

Annual Report for Global Rescue Mission Sierra Leone
(A locally registered charity with the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning, Sierra Leone)



Period Ended 31 March 2008

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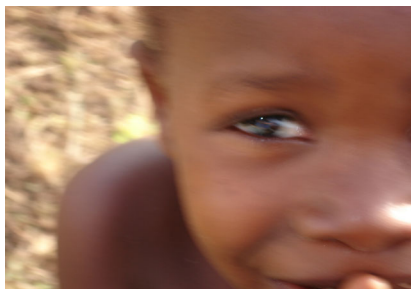
7.0 Summary of 07/08

1.0 Introduction

Sierra Leone lies at the bottom of the 2007/8 Human Development Index. A decade of civil war combined with bad governance, resource mismanagement and human rights abuses to mention a few have all contributed to this poor placement on the Index. Youth, woman and children continue to bear the brunt of this reality. Today, 282 of 1,000 children will not live to see their fifth birthday, 75% of females (15 years old and over) cannot read and write, 31% of children continue to have their right to primary education denied and over 60% of youths remain unemployed.

Late 2006 some young people decided to act, creating a forward-looking and grassroots organisation called Global Rescue Mission Sierra Leone (GRM-SL). By May 2007 the organisation had secured its first grant and it was on the way to improving the lives of various groups of young people, women and children in Sierra Leone.

This is GRM-SL's first Annual Report and it outlines the organisations major activities, priorities and achievements in 2007/8. We hope that 2008/9 will continue to bring fruitful interventions for the organisation for the positive development and empowerment of Sierra Leone's youth, women and children.



2.0 Global Rescue Mission Sierra Leone (GRM-SL)

2.1 History

GRM-SL was founded in late 06 by a young Briton, Kirsty Wood, and a Sierra Leonean, Mohamed Jaward. The aim of the organisation is to empower the most marginalised youth, women and children in Sierra Leone. Over the past year the organisation has focused its operations in Western Freetown, a region of the capital city, and Kenema district, Eastern Sierra Leone.



2.2 Vision and Key Aims and Objectives

Our vision is to ensure that all youth, women and children have access to dignity and equal opportunities. We believe that all human beings, regardless of age or gender, must have their rights recognized and adhered to.

Key Aims and Objectives

1. To work alongside government bodies and NGO's to protect the rights of youth, women and children.
2. To ensure that the voice of everyone is heard and respected, regardless of gender or age.
3. To work towards sustainable development
4. To actively participate in the global struggle for peace and security.

2.3 GRM-SL's Approach

1. We work at the grassroots close to the people we are trying to help.
2. Our work remains entirely impartial
3. We work with cultural sensitivity
4. We believe in the ideals of human rights
5. We are open, friendly and enthusiastic

2.4 Unique Qualities of GRM-SL

- ✓ We believe that young people have the spirit, energy and creativity to bring positive change to people's lives. This is why our organisation is made up primarily of *young people* between the age of 18 and 28. The founders of the organisation began their work when they were 23 and 25 respectively
- ✓ We believe in the culture of *volunteerism* and encourage locals and internationals alike to give their time and efforts for free to a worthy cause. GRM-SL's operations are carried out mainly by volunteers
- ✓ We believe that interventions must come from the grassroots with the local communities leading the way. Our projects grow naturally through, and with, our beneficiaries.
- ✓ We do not see our beneficiaries as 'numbers.' Everyone we work with has a name and a story to tell. We see our beneficiaries as our friends and our project partners. They are *not* just numbers on a piece of paper.
- ✓ We stand up for what we believe in and hold tight the principles and spirit

that drove us to start the organisation in late 2006.

- ✓ We believe that youth, children and women hold the key to developing Sierra Leone.



3.0 Some Key Facts about Sierra Leone

- ✓ 44% of females (aged 15 and older) are not economically active
- ✓ 75% of females (aged 15 and older) are illiterate
- ✓ 62% of female youths (aged 15-24) are illiterate
- ✓ The female gross primary enrolment rate is 65%
- ✓ The female gross secondary enrolment rate is 22%
- ✓ Women hold 14.5% of seats in parliament
- ✓ The under 5 infant mortality rate is 282 per 1,000 births
- ✓ 74.5% of the population survive on less than US\$2 per day
- ✓ Youth unemployment rate is thought to be as high as 60%
- ✓ Young people (aged 15-35) make up 55% of the population
- ✓ Women make up over half the population
- ✓ 700,000 children and young people were displaced during the decade long

civil war with many losing family, education and livelihoods



4.0 2007/8 Highlights for GRM-SL

- ✓ Global Rescue Mission Sierra Leone (GRM-SL) compiled its mission statement, aims and objectives and approach
- ✓ GRM-SL was registered with the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning, along with line ministries for the first time
- ✓ The official charity website was launched in Mar 07
- ✓ A partnership with SLANSA, Sierra Leone Action Network on Small Arms, was developed and staff at GRM-SL were represented in many meetings and training workshops from Mar 07
- ✓ GRM-SL took the lead in distributing 'ballots not bullets' posters and leaflets for SLANSA in Kenema district on the run up to the general and presidential elections in Aug 07
- ✓ GRM-SL offices were opened in Freetown (Feb 07) and Kenema town (Sep 07).
- ✓ GRM-SL secured funds from the British High Commission. The project on promoting non-violent youth participation in politics in Kenema district was successfully implemented
- ✓ A one day promoting non-violent youth participation workshop was held with youth groups in Lumley, Kenema on the run up to the elections
- ✓ GRM-SL staff alongside youth groups in Kenema and Lumley successfully worked alongside the National Electoral Commission to observe the 2007 general and presidential elections
- ✓ An international volunteer scheme began in Sep 07 with volunteers coming to work with GRM-SL from the UK, USA, Canada, Czech Republic and Holland
- ✓ A Kids Rights Pikin Rights Child Rights education programme was ran in 7 schools of Kenema district
- ✓ A Kids Rights Pikin Rights Child Rights education teacher training workshops was ran with 6 schools in Lumley/Aberdeen, Freetown
- ✓ A online Kids Rights Pikin Rights child rights magazine was put online in Nov 07
- ✓ In Nov 07 GRM-SL made a 45 minute documentary on the plight of the Amputees and War Wounded of Kenema district to

- aid GRM-SL's fundraising efforts in the UK
- ✓ A HIV/AIDS and other STI sensitization campaign was ran in Lumley, Freetown with youth groups and commercial sex workers
 - ✓ A HIV/AIDS and other STI resource centre was opened in GRM-SL's head office in Lumley, offering walk-in advice and referral services, as well as free female and male condoms
 - ✓ GRM-SL joined the Freetown HIV/AIDS Community Group Network, led by International NGO Right To Play. GRM-SL hosted the monthly meeting in Jan 08
 - ✓ GRM-SL secures funds from the S.A.F.E Foundation to begin a small business initiative with all profits going to a scholarship scheme (*Pending due to land disputes*)
 - ✓ GRM-SL secures a partnership with STAR4AFRICA to run an outreach project with street children, Kenema district. This project is currently being launched
 - ✓ GRM-SL secures funds to run a homeless Youth Rehabilitation Programme in Lumley, Freetown. This project is currently being launched
 - ✓ GRM-SL secures funds to run a agricultural programme for Amputee and War Wounded women, Kenema district. This project is currently being launched
 - ✓ A UK-Sierra Leone school partnership scheme is currently being developed with 3 UK schools signing up to take part
 - ✓ GRM-SL receives media coverage in regional and local newspapers in North and North East Scotland
 - ✓ Airyhall school, Aberdeen, Scotland raises a substantial sum for S.L.C Primary school, Kenema. The funds will be used to provide school resources for S.L.C. The project is due to commence in Apr 08
 - ✓ A project is approved with Feed the Minds to run a critical literacy course with youths in Kenema. Funds are currently pending
 - ✓ Plans in progress for UK registration
 - ✓ Plans in progress for a girl child commercial sex worker rehabilitation programme, Kenema district
 - ✓ Plans in progress to secure more funds for homeless youth in Lumley
 - ✓ Community Fundraisers in Orkney Isles, Scotland identified to aid GRM-SL's work in Sierra Leone

Why an Annual Report?

The Annual Report concludes the first year of GRM-SL's operations. It gives a summary of our major activities and interventions and enables us to reflect on the successes of the

year, as well as the challenges that need to be overcome.

The Annual Report is also intended to provide stakeholders, including trustees, donors, community fundraisers and interested parties with documented feedback of our activities to date.

5.0 PROGRAMME REPORT

A Report on Key Events and Activities of 2007/8

5.1 BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION – PROMOTING NON-VIOLENT YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS

GRM-SL secured funds from British High Commission in June 07. This was GRM-SL’s first ever grant and so, the organisation had everything to prove.

The project held one over-riding aim: to move young people away from the temptation of violence towards constructive political engagement. The programme proved timely, with the general and presidential elections scheduled for August 07.



Throughout the project implementation, GRM-SL worked exclusively with existing youth

groups in five chiefdoms of Kenema district - Nongowa, Kandu Leppeyama, Dama, Simbaru and Blama - and each group sent representatives to all of GRM-SL’s activities, including workshops.

Throughout the course of the programme the following activities were undertaken:

1. A sensitization workshop on promoting non-violent youth participation in politics (100 youths present).
2. A stakeholders meeting (60 present including MP’s, traditional leaders and authorities)
3. A street parade (300 + youths present)
4. A training workshop in civil society monitoring mechanisms, grassroots engagement and election monitoring mechanisms (60 youths present)
5. The creation of a Kenema Youth Alliance (60 youths present)
6. Street Advocacy (conducted by the ‘drama unit’ of the Kenema Youth Alliance)
7. Media and Publicity Campaign (radio discussions, radio jingle, radio slots and newspaper articles)
8. A training workshop on peacebuilding and advocacy (60 youths present)
9. A follow-up workshop on post-elections and the role of Kenema Youth Alliance (60 youths present)

Successes

- ✓ Excellent feedback from Kenema youth at all key activities
- ✓ Kenema youth remained peaceful throughout the election process
- ✓ Core group of youths engaged in the election process as election monitors
- ✓ Positive and trusting relationships developed with Kenema youths
- ✓ Positive relationships developed with Kenema stakeholders and media
- ✓ GRM-SL gains first recognition as an organisation
- ✓ GRM-SL gains experience in running governance and youth programmes
- ✓ 60 youths trained extensively in techniques for engaging in politics
- ✓ Wider society benefited from GRM-SL’s extensive sensitization campaign

Challenges

- ✓ Cultural and political norms of Kenema district – Promotion of youth critical thinking in political decision making was viewed with hostility by some

5.2 KIDS RIGHTS PIKIN RIGHTS

SCHOOL NETWORK

Kenema

Kids Rights Pikin Rights (KRPR) began its pilot phase in Kenema district in October 07. 7 schools took part in this initiative: St Charles Primary, National Islamic Primary, Islamic Secondary, S.L.C Primary, Holy Rosary Primary, Holy Rosary Secondary and United Islamic Primary. The programme aimed at raising awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Global Citizenship amongst teachers and students alike. Officers from GRM-SL visited schools fortnightly to introduce an array of topics to children and teachers, with themes including needs and wants, rights and responsibility, gender, peacebuilding and tolerance, the right to play, the environment, health and family and protection.

Freetown

GRM-SL ran a pilot KRPR project in Freetown during the months of January and February 08 in Aberdeen/Lumley, Western Freetown. Changing approach from Kenema with the hopes of increased sustainability, GRM-SL officers conducted teacher training for teachers of 6 schools selected by the Ministry of Education. The training was geared towards raising awareness of Child Rights amongst teachers, as well as providing a forum for sharing ideas/knowledge on how to incorporate rights education into the school syllabus. Each school also received a training pack which included 10 suggested lesson plans on Child Rights education.

KENEMA

Successes

- ✓ The programme raised awareness of the UNCRC amongst thousands of children in Kenema district
- ✓ GRM-SL reached a wide network of contacts across many schools in Kenema
- ✓ The KRPR programme has given GRM-SL the opportunity to build on the internal capacity of volunteers, giving them a wide and varied teaching experience
- ✓ The programme has raised GRM-SL's profile in Kenema district

Challenges

- ✓ The motivations of head teachers and classroom teachers were questionable at times and many teachers were more interested in boosting their schools profile.
- ✓ Teachers were often not cooperative and did not spare their time to attend the fortnightly meetings with GRM-SL.
- ✓ Some teachers felt that English lessons with international volunteers may have been more beneficial
- ✓ The KRPR programme was run independently with no donor support. As such, GRM-SL was too under resourced to provide teacher training or orientations which would have inevitably contributed to a more successful project.

FREETOWN

Successes

- ✓ Change in approach from Kenema proved successful with teachers being highly involved from the planning stage of the initiative
- ✓ Teachers all gave very positive feedback after the training days and were all enthused to 'pass the word' to other teachers, and to pupils, in their school
- ✓ Training of teachers proved very sustainable
- ✓ GRM-SL volunteers learnt new skills and knowledge of project and event planning as a result of the programme
- ✓ Relationships with schools developed

Challenges

- ✓ Lack of funds meant that GRM-SL was limited in its interventions. With more funds the organisation could have trained more teachers, increased the training duration time, provided more resources and offered more ongoing support

5.3 HIV/AIDS AND OTHER STI SENSITIZATION CAMPAIGN

In comparison to other African nations, Sierra Leone has a relatively low HIV/AIDS prevalence rate of 1.6%. Yet a lack of awareness of the virus is putting many of the population at risk, particularly the young. As such, GRM-SL began working to raise awareness of the virus, and other STI's, from January 08 with a HIV/AIDS and STI sensitization campaign amongst youths and Commercial Sex Workers in Lumley, Western Freetown. So far, 100's of youths have been given hour long sensitizations on HIV/AIDS within their respective youth groups, posters and leaflets have been distributed at nightclubs frequented by Commercial Sex Workers (CSW's) and condoms have been distributed at brothels/motels used by CSW's. Since Mar 08 a small walk in resource centre was opened at GRM-SL's Freetown office which offers HIV/AIDS and STI advice, a referral service and free male and female condoms given to GRM-SL by the National Aids Secretariat and UNFPA.



Successes

- ✓ 100's of youths have been sensitized on HIV/AIDS and STI's
- ✓ 1000's of free condoms have been distributed amongst youths
- ✓ CSW's in Lumley now have access to condoms at their places of work
- ✓ Youths are dropping into the resource centre to seek advice about HIV/AIDS and STI's, as well as collecting free condoms
- ✓ GRM-SL has formed relationships with leading HIV/AIDS and sexual health agencies
- ✓ GRM-SL is now an active member of the HIV/AIDS Community Group Network

Challenges

- ✓ Lack of funding has limited activities
- ✓ Lack of resources, such as posters and leaflets, as well as institutional support from leading agencies such as National Aids Secretariat
- ✓ Lack of funds has resulted in the resource centre being under publicised and under resourced

5.4 STAR4AFRICA PARTNERSHIP

In December 07 GRM-SL secured a partnership with UK based organisation STAR4AFRICA to run a six month outreach programme for 20 street boys of Kenema town. During these 6 months GRM-SL will offer football training, counselling, informal education and feeding to the boys on a twice weekly basis. The partnership also involves purchasing a local taxi motorbike, to be ran commercially with all profits going to a girl child commercial sex worker rehabilitation programme (due to begin mid 2008). The street children programme began mid March 2008 and it marks the beginning of GRM-SL's intervention with some of Sierra Leone's most vulnerable children. More information and reports about this programme can be found on GRM-SL's 'current project' section of the

organisations website www.grm-sl.org over the coming months.

5.5 HOMELESS YOUTH REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

With money donated by a private Irish donor, GRM-SL has begun running a homeless youth rehabilitation programme for 6 youths in Lumley. Each youth is being provided with shelter, vocational training, counselling, life skills training, monthly allowances for one year, as well as a business start up kit at the end of the programme. The project began in March 08 and more information about this programme can be found on GRM-SL's 'current project' section of the website www.grm-sl.org over the coming months.



5.6 AMPUTEE HELP

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of Birsay, Harray and Sandwick church in the Orkney Isles, Scotland the Amputee and War Wounded women of Kenema district will benefit from their very own agricultural programme. This programme is soon to begin and more information about the cassava and yam farms can be found on GRM-SL's 'current project' section of the website www.grm-sl.org over the coming months.

5.7 VOLUNTEER SCHEME

The following international volunteers assisted GRM-SL in 2007/8. GRM-SL wishes to thank all of them for their outstanding contribution to the organisation.

1. Sam de la Haye
2. Sam Duerden
3. James McKiernan
4. Jennifer Leung
5. Erik Werkman
6. Rachel Stats
7. Nina Meghji
8. Iona Naylor
9. Tom White
10. Ali Sedaghat
11. Katerina Stankova

6.0 2008/9 GRM-SL: THE WAY FORWARD

6.1 FUNDRAISING AND PROJECTS

The priority for 2008/9 will be to ensure the ongoing funding and support for the various ongoing programmes ran by GRM-SL. GRM-SL will also look to extend its work with existing Kenema and Freetown networks. Specifically, the 08/09 plan will be to continue, extend or develop the following initiatives:

1. HIV/AIDS AND OTHER STI AWARENESS AND PREVENTION CAMPAIGN, WESTERN F'TOWN AND KENEMA

- ✓ Continued youth group sensitisations in Lumley and Aberdeen, F'town
- ✓ Continued youth group sensitisations in Kenema
- ✓ Continued running of F'town resource centre and the opening of a Kenema resource centre
- ✓ HIV/AIDS and STI sensitisations in identified F'town and Kenema schools

2. STREET CHILDREN, KENEMA

- ✓ Continuation of outreach work with 20 street boys
- ✓ Launching of a girl child CSW rehabilitation programme – 6 beneficiaries initially
- ✓ Needs assessment to be conducted with the current 20 street boys, with the possibility of launching A rehabilitation/skills training programme

3. HOMELESS YOUTH, F'TOWN

- ✓ Continuation of the homeless youth rehabilitation programme
- ✓ Introduction of various business initiative schemes for other homeless youth, including fundraising for the identified Lumley car wash business.

4. AMPUTEE AND WAR WOUNDED, KENEMA

- ✓ Continuation of the agricultural programme being ran with the female members of the Association
- ✓ Extension of the agricultural programme with the women and youths of the Association
- ✓ Possible other interventions as and when they are identified by the Association

5. GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME, KENEMA

- ✓ Promotion of youth and women's political participation in politics, particularly the promotion of their active engagement in the 2008 local council elections

6. ICT TRAINING CENTRES

- ✓ Opening of a ICT training centre in the Kenema and F'town office for vulnerable youths

7. EDUCATION

- ✓ Development of a UK-Sierra Leone school partnership scheme

- ✓ Development of a school scholarship scheme
- ✓ Development of a school resource donation scheme

Help from local and overseas funding bodies, government institutions, businesses, overseas trusts, philanthropists, community fundraisers and individual supporters will all be requested to help GRM-SL achieve the above targets, in collaboration with Global Rescue Mission Scotland.

GRM-SL will also prepare a fundraising strategy by Jun 08, alongside a fundraising pack to assist fundraisers in their efforts. Support for the office and operation costs of GRM-SL will come from GRM-Scotland alongside contributions from international volunteers.

6.2 COMMUNICATIONS

Over the past year GRM-SL has had coverage from the following media sources:

Local Newspapers – Awoko

Standard Times

Concord Times

Note: all local newspaper coverage centred on British High Commission project

Local Radio - SLBS, Kenema

Eastern Radio, Kenema

Note: local radio coverage centred on British High Commission project and the KRPR network

Scottish Newspapers – Press and Journal

- Orkney Today

- Big Issue Scotland

Note: Covered all activities being ran by GRM-SL as well as Kirsty Wood receiving a nomination as ‘unsung hero’ of Orkney

Other - A DVD made by GRM-SL about the Amputee and War Wounded was watched by various groups in Orkney, Scotland

GRM-SL will seek to improve their communications with donors, supporters, possible funders and the general public over the coming year. In particular:

- i. Quarterly newsletters will be produced and sent to donors, fundraisers and interested parties. It will also be available for download on GRM-SL’s website. This will begin from Jul 08.
- ii. The news section of the website will be updated where and when necessary
- iii. The news bulletin at GRM-SL’s head office will be updated where and when necessary
- iv. News articles in Orkneys newspapers, Scotland will be published every 2-3 months to update the general public about GRM-SL’s activities
- v. News will be covered by local media sources of Sierra Leone where and when necessary
- vi. The Amputee and War Wounded DVD will be aired at further fundraising events in Orkney, Scotland
- vii. Leaflets will be distributed to supporters and the general public about GRM-SL at fundraisers in Orkney, Scotland

- viii. Records will be kept of all future communications with the public and the media. A file will be kept in the GRM-SL head office with all such details.

7.0 Summary of 07/08

From a mere dream back in Jan 07, a remarkable amount has been accomplished over the past 12 months.

GRM-SL's main aim over the coming year is to continue the ongoing projects, as well as branching out to various other initiatives in Kenema and Freetown. GRM-SL's focus for the year will be taking advantage of its international links. The registration of a partner organisation in the UK, as well as the recruitment of enthusiastic community fundraisers in Scotland, will play a huge part in developing the organisation over the next 12 months. There is genuine excitement about the prospects it brings.

We hope that this time next year we will have even more to write about in our annual report. In the meantime, we will wholeheartedly keep pushing for youth, women and children's voice and presence to be recognised and respected in Sierra Leone.

GRM-SL Management,
Sierra Leone

