

**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**



**Restless
Development
Sierra Leone
Annual Report
2022/2023
Financial year.**



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WHO WE ARE

Restless Development Sierra Leone is the leading development agency championing youth leadership nationally. Restless Development started operations in Sierra Leone at the government's invitation in 2005, working with and for young people to help the country rebuild from civil war. When Ebola broke out in 2014, it was Restless Development that worked with the next generation of young people – including 3,000 social mobilizers – to reach and build trust with communities across half the country, playing a critical role as the country put an end to the disease. Presently Restless Development, through its Power Shifting model, is working with leaders across the country to identify and solve challenges they are facing in their communities.

THE RESTLESS APPROACH

We support young people to lead change, with opportunities to build confidence, networks, and skills to lead initiatives that have a lasting impact. Our work differs in response to the context and challenge. However, it is always led by young people in their community and in line with the Power Shifting Checklist. We have several models which underpin much of our work, including:

Community mobilization

Young people change behaviour or mobilize action in their communities to respond to long-standing challenges such as child marriage or gender-based violence, as well as more pressing emergencies such as disease outbreaks or climate-related disasters.

Youth-led accountability

Young people are supported to advocate and hold decision-makers to account. Young people capture key insights on issues that matter most to them and use them to inform policy and practice:

Youth training and empowerment.

Young people are provided with tailored training, support, networks, and mentors enabling young people to learn, adapt, grow, and ultimately thrive.

OUR POWER SHIFTING MODEL:

We are feminist, inclusive, gender transformative, and anti-racist in our approach. We are grounded in communities and work in partnership to ensure young people lead with their communities. We recognize historic power inequalities and aim to decolonize development.

How we do our work is as important as what we do. We take a power-shifting approach. We see the growing inequalities and injustices in our world. We are intentional in our efforts to shift power; enabling young people and communities who have previously been marginalized to lead change.



Our work has had a truly remarkable impact, directly benefiting over 92,400 individuals and reaching over 1,000 communities. We have made significant positive changes in various critical areas through our commitment to youth leadership and community-driven solutions.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, our dedicated young volunteers conducted 610 awareness-raising sessions, equipping a total of 24,400 community members with vital knowledge and preventive measures. Our CYLER project facilitated the return of 150 children to the classroom, and we distributed 190 solar backpacks, opening new learning opportunities. We have also made substantial strides in preventing early marriages, supporting the education of 150 adolescent girls, and successfully reaching 4,370 adolescent girls with comprehensive life skills training through the End Child Marriage project.

Our HIV/AIDS prevention efforts have had a significant impact, reaching 3,651 individuals through our Youth Stop Aids campaigns, and distributing 9,980 branded condoms to ensure safe practices. Through the EAGER project, we impacted 7,860 adolescent girls, providing them with life and business skills training, along with assistive devices for physically challenged girls, a testament to our commitment to inclusion and empowerment.

Our financial inclusion project has empowered 5,550 women living in informal settlements, with 84.4% of them now confident in using financial services, and we helped 318 women and 101 savings groups open accounts. Additionally, our E-UPSHIFT initiative improved digital learning opportunities for 1,982 young people.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR HUB DIRECTOR

I am delighted to present the annual report for Restless Development Sierra for the 22/23 fiscal year. With deep gratitude, I reflect on the achievements made possible through the unwavering support of our dedicated team, volunteers, young people, and funding partners.

Never has the agency of young people in the development sector been more critical. We continue to utilize the community-based approach to ensure all interventions are locally led. We work with young people and community members to identify community challenges and offer community-driven and owned solutions. We managed to secure funding from foundations that enabled us to deliver the power-shifting pillar of our strategy. We implemented a project in which young people identified challenges they faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic and worked to proffer solutions which they presented to different decision-makers. Our Catalyzing Youth Leadership for Education Reform project saw the project governed by 10 Young Leaders who had decision-making power in the implementation of the project. We also support 12 youth CSOs to deliver initiatives to provide practical solutions to the education challenges young people face in Sierra Leone. We also have continued to work with volunteers and mentors to end child marriages and support girls to remain or re-enrol in school to continue to support them in achieving their academic and personal goals.

None of our achievements would have been possible without the unwavering support and generosity of the Government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Youth Affairs, the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, and the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs our funding partners, partner organizations, volunteers, and dedicated staff. Your commitment to our cause has driven our accomplishments, and we are immensely grateful for your continued partnership.



REFLECTION FROM A STAFF MEMBER, (HALIMATU JALLOH)

Throughout my time with Restless Development, I have experienced continuous growth and motivation. The organization's power-shifting model, implemented in 2022, has created an enabling environment that has allowed me to take on more challenging roles.

In 2020, I began my journey with Restless Development as a volunteer for the Saving Lives 2 project in Tonkolili district. Today, I am a Field Officer for the Positive Parenting Education Project, responsible for seven operational communities in the Moyamba district.

This role has greatly boosted my confidence and aspirations to attain higher and more challenging positions. I am proud to serve as a role model for other young people and take great satisfaction in knowing that my actions have made a positive difference in the lives of parents and young people.

My experience with Restless Development has empowered me to see the tangible results of my efforts, giving me a sense of optimism and a strong sense of responsibility to continue working towards positive change.



Our Work During COVID-19

The CLA APPROACH:

During the COVID-19 outbreak in Sierra Leone, Restless Development supported 122 young volunteers nationwide to conduct 610 awareness-raising sessions to increase knowledge, influence change in behaviour and practice among community members, and support households to create their plans to prevent and respond to the virus.

Households were clustered into outreach sections, and volunteers used that to reach 24,400 people (14,168 women) with information and support on preventing COVID-19 in their communities and households. Households developed customized action plans focused on how they can prevent the spread of Covid-19 in their homes.

YOUTH TASK TEAM:

YOTA (Youth Opportunity & Transformation in Africa) and Restless Development implemented the Africa Youth Partnership for an Equitable Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic Project, through which we engaged, supported, and empowered young people to put their ideas into action and play leading roles in the recovery.

Through this project, we invested in addressing the critical issues of social and economic inequalities that have been escalated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I am attesting to the fact that by giving support and trust, Young people can lead change and lead in solving challenges in their communities like me.”

Marie Tholley (20) :
our youngest Field Officer

...NOT To:
ound Mind In A Sound Body)



FATU'S STORY

“WE ALL HAVE GOT STORIES TO TELL, JUST LIKE FATU”.

In her teenage, she became pregnant whilst she was in SSS 2. She was vulnerable, inexperienced, and naïve. Sadly for her, the man who got her pregnant ran away till today.

She dropped out of school and was left to cater to her needs and that of her unborn child. It was a tough moment for her to endure, considering her family background. “I suffered; I saw hell on earth. There was a night I cried my gut out until I could produce no more sound in me. I still feel emotional today as I share my story” Fatu lamented.

Fatu was mapped out to benefit from the catalyzing Youth Leadership for Education Reform Project. Through 4HER, the project empowered her with educational, leadership, and vocational skills. Today, Fatu is an Entrepreneur. Her hope is revived and she has become inspired to go back to school

With support from 4HER, Fatu feels confident, motivated, and optimistic of the future as she returned to school.

Everyone deserves a second chance. Whatever the circumstance it is today, don't give up. Your trial will become your testimony. Keep the dream alive! Don't allow your past to define you.

Michael and Peter's Story

Electricity is essential for learning in rural Sierra Leone, meaning the difference between being able to study at night, or skipping homework. For most students in rural communities, children join their parents on the farm or market to help earn money after school and return home late to study.

This means that their studies are cut short by lack of light, resulting in fewer hours spent studying during the night-time quiet. As a result, most of them end up dropping out of school or relocating if they want to further their education.

In 2021, two young people living in Bo district – Michael Nabieu and Peter George – saw the need to help. Peter has been designing novel inventions since he was a child and developed a brilliant idea to provide both a reliable source of light and an alarm system to provide safety for children walking home late.

However, even though Peter and Michael had the knowledge, passion and skills for the project, it was hard for them to bring their vision to life without help. They received some support from local organisations, but it was not enough to really make the project fly and meet the demand of the large local communities. This is where Restless Development stepped in and helped to finance the innovation via the Youth Fund from the Catalyzing Youth Leadership for Education Reform project funded by the Peoples Postcode Trust.

He invented a solar-powered backpack, fitted with a light for studying and a personal alarm system, to help improve the educational outcomes of children in low-income communities.





The team is now providing 150 solar-powered backpacks to school pupils in three rural communities of Bo District. It is also training young people in these communities to ensure the project is sustainable.

The solar-powered backpack is a creative solution to a huge problem that is holding children and young people back from achievement. It is also a sustainable and affordable solution. The backpack is equipped with a solar panel that can generate electricity, which is then used to power the alarm system and light source. This means that children can carry their books and school supplies in their backpack during the day, and use it as a light source to study at night.

So far the group has also trained 80 young people on solar bank power products, and has mapped out more communities and students who can benefit from the catalysing project.

“Power Shifting is about stepping outside existing systems and challenging the status quo. This means that instead of programme models designed by funders, we give resources, space and support to young people to co-create their own programmes. Their creativity drives the change,” says Lesley Garura, Sierra Leone Hub Director for Restless Development.

In Sierra Leone, by shifting power to local youth-led Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), we have witnessed innovations that allow young people in rural areas to transform their success in school and college. For example, through the Youth Fund, which directly funds youth-led initiatives, we recently supported two young people who designed and distributed solar-powered backpacks, so that children working outside the home after school are able to complete their school studies at night.



“

Because we are the focus, young people’s energy and innovative skills must be harnessed and used effectively in addressing educational problems in our communities: youthfulness should be usefulness”

MOHAMED KABBA

YOUTH COLLECTIVE MEMBER

OTHER PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. CATALYZING YOUTH LEADERSHIP FOR EDUCATION REFORM PROJECT:

On October 6th, 2022, the Catalyzing Youth Leadership for Education Reform Project was launched by the then Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, David Moinina Sengeh. This project provided an opportunity for youth Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in Sierra Leone to receive direct funds to implement their creative solutions to education-related issues in their communities. Restless Development recruited ten Youth Collective for Education Reform Members (five male and five female) to support the smooth implementation of the project. Workshops and visits were held to train and co-create with the 12 successful youth-led organizations that were selected to receive the grants.

Out of the 12 CBOs that received the grant, three (one in Kenema and two in Port Loko) helped 150 vulnerable out-of-school children return to school by providing materials and enrolling them in nearby schools. One CBO in Bo distributed 190 solar backpacks to school pupils and provided training on production and maintenance. Additionally, four community-based organizations (one in Kono, one in Kailahun, and two in Western Area Urban) provided school supplies, training, and startup kits to support 200 people with disabilities in learning technical skills such as hairdressing, catering, gara tie-dyeing, and carpentry.

Four youth community-based organizations, two in Bombali, one in Port Loko, and one in the Western Area Urban, collaborated with communities and schools to conduct career awareness sessions for 2000 girls. They also provided education on sexual harassment, gender-based violence, menstrual hygiene management, and materials to keep girls in school.





2. Improving Financial Inclusion for Women Living in Informal Settlements:

Intending to reach 5,500 women living in Informal Settlements by the end of 2023, our Financial Inclusion for Women Living in Informal Settlements program funded by Jersey Overseas Aid has established 131 new Savings Groups and expanded financial services in 37 Informal communities in Freetown.

84.4% of the women engaged by the project's volunteers are now confident in using financial services, resulting in 318 women and 101 savings groups opening savings accounts with Sierra Leone Commercial Bank. The program also advocated with Orange Money mobile banking service in Sierra Leone to relax their agent tariff for WLIS women from Le 3000 to Le 500, & negotiated with Sierra Leone Commercial Bank Women Banking to provide soft loans to WLIS who have saved Le 1,000 with their bank.

"Even though I am educated, initially I felt hesitant to have transactions with formal financial institutions because I believe in saving at home. Through the guidance of community volunteers, I have gained knowledge about saving with banks. As the Treasurer of the Forward and Leading Savings Group, I have taken on the responsibility of preparing all the necessary documentation for account opening. My main objective is to ensure the security of the saved funds."

- Mariama Abdul Kamara, Moyiba Community



3. END CHILD MARRIAGE PROJECT:

“Enhancing adolescent girl's knowledge through life skills to end child marriage and other harmful practices (ECM)”

Our End Child Marriage project successfully reached 4,370 adolescent girls, who were comprehensively trained in transformative life skills and received essential sexual and reproductive health messages. The project engaged 15,000 in-school adolescent boys and girls through assembly messages and made over 1,800 referrals to health centres and SRH hubs. The implementation supported the education of 150 adolescent girls, engaged boys and men, and reached more than 11,000 families, traditional and religious leaders, and other influential community members.

It also delivered messages on early marriage, teenage pregnancy, and harmful practices against women and girls to over 10,000 community members. The ECM project played a pivotal role in preventing cases of early marriages within the communities it served. These marriages were successfully cancelled, allowing the affected children to continue their education.

4. CONDOMIZE CAMPAIGN:

Restless Development with support from UNFPA implemented the Condomise Campaign in 2022. The campaign used innovative channels, including traditional and social media platforms to popularize its condom use among young people and key populations in Sierra Leone. Our young volunteers worked with local organizations, the student governing bodies, and key community stakeholders to conduct 20 Youth Stop Aids campaigns in five universities, raise awareness of HIV/AIDs, and promote the proper use of condoms among young people. Condom dispensers were made available on all campuses, reaching 3,651 people.

The program also engaged 36 nightclubs and restaurants, distributing 9,980 male and 900 female branded condoms.



5. EVERY ADOLESCENT GIRL EMPOWERED & RESILIENT PROJECT:

During the year 2022, the Every Adolescent Girl Empowered & Resilient (EAGER) project successfully certified more than 7,860 young girls from 160 safe spaces in four districts in Sierra Leone, namely Kailahun, Pujehun, Koinadugu, and Kambia. These girls were provided with life and business skills training in secured environments and were given cash and basic start-up kits to help them transition to sustainable livelihoods.

Throughout the implementation period, over 250 girls with physical challenges who participated in the safe space sessions were screened, diagnosed, and supported with assistive devices, including wheelchairs, crutches, glasses, and other eye medications.

The Foreign Commonwealth Development Office funded the project, while Restless, the International Rescue Committee, Concern Worldwide, and BBC Media Action implemented it in a consortium.

6. e-UPSHIFT:

UNICEF launched the E-UPSHIFT initiative in February 2022. This innovative approach was aimed at expanding the traditional UPSHIFT Programme by empowering young people with the skills and knowledge needed to identify problems in their communities and design solutions for them. The ultimate goal of the initiative was to improve digital learning opportunities for young people in Sierra Leone.

Restless Development, along with DSTI, supported the project rollout for 3 months (May to July) in Western Area, Port Loko, Bo, Kenema, Tonkolili, Kono, Kambia, Makeni, Lunsar, and Moyamba. Throughout the implementation, 15 Digital Labs were furnished and operated in all the districts, reaching 1982 young people. Lab technicians and steady routers were provided in each lab to ensure their smooth running. At the end of the project, all participants received a certificate of completion.



8. POSITIVE PARENTING EDUCATION PROJECT:

We have recently launched a comprehensive intervention program in Moyamba and Koinadugu districts. The program aims to empower communities, parents, caregivers, and adolescent girls to take a stand against child marriage by changing behaviours and social norms.

The program comprises two main components: Positive Parenting Education and Community Engagement. Our mentors and facilitators have provided training to a total of 3,600 parents and caregivers using the PPEP curriculum (Gud Kombra na Gladi family). This has helped promote violence-free, nurturing, and supportive family environments that promote children's well-being and development.

In addition, we are conducting life skills sessions for 7,500 adolescents (5,000 girls and 2,500 boys) using a safe space strategy. The Community Dialogue/Engagement component focuses on intergenerational and youth-focused dialogues that aim to address harmful socio-cultural and gender norms that perpetuate violence against girls. We aim to have 1,500 participants who will lend their support to the community

9. POWERUP:

The Power Up Project, funded by FCDO under the AIDMATCH facility commenced in April 2023. The project recruited 34 young volunteers who are supporting the project implementation in two districts (Moyamba, & Bombali).

Power Up is building a more educated and empowered female population in the Bombali and Moyamba districts of Sierra Leone by 2025. This will be achieved by working with communities and schools for three years to improve the enrollment, retention, attainment and transition out of school into higher education or work for 15,300 adolescent girls.

The project is working closely with key community stakeholders and has established Parental Clubs (542 male & and 532 female) in all 17 operational communities in Moyamba and Bombali.

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“Being a value champion for this year means so much to me because it speaks to the fact that I have been living and breathing the four core values of the organisation. These values define how we behave and what we stand for, guiding every decision we make. I have ensured that my work aligns with these values to help the organization achieve its goals, vision, and mission for young people in Sierra Leone”.



FINANCIAL UPDATE

The financial statement below comprises the financial position of Restless Development Sierra Leone as of 30 September 2022. The financial information on this page may not contain all the details to allow for a full understanding of our affairs. Further information, the full financial statements, the Auditor's report on these financial statements, and Trust.

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR TWO COMPARABLE YEARS.

INCOME	2021/22	2020/21
GRANT INCOME	39,120,016	23,562,841
FOREIGN EXCHANGE GAINS	1,054,638	
TOTAL INCOME	40,174,654	23,562,841

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE EXPENDITURE FOR TWO COMPARABLE YEARS

EXPENSES	2022	2021
DIRECT PROGRAM EXPENSES	31,974,922	16,826,831
STAFF COST	2,914,662	3,653,318
OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	2,914,662	3,775,380
FINANCE COST		944,332
TOTAL EXPENSES	38,854,762	25,199,861
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	1,319,892	(1,637,020)



2022/2023 IN NUMBERS

NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES REACHED.....	1,019
NUMBER OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS.....	1,447
DIRECT REACHED.....	92,400
NUMBER OF YOUTH CSOS SUPPORTED.....	12
NUMBER OF STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED.....	33

FUNDING PARTNERS FOR 2022 & 2023

- PEOPLE POSTCODE LOTTERY
- UKAID
- JERSEY OVERSEAS AID
- UNICEF
- UNFPA
- FCDO

OTHER PARTNERS

- INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
- GOAL
- CONCERN WORLDWIDE
- CENTRE OF DIALOGUE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENT
AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION
- BBC MEDIA ACTION
- SIERRA LEONE COMMERCIAL BANK
- BANK OF SIERRA LEONE



MEET OUR SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM



Lesley Garura
Hub Director



Alfred T. M. Navo
Head of Programs and Partnership



David M. Bayo
Senior Programs Manager



Mohamed Denkeh
Senior Finance Manager



Hezina Johnson
WLIS Project Manager.



Tamba Aliyu
Safeguarding Manager.



Francis Sayoh
ECM Project Manager.

MEET THE RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT SIERRA LEONE TEAM

