

## Basic Education for Youth in the Post-conflict Situation, Sierra Leone

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|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Project number:        | 2003.2239.6                   |
| Commissioned by:       | BMZ, Division 321             |
| Contract value:        | EUR 1,000,000                 |
| Lead executing agency: | Ministry for Youth and Sports |
| Project area:          | Koidu, Kailahun, Freetown     |
| Status:                | In implementation             |
| Term:                  | July 2004 – Dec. 2006         |

### Short description of project and German contribution

The project specifically addresses the practical conditions of life of more than 2000 marginalized children and youth in Sierra Leone. It combines basic education with a general educational and prevocational component on the one hand and on the other with social education for children and youth promotion.

The general educational component of basic education for children comprises written language skills, basic mathematics-science, basic health and basic political education to foster peaceful co-existence and democratic values. The prevocational component for youth includes practical traineeships in local trades and crafts and productive activities. The social education measure provides support for war-traumatized children and youth. Youth groups are engaged as multipliers in the three centres Koidu, Kailahun and Freetown in outreach to other marginalized youth from the municipalities, addressing such issues as HIV-AIDS, conflict transformation, motivation and drug prevention. An international encounter programme (peace camp) is planned for youth from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea. The project thus makes a significant contribution to peace education and violence prevention.

### Project implementation status

Altogether 405 young people are taking part in development measures at the three training centres in Waterloo, Kailahun and Koidu, with two social workers assigned to each.

271 young people have successfully completed the three-month basic education phase in the prevocational component of the project and have been attending local workshops since May, where they have already been able to establish contacts with prospective employers. All apprentices are either engaged in production activities or in technical services and earn a regular income. The young people are extremely motivated, as the low dropout rate of 1.5% (four participants in all) attests.

Altogether 147 young people take part in the project's basic education component to remedy educational deficits - the Rapid Primary Education Programme. Thanks to the small sizes of classes and an adaptable organization of lessons tailored to their needs, the pupils have received intensive guidance. Only three have dropped out since the beginning of the programme. They undergo intensive preparation for the National Primary School Examination in May 2006. Regular achievement tests give grounds to hope that more than 30% of the pupils will pass the final national examination and qualify for admission to secondary school.

Altogether 1,700 youth at the three locations are assisted by 180 youth peer educators (YPE) in making joint plans for the future. The YPE were identified, qualified and equipped with learning materials by the social workers. Every YPE looks after ten young people. Besides regular individual counselling, joint activities (sporting events, community services such as street cleaning, celebrations for the Day of the African Child) are organized and carried out. Social education support helps the participants to make plans for their future career. The project, however, is not able to support young people or youth groups in taking up productive activities. These kinds of flanking measure would help raise the acceptance of the development approach.