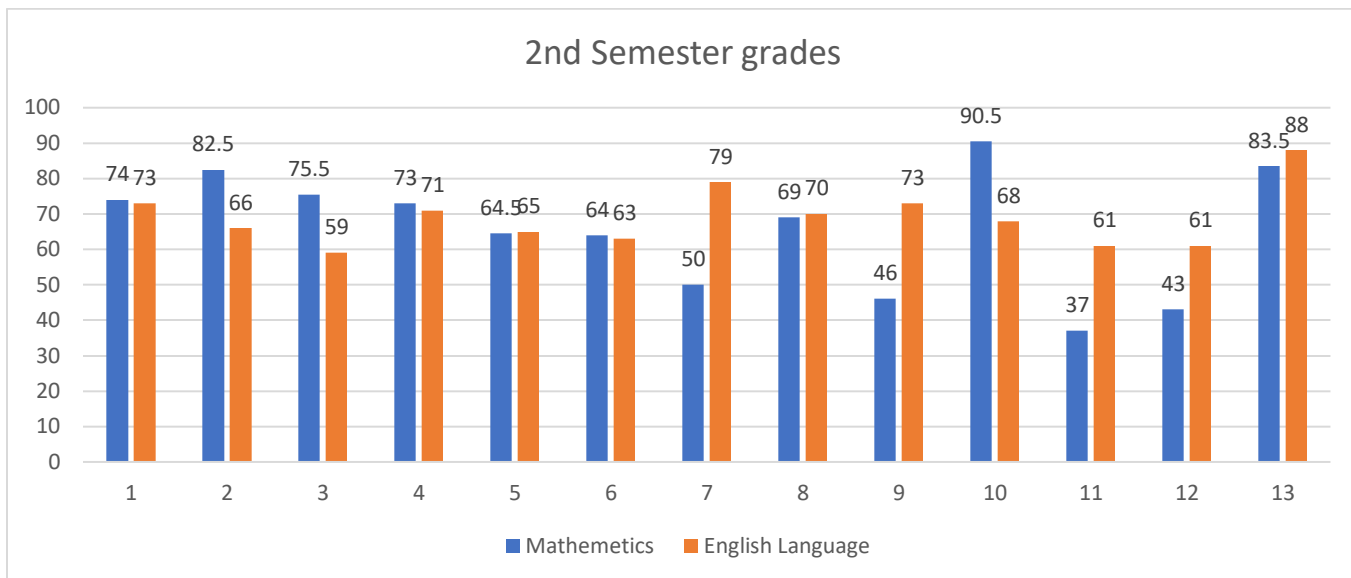
Figure 11 Closer analysis of individual grades 2nd semester

In the second semester, again the lowest grade was in mathematics, 37 and that was a 53-point difference from the highest score of 90. English grades were fairly even and there were no large disparities found in the individual performance of students.

As expressed by some of the trainers during the trainer meeting, attention must be paid to make sure that all students are performing well in their classes.

Performance in other subjects
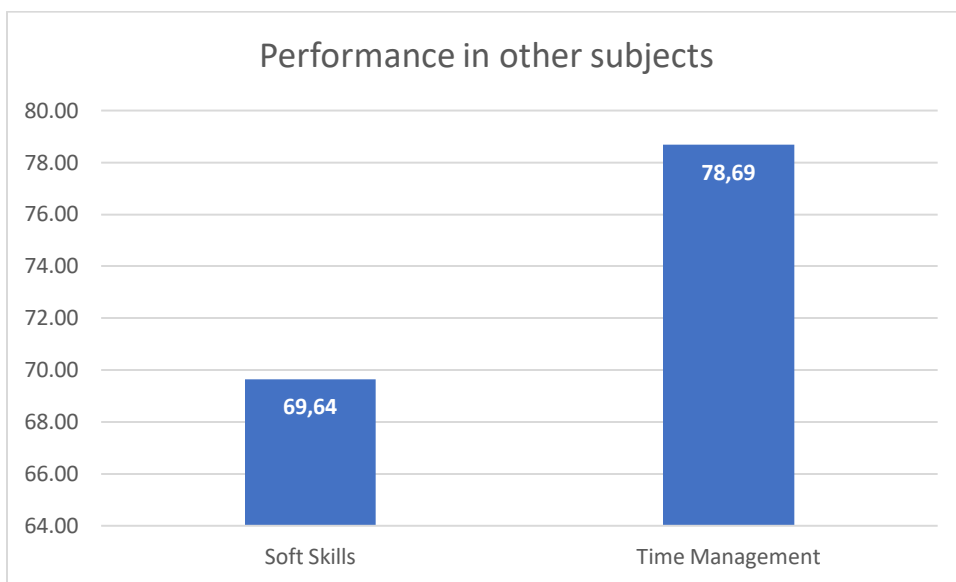
Figure 12 Students performance in 1st semester Soft skill and 2nd semester Time Management

During the first two semesters, students took additional subjects beyond English language and Mathematics. The first semester focused on Soft Skills, where students learned about problem solving, teamwork, creative thinking, critical thinking and more. Overall, students' performance in Soft Skills was satisfactory, completing the course with an almost 70% average grade. Soft skills class creates a foundation for students as it touches on subjects that come back later, such as time management and communication. This foundation could be the reason why a significant improvement in overall performance in the Time Management skills class is seen in the second semester.

Development of new curricula
Before the start of the second semester in January, a Time Management skills curriculum was developed. During the second semester, in preparation for the third semester upcoming, a Communication skills curriculum was also developed in March.

Training of Trainers

In preparation for the start of the third semester, a new Communication Skills trainer was hired and trained. The training focused on increasing the trainer's knowledge and skills on the active learning strategies needed to effectively communicate the content of SfL training sessions. The trainer learned the SfL key teachings, background and learning tools for the students and was given the SfL trainer resource materials for the Employability skills training of SfL students.

End of semester meeting with trainers

Issues can emerge in skills classes that require dialogue between trainers and Schooling for Life. As a conclusion from a previous reporting period, the management adopted the practice of holding one general meeting with trainers at the end of every semester. These meetings cover the successes and challenges in the skills classes, conduct of students and opens communication between trainers and Schooling for Life to strengthen cooperation between trainers and the management of Schooling for Life.

The end of second semester trainer meeting was held on the 26th April 2019. The meeting covered what went well during the semester and what could be improved from both the trainers' and SfL side. In English skills class, according to the trainer, students' writing skills are greatly improving, due to the creative writing lessons they received at the beginning of the year. The attendance and participation of students has increased in general.

In terms of areas of improvement, there were student-specific concerns that were addressed and a plan of action was discussed.

Successes
- Two new curriculums were developed
- Students' understanding of concepts in Mathematics and English language increases once they begin skills classes
- In English language skills class, students' writing skills are greatly improving
- The attendance and participation of students has increased in general

Challenges
- Some students are failing their skills class exams, which has led to some not passing their classes
- Some students do not have the foundational knowledge to understand some of the topics in Mathematics skills class

How Will Our Experience Be Transformed into Change
- The organisation plans to collaborate with trainers to create a uniform assessment system in order to ensure that students are being assessed in the same manner and to detect earlier when students are struggling with the material
- In order to combat the issue of students feeling that the pace of certain skills classes is too fast, trainers will be taught to be more student-focused in their training, during the training of trainers in the new year

PILLAR THREE - Personal Guidance

Personal guidance

Personal guidance is the third pillar of the Skills for a Successful Future programme. This pillar is designed to support students in making informed decisions relating to academic, domestic and social life, and to learn to set and achieve goals. Confidence, self-esteem building and developing positive and creative thinking also form an integral part of the sessions. Overall, personal guidance is focused on behavioural change and character building.

Due to some staff changes, personal guidance was not completed for batch two students and batch three students did not start their personal guidance upon their entrance into the programme. For this reason, the management has decided to give students of batch two one additional semester of personal guidance. This will imply that batch two students will continue with pillar three, even after they complete the rest of the programme.

A new Guidance Counsellor was hired in May and guidance counselling sessions will commence in July 2019 with the batch two students.

Group guidance sessions

The idea behind group guidance sessions is to check in with each group as a whole (batch two and three students) at the end of every semester and discuss common issues that they run into across the group and support each other in dealing with these common hurdles. This will increase their bonding within the team and promote support for each other in the programme.

The group guidance meeting for batch three students occurred on the 15th May 2019 and all 13 students were in attendance. Some significant points that came out of the discussion were a general sentiment by some students who felt that their Mathematics class was moving too fast and they didn't feel that consideration was given to the students who were not picking up the material as fast as others. Students also expressed that they wanted additional support from Schooling for Life with materials to enhance their learning in college, especially as it came to learning about doing research and public speaking skills. The management shared that the third semester Communication skills class will greatly help students with public speaking skills. Students were told that their desire to learn more research skills will be communicated with the English trainer and could be incorporated in next semester's lesson plans.

The end of semester group guidance meeting for batch two occurred on the 16th May 2019 with 11 out of 14 students in attendance. As a response to the students' request, the management began discussions around the end of programme experience, more importantly the job market. Job searching tips were shared and the batch two students were encouraged to take personal responsibility for the job search as some of their colleagues have done.

In the group guidance discussion, the batch two students were still displaying signs of discord among each other, as some expressed that they didn't receive support from each other. It was clear that some were not in communication with each other and that they did not operate as a family unit, as has been seen throughout their time in the programme. Schooling for Life management emphasised the importance of working as a group and supporting one another. The students were encouraged to communicate beyond Schooling for Life initiated events or meetings.

Student/guardian meetings
On the 4th May 2019, the end of second semester student-guardian meeting was held. All 13 students were present, but only eight guardians were in attendance, some expressed due to the time. The management shared information about the performance of students, attendance and students' attitudes in class, as well as information on the start of third semester classes, the application process, and extra-curricular activities such as the Ramadan dinner. Students had opportunity to share their experiences within the programme and in skills classes so far. Guardians were encouraged to make comments or ask questions and they were very engaged in the process and invested in their students performing well in the programme.

Successes
- Students are expressing themselves more within group guidance, especially the batch three students

Challenges
- Some guardians were not able to be present for the student-guardian meeting because, as they stated, the time conflicted with their work and other activities
- Personal guidance was not started this reporting period
- Batch two students are still having a hard time working together as a group
- Not all batch two students were able to attend their group guidance since a few had started working or doing an internship – which SfL does not want to interfere with

How Will Our Experience Be Transformed into Change
- Personal guidance for batch two students is being scheduled to begin in July, to make up for the semester missed
- Due to the new Guidance Counsellor still being inducted, the commencement of batch three personal guidance will be evaluated after the induction period of the Guidance Counsellor.

PROGRAMME RELATED ACTIVITIES

Recruitment Process

Outreach

The Schooling for Life (SfL) application process was officially opened on Monday, the 4th March 2019. Outreach is a critical part of the application process, which gives Schooling for Life students and staff an opportunity to reach out to individuals who may be qualified for the programme. A training of students and staff on Friday 1st March with additional refresher training on the 4th March was conducted in order to prepare students and staff who were participating in the outreach process on how to conduct the outreach. Although in previous reporting periods one of the changes proposed was to start the process earlier, that could not be done this year due to staff capacity. A movement plan was created that outlined the various secondary schools, colleges, organisations, and community hotspots, such as syndicates, mosques and churches, where the organisation's target population frequently attends.

Two staff and five students conducted most of the outreach, which was divided into three main sections: visitations to community hotspots, media engagement, and the publishing of the public notice.

➢ *Visitation:* Fourteen secondary schools, six mosques, five churches, two okada (bike-rider) parks, and eight syndicate centres were visited during the outreach. Schooling for Life staff and students engaged potential applicants and the general public through delivery of speeches about Schooling for Life, answering questions, and dropping of letters and public notices to the various sites visited.

During the visitation, additional referrals of sites were received to visit, that were additional to the original movement plan such as added churches and syndicates. All okada parks, syndicates, mosques, and churches that were identified were visited by the outreach team. All seven of the identified secondary schools in the western area of the capital were visited by Schooling or Life staff and a student ambassador to speak during the school assembly about the application process. Only two secondary schools in the eastern part of the capital were engaged during the outreach process due to time limitations and secondary schools conducting exams during this period. Three tertiary educational institutes were not visited due to difficulty in locating the institutions.
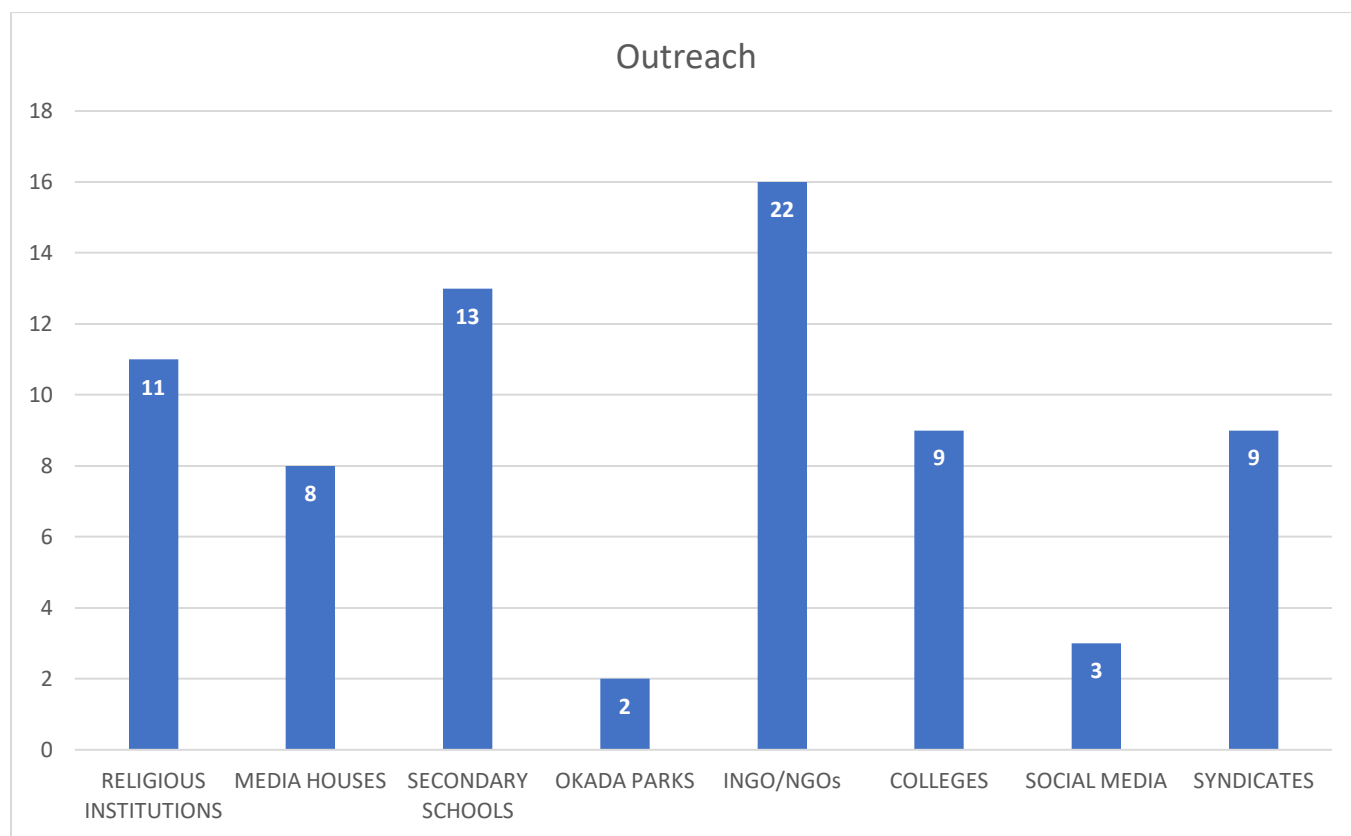

Figure 13 Outreach targets for visits and drop off of public notice

Community hotspots: Out of the nine religious institutions targeted through outreach, more religious institutions were visited; six mosques, five churches were visited, which was due to additional referrals being given when the group arrived at various religious houses.

At the syndicates, a similar situation occurred, wherein teachers at the syndicates made recommendations for additional syndicates to be visited, which led to nine syndicates being visited. This was more than the six that were targeted. Public notices were then taken to these places that were referred to the group.

Secondary Schools: The most popular secondary schools in the east and west end were chosen to be visited. Due to time constraints, only five out of the 13 secondary schools targeted were visited. Many schools were having exams around that time and given that they all have assembly at the same time, it was difficult to schedule all within the timeframe of the outreach. In the end, only five schools in the western area of Freetown were visited and assembly talks delivered at four.
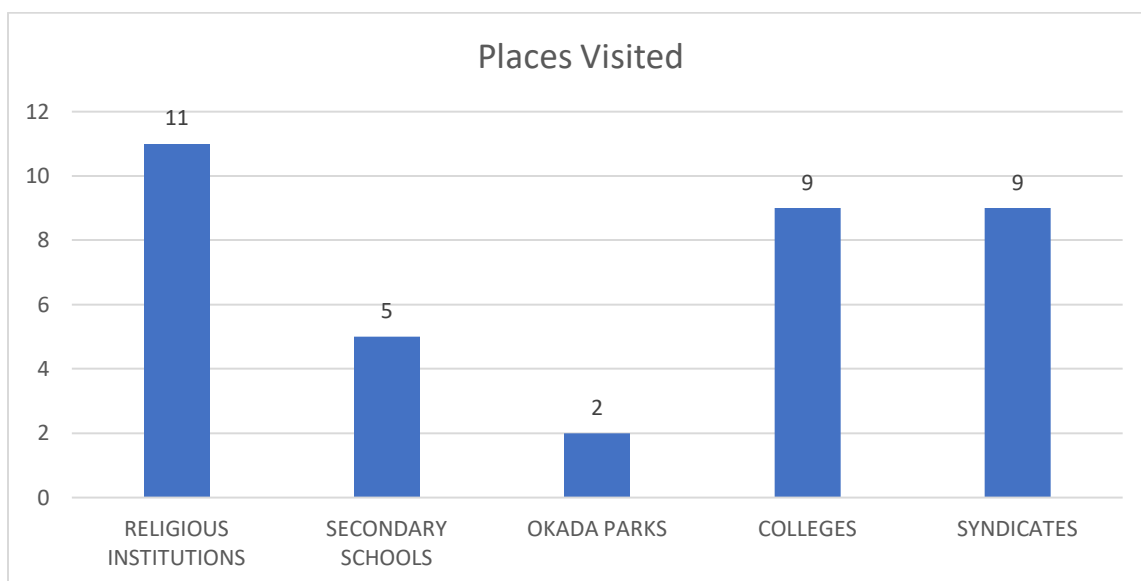
Figure 14 Actual sites visited during outreach

> *Media engagement:* A Schooling for Life staff member and a student went to three houses to engage the public on the Skills for a Successful Future programme and the application process. Talk shows were conducted on Africell's Air radio, AYV radio and Radio Democracy. During the Air Radio talk show the phone line was open and many questions came in, which showed that there was quite an engaged audience. The AYV radio appearance was simulcast as a tv programme, which led to a wide reach. The announcement of the opening of the application process was also published in two major national newspapers: Awoko and Awareness Times.

Media	Type of Engagement
AYV	1) TV and Radio (simulcast) appearance on the Good Morning Show 2) Front page story given free of charge 3) Public notices played in the morning and evenings
Awoko Newspaper/Awareness Times	Half page spread advertisement
Air Radio	1) Public notices played in the morning and evenings 2) Talk show appearance
Radio Democracy	1) Public notices played in the morning and evenings 2) Talk show appearance

Table 1 Types of media engagement during outreach

Sharing of public notices: There were 22 NGOs and INGOs targeted. 19 organisations were successfully provided with notices to help towards the sharing of information, and Schooling for Life students put up the notice at their individual colleges; IAMTECH, Bluecrest College, MMCET Brookfields and Congo Cross, and GTI.

Application process
The application process is the second step of Schooling for Life's recruitment process. The application process was opened on March 4th and was scheduled to close on the 22nd of March 2019, but was extended for an additional week and a half to the 3rd of April. This was due to many applicants asking for an extension because they were having difficulties obtaining certain documents, such as their recommendation letters from their last attended school. The management decided to be more flexible with applicants when it came to certain documents due to the challenges they faced.

When the application process was extended, further outreach was done to four mosques and three churches. Schooling for Life students were called by batch to a meeting to encourage them to do additional outreach and inform people they know of the extension in their various communities. Two media houses, Radio Democracy 98.1 and Tumac Radio in the eastern part of Freetown, were engaged in further advertising. A public notice was read on a daily basis, twice a day, morning and evening during the extension period.

All applicants who submitted incomplete applications due to missing recommendation letters from the last attended school, turned in their recommendation letter during the extension period. More incomplete applications were completed after the flexibility of certain documents was issued. For example, 90% of applicants without ID cards turned in their WASSCE ID card instead, after they were informed that they could submit that as an alternative to the originally

requested national identification card. The organisation made several follow up calls to applicants who had incomplete applications. By the end of the extension of the application process, 21 applications had been added to the previous number which brought the total to 76 applications, but only 63 were complete applications.

of Applications by Gender

0.25; 25%

0.75; 75%
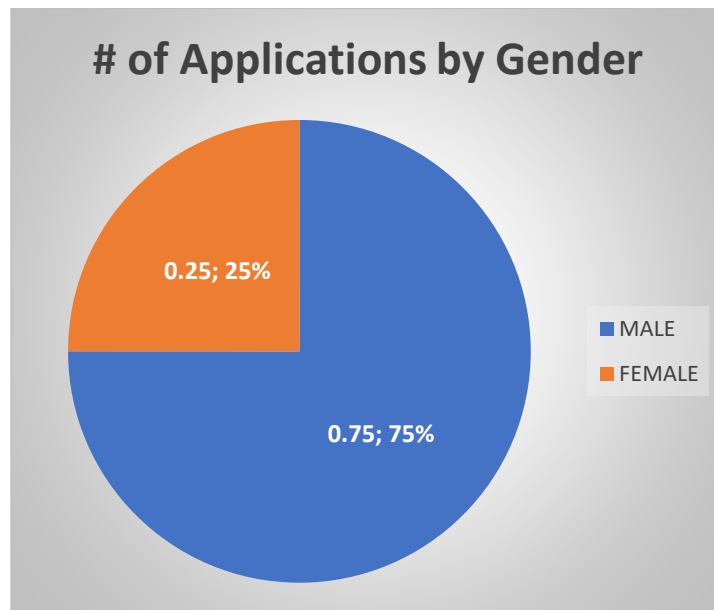
■ MALE
■ FEMALE

Figure 15 applications received by gender

Out of the 63 complete applications received, 51 were male applicants and 12 were female applicants. Although it was the aim of the organisation to receive more female applications this year, not many young women applied. The organisation purposefully reached out to many girls and women organisations and groups, but the number of applications was still very low compared to male.

Religious Institution: 1, Media Houses: 18, Secondary school: 0, INGO/NGOs: 0, Colleges: 2, SFL Students: 29, Social Media: 13, Syndicates: 1, Unknown: 12

Figure 16 Referral sites for applications

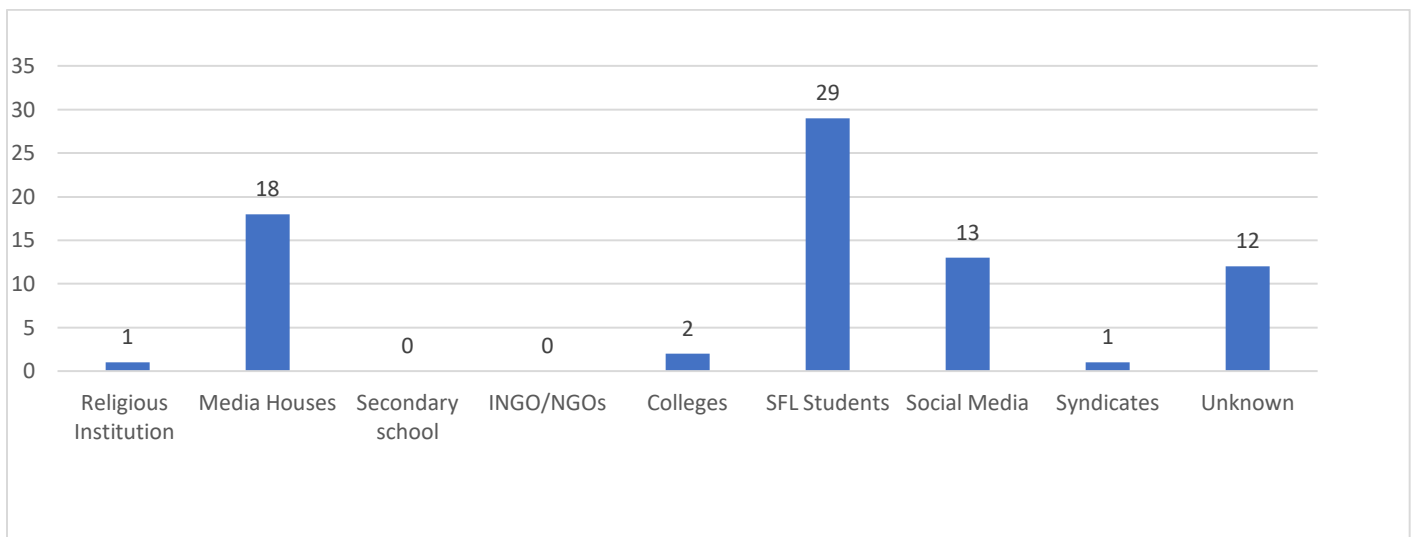Schooling for Life students brought in the highest number of applicants; 29 applicants stated on their applications that they were referred to the programme by a Schooling for Life student.
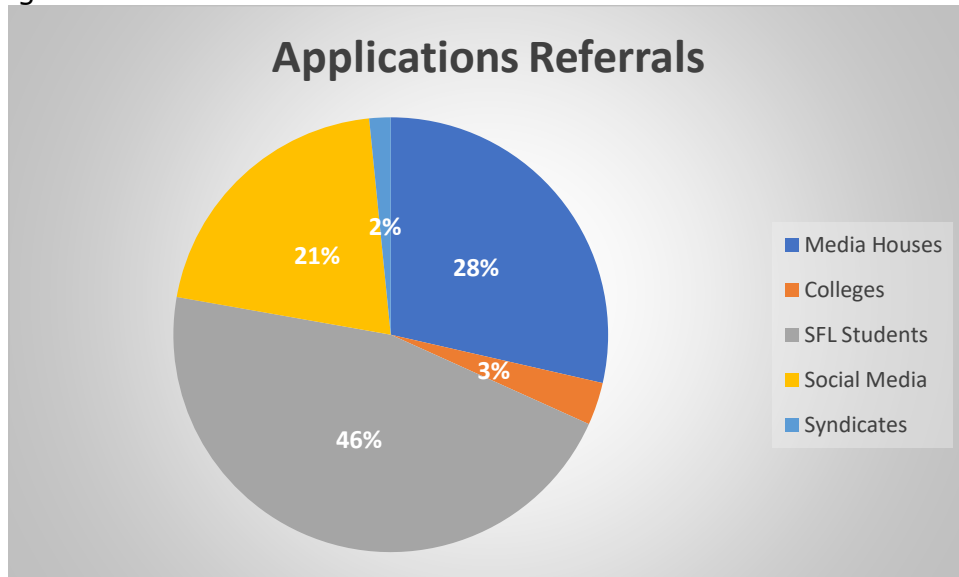
Figure 17 Points of referral to applicants

The second largest number of applicants, 14 applicants, heard about the organisation through different media houses:

AYV TV	1
Awoko Newspaper	1
Tumac Radio	2
Air Radio	3
Radio Democracy	9
Capital Radio	1
AYV Radio	1

Table 2 number of referrals from media

Other applicants stated various online media where they saw the public notice of the application process, including various social media platforms.

Whatsapp	5
Facebook	4
SFL website	2
Social Media	2

Table 3 other referral points

It is important to note that there were many applicants who stated that they heard about the programme from a friend or family member, but could not identify where those people heard about the organisation.

Overall the management of Schooling for Life believes that much could have been done during outreach to increase the number of applicants, which will be highlighted in the recommendations section.
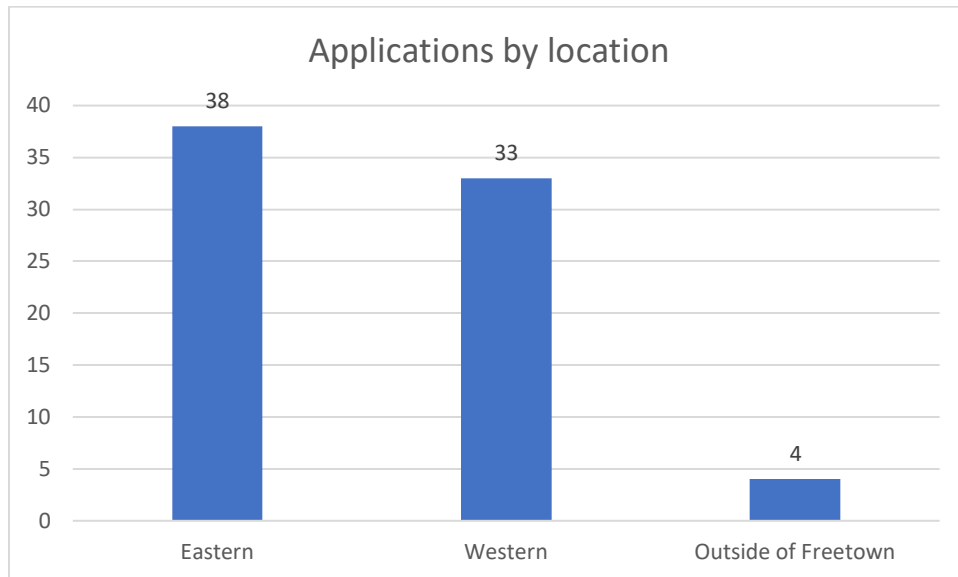
Figure 18 Number of applications received by location

The number of applications from the eastern and western area of Freetown were almost the same. The increase in number of eastern area applications, was most likely due to the increase in outreach through the radio broadcasting during the extension period on an eastern radio station. The target audience of Schooling for Life's Skills for a Successful Future programme, youth 15-25, who can't afford tertiary education, mostly live in the east and it may be beneficial in the next year to do more outreach in that part of town.

Most common field of study stated

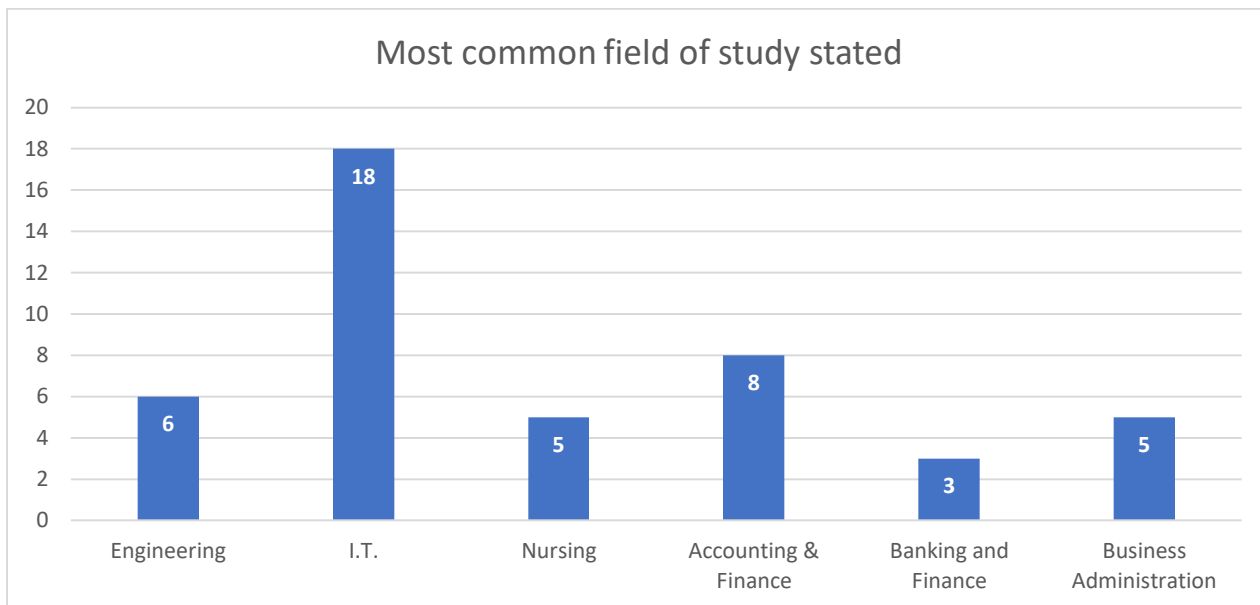| Field	Value
Engineering	6
I.T.	18
Nursing	5
Accounting & Finance	8
Banking and Finance	3
Business Administration	5

Figure 19 Most common fields of desired study stated in applications

Of the 76 applicants, 23%, which is the majority, expressed in their application that they wanted to study Information Technology. The other popular fields of study are outlined in the figure above: Social Work (2), Banking & Finance (3), Pharmacy (2), Hotel & Tourism, and Human Resource Management both mentioned once. There were many fields of study mentioned that are not offered at diploma level, such as Mass Communications and Economics (3), Agriculture, and Procurement & Logistics (2). The applicants that mentioned these courses, if they moved on to the next phase of the recruitment process, would be asked to speak on their passions and told that Schooling for Life only supports technical, vocational education at Diploma level.

Interviews/Assessment day

43 applicants were selected for the initial selection process interviews; 10 females and 33 males. Of the 43 interviewed, 20 were selected for the Assessment Day.

The assessment day was held on the 2nd of May 2019 at the Africell American Corner. The main purpose of assessment day is to gage the educational level of the applicants and for the organisation to further explain the expectations of Schooling for Life to applicants. The assessment day started with an explanation of the values of Schooling for Life and taking questions. Throughout the day, current students gave speeches on their experiences with the organisation and participation in the programme. The applicants took an assessment in English, Math, and General Paper, and a career assessment was conducted to evaluate whether applicants' interests matched what they stated they wanted to study.

15 applicants were selected to continue to the applicant-guardian interview stage of the selection process after analysis of their assessments. Following the applicant-guardian interviews, 14 applicants were shortlisted.

Due diligence

Prior to the start of each academic year, since 2014, Schooling for Life does due diligence on the relevant educational institutes in Freetown to determine where to place new students for the upcoming academic year. The purpose of the visits is to assess the suitability of institutes across Freetown, whether currently working with Schooling for Life or not. Prior to the due diligence process, both students who were still enrolled in college and those who already completed their formal education were asked to provide feedback on their institutions. 38 students filled out institute evaluation forms; this was analysed and informed the questions that were prepared for due diligence.

17 institutions were selected for due diligence based on the areas of studies of shortlisted candidates. For MMCET, two of its campuses (Goderich & Congo Cross) were visited, making the number of campuses selected for visits 18. One of the colleges were not reachable, since the contact number did not work and no address was listed for the institution and therefore only 16 institutions were actually visited.
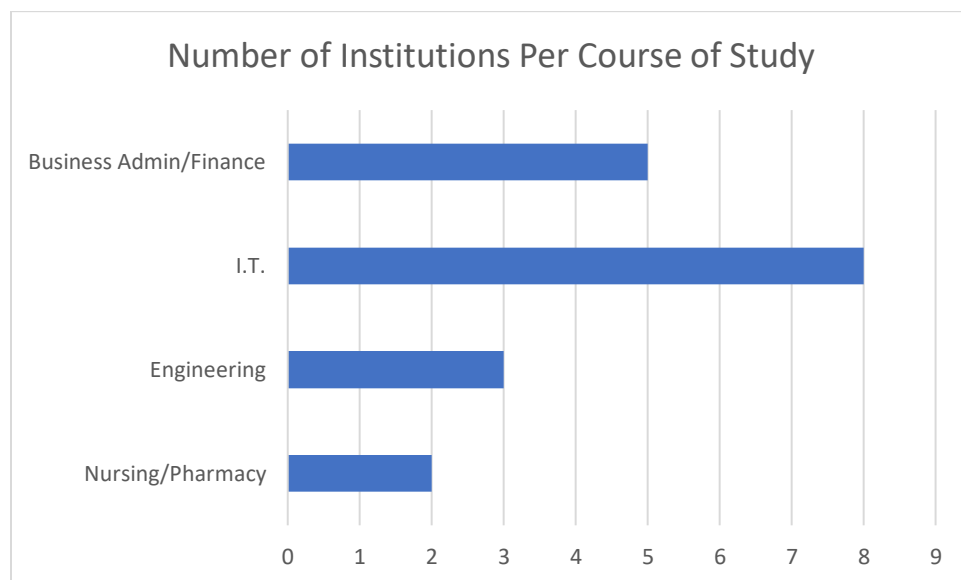

Figure 20 Number of institutions per course of study

Successes
- Schooling for Life students did well in helping Schooling for Life set out the application process and acting as ambassadors for the organisation. They brought in a lot of applicants

- Additional contacts and referrals were gained during the outreach process

- Schooling for Life students turned in the highest number of applicants (29) during the application process based on their individual outreach

- The media engagement was quite effective. When asked where they heard about the Schooling for Life application, the second largest response, is that of one of the media houses

- The outreach team was able to reach out to the major community hotspots, such as churches, as outlined by the movement plan

- All religious institutions on the movement plan were visited and some churches referred Schooling for Life to neighbouring churches that they believed might benefit from the information

- New contacts were made during the visitation process and a contact list was created to make outreach easier for future visitations

- 19 out of the 22 organisations on the movement plan were reached, who not only put up the notice on their noticeboards, but also shared in their Whatsapp groups

- Schooling for Life was able to receive sponsorship again by Africell. Through this sponsorship, public notices were aired every morning and evening throughout the application process on Africell Radio, free of charge

- Africell sponsorship also supported the Operational Manager and student appearing on an evening talk show programme on Africell radio, which was repeated in the morning show

- AYV newspaper provided the organisation with an extra free front-page story to help promote the organisation and the application process.

Challenges
- Outreach to secondary to schools in the eastern area of Freetown was not done extensively, with the schools only receiving public notices, but no assembly addresses, due to time limitations and schools being on exams

- Flexibility was made late on required documents for application, which might have led to applicants deciding not to continue with the application process

- Schooling for Life staff did not always fill in the application process enquiry log properly, which led to incomplete referral information

- Transportation served as a huge constraint as drivers/riders were charging more for transport fare than was budgeted, which made it difficult for the large group of students and staff to travel together when visiting different locations.

How Will Our Experience Be Transformed into Change

- Schooling for Life will consider incorporating the flexibility shown during the 2019/2020 application process in the future recruitment in order for applicants to have variety of options to choose from
- Schooling for Life will evaluate how to ensure staff are properly trained on how to collect full information from applicants in order to ensure that information, such as where applicants heard about the programme, is properly recorded
- More time, at least a month in advance, will be allocated for doing outreach in order to ensure that the information reaches more of Schooling for Life's target audience
- A continual outreach will be outlined to see how outreach can be done throughout the year for the general public to get to know more about Schooling for Life
- A proper outreach training will be planned to prepare students to be effective ambassadors before and during the application process

Ramadan Dinner

As a religious tolerant organisation, SfL believes in showing respect to Muslim students and staff and providing a sociable time in the form of a dinner during Ramadan. The dinner was held at the Africell American Corner, a space sponsored by Africell, Thursday, the 30th of May 2019. 23 students, five trainers and all Schooling for Life staff were in attendance. Two batch three students gave speeches on the importance of Ramadan, fasting and the benefits of fasting. A batch two student also gave a speech on the importance of family. The evening was celebrated with a dinner, with various students and trainers sharing their experiences and motivational words throughout the evening. The event was culminated with an award ceremony which recognised the three students who brought in the most applicants during the application process. The final awards were focused on the top three performing students in skills class from the batch three students.

Creating these opportunities for students, staff and trainers to get together, helps to build relationships among various groups of students. It also provides an opportunity for staff who do not normally get to interact with students to connect with them and share their own valuable advice. The awards ceremony is an

opportunity to recognise students who have performed well in their skills classes and motivates others to improve on their performance.

Students in the job market

Schooling for Life provides students with the type of education that prepares them for the job market by giving them soft skills such as communication skills, time management skills and work ethics, as well as hard skills through the provision of a full scholarship to attend a technical vocational institute. These skills enable them to access and retain jobs.
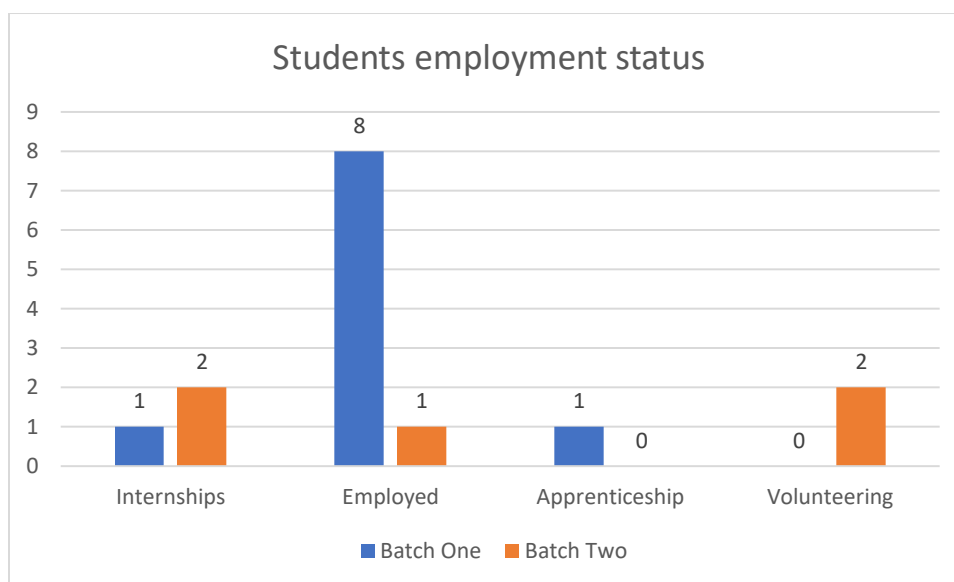

Figure 21 Students' status of employment

During this reporting period, 15 students are actively engaged in employment activities, whether volunteering, interning, doing an apprenticeship, either part-time or full-time. Since most of batch two students are still completing their formal education, compared to batch one, their numbers may seem low. Two of the batch two students are volunteering with BRAC, an international development organisation doing work in Sierra Leone focused on youth empowerment. The students are gaining experience in community organising and improving their communication skills as they volunteer on various projects that require going on sensitisation engagements in their respective communities.

10 out of 13 batch one students are engaged in the job market in some capacity. This aligns with one of Schooling for Life's main goals, which is to have students who have completed the programme in an internship or employment within the first year after completion of the programme. Considering that nine of the batch one students recently completed their formal education, this shows the effectiveness of the programme in enabling students to seek job opportunities and take personal responsibility immediately after completing the programme.

Also implemented during this reporting period, is an evaluation form for employers to give feedback on Schooling for Life students interning or working in different companies. The analysis of the feedback showed that many employers commented on how committed and hardworking Schooling for Life students are in the work place. Schooling for Life students are rated "Good" or "Excellent" in areas such as: attendance (mostly because of punctuality, which shows good time management), behaving in a professional manner (timeliness, attitude towards work and colleagues, etc.), effectively performs tasks, ability to work with others, ability to ask questions when needed, and general work ethics. These evaluations will be continued to analysed and more details will be shared in the next reporting period.

Internships

After students complete the programme, they are exposed to internship opportunities to gain experience in the work environment. Internships are an important component after the programme as it provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their acquired skills and knowledge in a practical working environment. Schooling for Life does not supply internships but tries to help students to acquire one as students are required to go through an internship period. During this reporting period, Schooling for Life developed a collaboration with Sensi Tech Hub, which led to two students being offered internship positions. The performance of the students during their internships should attract further employment.

The batch one student, who was studying Human Resource Management is still doing an apprenticeship with Afriqia HR Solutions. The student continues to benefit from the tremendous human resource experience.

Another batch one student, who studied I.T. focused in Web Development, was offered an internship at Sensi Tech Hub. In this internship, the student is able to put into practice exactly what he studied. Working in Sensi's I.T. department, the student is an Assistant Trainer helping to design trainings on basic Microsoft Office packages and also assisting the company to build websites using his web development background. Not only is the student acquiring direct experience in his field, he is also contributing greatly to the organisation and his internship was extended due to excellent performance.

The two batch two students who studied Social Work at MMCET and were interning at Don Bosco Fambul (DBF), a local non-government organisation that works with vulnerable children and youth, have completed their internship.

The other batch two student in Social Work completed her internship with the Family Support Unit, a division of the Sierra Leone police that investigates family, women and girls' cases and provides various psychosocial support to women and girls who have experienced abuse. After this internship, the student received a second internship with the United States Embassy in March 2019 as a Library

Assistant in the library. In this internship, the student is improving on interpersonal skills, which is crucial in social work. Having to face with various visitors and exercising patience and understanding, whilst attending to visitors' needs, will prove useful in the student's career.

A batch two, recent graduate of IAMTECH in Banking and Finance, started an internship with Sensi Tech Hub in March working in their finance department as an Assistant Accountant. Due to the student's great work ethic, not only was the internship extended, the student's responsibilities were expanded. Using the formal education experience, the student is able to use knowledge in finance to plan and deliver effective trainings to young entrepreneurs that frequent the space. The student is also gaining significant experience in planning of events for a diversity of stakeholders from government to private companies.

The Schooling for Life management is still working hard to build more relationships with companies and organisations to provide more internship opportunities for students.
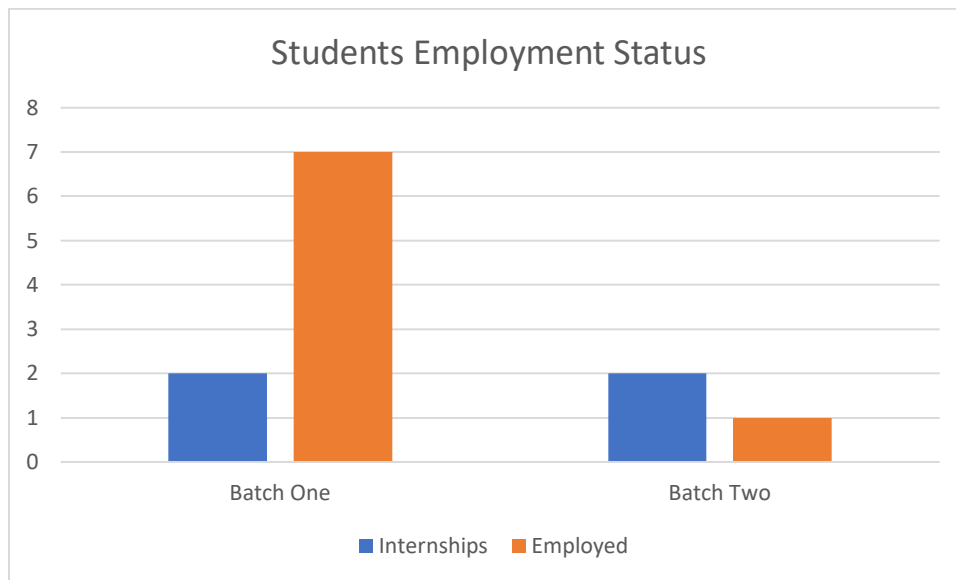

Students Employment Status

Figure 22 Batch one vs Batch two employment status

Employment

In the last reporting period, six batch one students were reported to be employed for two years. Of the four batch one students who have been employed with the same company or organisation for nearly two years, three are still employed with the same company: Afrigas, Moreno Enterprise, and Schooling for Life. The other student recently gained new employment with Hearts and Hand SL, teaching I.T. courses in Word, Excel and other basic computer skills.

Two other batch one students who were employed on a part-time basis, one at a non-profit called Sudu, and the other teaching at a syndicate, are still at the same institutions.

Another batch one I.T. student started working as a digital staff with the United Bank for Africa (UBA) in their Application Enrolment Department in May 2019. UBA is a pan-African bank operating all over Africa. The student is able to use the I.T. knowledge gained in his formal education to set up mobile banking on clients' mobile phones and help with any troubleshooting.

After successfully completing his internship, one of the batch two students interning at Don Bosco Fambul was offered a position as a social worker with the organisation. This was an unusual act by the organisation, because normally, they do not accept full time employees, on diploma level. The tremendous work ethic shown by the Schooling for Life student, who frequently received praise for bringing fresh ideas to the organisation (using his creative thinking skills) and also for being a great team player, convinced the management to offer him a position. In this job, the student continues to learn more about providing social services for vulnerable populations and is directly working in the field he studied.

Successes
- Several students were able to find internship opportunities on their own and are performing well at these companies
- Students continue to excel in their work places
- Students are securing employment and are standing out
- Schooling for Life was able to form a new internship relationship

Challenges
- The organisation has not been able to create a plan for building more internship relationships with companies and organisations, as planned. This was due to staff management shifts, leading to certain tasks being put on hold for larger programme goals
- The organisation was not able to sign more agreements with companies and organisations to place interns or to gain employment opportunities because many companies are not familiar with the organisation and are not convinced about the gain. This is something that needs to grow and over time be further addressed by the organisation

How Will Our Experience Be Transformed into Change
- The internship strategy idea initially planned will be reviewed in order to make sure there is a clear process for finding internship opportunities for students

Planned Activities for July - December 2019

- ☐ Continuation of skills classes and start of skills classes
- ☐ Finalisation of the selection process of new students
- ☐ Inauguration of new students
- ☐ Introduction week for new students
- ☐ Batch one graduation
- ☐ Registration of students to various institutes
- ☐ Training of Trainers (TOT) for skills classes
- ☐ End of semester meeting with trainers
- ☐ Review of curricula for year 1 and 2 courses
- ☐ Student evaluation on skills trainers
- ☐ End of Semester Guardian/Group guidance meetings
- ☐ Christmas activity Day

Schooling for Life Organisation (during reporting period)

Schooling for Life Board

- ➢ Sjierly Pereira - Chairman
- ➢ Desmond Awoonor – Gordon
- ➢ Harm Beskers

Staff and Volunteers

Sierra Leone - paid staff

- ➢ Sjierly Pereira – Country Director
- ➢ Janice Williams – Operational Manager
- ➢ Danny Gbesonga – Programme Coordinator/ Trainer of Trainers
- ➢ Alex Menjor - Senior Finance Officer
- ➢ Hawanatu Kamara– Guidance Counsellor
- ➢ Isha Jalloh – Guidance Counselling Admin
- ➢ Patrick Mambu – Office Admin Assistant

The Netherlands - volunteers

- ➢ Dries Arnolds – Website
- ➢ Barbara Heutink – Social Media and Communication
- ➢ Stéfanie Freel – Partner relations/ Fundraising

Contact information

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Bank Information

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IBAN:NL49RABO0171   000593-149022

SCHOOLING FOR LIFE