

SIERRA LEONE FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL STUDENTS – SLEFES

To: SAVE

Subject: Ministry Report since 2016 (5 Years of service)

Date: 11th February 2021

INTRODUCTION

We remain grateful to God for the grace and opportunity to serve His purpose in SLEFES throughout these years. God sustained us and proved the point that He alone can qualify and equip those that He calls. As in Rom 8:28: “we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair (2 Corinthians 4:8).

A SUMMARY OF WHERE WE TOOK OFF

We are encouraged to share a brief reflection on where we took off and what we have obtained since the time we heeded the call of God to serve in SLEFES.

1. STAFF: we inherited three staff; two Training Secretaries in Western and North Kono Regions, one admin staff at the head office and the Campus Director had tendered his resignation in the course of the recruitment and transition period.
2. ACTIVE CU: there were 24 Christian Unions in existence
3. LEGAL STATUS: the registration of the Ministry as a legal entity needed renewal.
4. SALARIES: There were backlog salaries owed to all the staffs inherited including my predecessor, and there was an obligation to raise funds and pay end of service benefit to staff who had resigned including my predecessor.
5. AUDIT: SLEFES had not been audited in the past nine (9) years
6. RENT: SLEFES head office in Freetown was in three years (3) rent arrears, the TS North Kono Region was using his private residence as office and foots the bill of paying rent all by himself. The South East region office was in full operations and rent for it uses was paid.
7. ASSETS: we inherited two licenced motor bikes and one unlicensed motor bike, we had one Nissan Patrol used car that needed major repairs, one HP printer, plot of land in Makeni and SUFES land and three used dell laptops in the custody of the training Secretaries.
8. SLEFES Oxford Account was suspended.
9. PARTNERSHIP: SLEFES had partnership with HFB in Germany, SAVE in the USA and Living Water Sierra Leone. And our EFSL membership was in arrears.

OUR SERVICE SINCE 2016

The tenure of the GS started on 1st February 2016 after the relevant recruitment procedures were completed. A strategic plan on the recovery and stability of the Ministry was prepared and presented to the Board to create a picture on how we seek to turn things around and set the Ministry on a trajectory of growth and sustainability. To the glory of God we were able to do the following in the period under review.

RECOVERY PLAN

We review the state of the Ministry at the time and developed a five-year strategic plan to enable us to turn things around and place the Ministry on a footing that would maximise its full potential and pave the way to sustainability and lasting impact. The plan was formalised with the Board and formed part of the key performance indicators of the GS. We believed at the time that a well-thought plan in place with prayers and a clear vision backed with the grace of God will make things happen.

LEGAL STATUS

We were able to renew the registration of SLEFES as a limited company by guarantee with Corporate Affairs department with the registration No: **SLE28121SLEFE1600705**. We registered the Ministry with the National Revenue authority with the Taxpayer Identification Number: **1085588-1**, and registered all the staff with NASSIT, National Revenue Authority-(NRA) and complied with all payment protocols throughout the last five years. We have since regularised and maintained the Ministry's status with IFES and EFSL. We have also endeavoured to do backlog audits of the Ministry and have since continued with the practice.

STAFF

We maintained the three staff inherited until recently when the then Admin Assistant resigned at the rank of Resource Mobilisation Officer along with the TS West who resigned earlier on. However we recruited and maintained a staff team of **twelve (12)**. We have given and enabled the staff to participate and benefit from IFES E-learning programmes and overseas travel without any direct cost to SLEFES domestic funds, SLEFES throughout this period didn't spend any cost on staff overseas travel or hotel bills, yet were able to recommend and advocate for sponsorship for staff overseas training and conferences. The Lord has enabled us to develop a strong and committed staff team that are ready and willing to serve the Ministry whenever and wherever the Lord Leads. We have recently nominated one of the TSs, Mathew Charles to serve as Assistant Coordinator to the IFES Engaging the University Coordinator for the French Speaking Africa, Dr. Steve Ney. Mathew in consultation with the GS has asked

IFES to support the Movement with a laptop and internet infrastructure that will enable the TS to serve SLEFES and IFES in the designated role better.

We also thank God for marital bliss among the staff; we have celebrated several weddings in the past two years to be specific. At present we have also nominated two staff to join a designated Committee set up by IFES to develop a module that would be used to reach out to Muslim students in different campuses across the world. We have also received a request from IFES for the nomination of two staffs for another E-Learning training on Indigenous Resource Mobilisation. The Admin staff in the South East and North Kono Regions have been nominated for the same.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

We exist for this course and the campuses remain crucial in our line of duty. In the Western Area, **we inherited 12 CUs in 2016** and we have maintained and upgraded their commitment to the vision including but not limited to their participations in regional and national programmes. We have also pioneered **three (3) CUs increasing the list to 15 CUs** in the region at present. In the South East Region, we **had four (4) CUs** which have maintained and upgraded as well. We have also **pioneered three (3) CUs** which we are developing and bringing to speed. In North Kono region **we had eight (8) CUs** which we have maintained and **pioneered five (5) additional CUs** and we have also identified two extra CUs which will be pioneered in the coming years. We presently have **35 CUs nationwide**, as we have prioritised student involvement and participation in our programme and made more direct efforts in terms of mentorship and leadership development.

We have continued to encourage student-to-student outreach/evangelism within and among campuses, intensifying discipleship and mentorship which are the reasons we have more campus staff, hold regular Bible studies/scripture engagements among students and hold public lectures on Integrity Management within the University and public square in general. We have experienced increases in the number of students making the choice to follow our Lord Jesus Christ. The Leadership Training conferences have also improved on the knowledge and ability of our emerging leaders the students across the country. We have developed, introduced and sustained the Students Word Conference, this provides the platform to enable students to read, understand, interpret and comprehend passages in the Bible within the appropriate context.

RENT AND ADMINISTRATION

We have centralised and assumed responsibility for the payment of office rents across the regions. We have also received enormous support from the Regional Support Committee Chairpersons in this regard and we are very grateful for their collective support and participation. We have sustained the effective operations of the three administrative regions of the ministry. We have renovated the head office and placed additional features to upgrade the standard of the Ministry and motivate staff performance and encourage effective service delivery.

IFES STATUS

We belong to the global family and our affiliation charter comes with responsibility and obligations. SLEFES in the past five years has complied with all IFES rules and regulations, benefited from IFES regional and international programmes. We have sent student representatives to all IFES programmes including World Assembly in 2019. We have made it a priority to ensure that student representation is rotated across the regions and the staff will consult with the student leadership in each region before a nomination is made. SLEFES benefited throughout the five years on all IFES special grants on inspiring evangelism among others.

ASSETS AND ESTATE

We have maintained the three motor bikes inherited, we bought an extra motor bike for the TS West and it was stolen from our office in Freetown. We have disposed of the inherited vehicle (Nissan Patrol) and replaced it with Toyota Land Cruiser (Prado) with support from SAVE USA. We have replaced the Dell laptops with improved versions to enable the work across the regions. The HP printer inherited is still with us but without use because we are unable to buy the ink specification designed for it. We have labelled and registered SLEFES asset nationwide.

We have maintained the SLEFES house at 27 Aitkins Street Murray Town; we have made some repairs to keep it habitable even though it needs massive renovations. We were able to fix the ground floor apartment of the same house and rented it out to one of our Associates thus contributing some income to the Ministry.

We were able to secure the SLEFES land in Makeni and purchased an additional plot making it viable for the construction of a Regional Office, conference center and dwelling for the regional staff. We have maintained our joint ownership on SUFES land with Scripture Union.

We have also secured a plot of land in Kowama campus from the College authorities. We intend to construct a chapel and office space for the South East region with the said plot of land.

PROGRAMMES

We maintained and improved some programmes and introduced some others in our student ministry. Regional Leadership conference is on course; campus fellowship, Scripture engagement, Student campus evangelism and National Conferences are also held. We have introduced with great success Word Conferences, which enable students to learn how to interpret Scriptures within context and Public Lecture as a platform to share and transfer knowledge among our student community. SLEFES held its 2020 National Conference via virtual means amidst the COVID-19 pandemic with huge turnout of students and Associates in attendance. Certain IFES National Movements who did not hold Conference logged in and benefited from the content provided by SLEFES.

ASSOCIATES CONTACTS AND MOBILISATION

We have prioritised and effectively embarked on a mass contact tracing and mobilisation of SLEFES Associates at regional, national and international level. This drive was crucial in our effort to ensure that the relevant stakeholders of the Ministry are reached and given the opportunity to participate in the Ministry activities for collective progress and sustainability. To the glory of God, Associates such the BSU Associate glory generation, Impact 360 and several others across the country have in one way or another supported and contributed to and participated in Ministry's programmes.

PROJECTS

We were able to develop and execute the following projects:

1. Through our partners Living Water Sierra Leone, we delivered a hand-pump water supply facility for the student community at MMCET Godrich campus.
2. With support from IFES we were able to launch the SLEFES movie project with students at Njala Main Campus at Mokonde and inspiring evangelism with selected campuses in the western region.
3. Through HFB Germany we sourced funds that enabled us give a face lift to the SLEFES head office Freetown.
4. Through support from IFES we were able to pioneer new campuses and bought a new bike which unfortunately was stolen from our office premises.
5. Through IFES one-off matching fund grant in 2016 we were able to buy a desktop for the Finance Officer and TS West, and printers and Wi-Fi devices for the regions.

6. Through one of IFES partners we received support that was used to fund the training programme of the Admin and Finance Officer in Nigeria.
7. With funds from IFES EPSA POST EBOLA solidarity funds, we were able to support one community in Kambia with livelihood support and school furniture for three community schools.
8. With support from SAVE USA, we were able to carryout of COVID-19 response programme, through which food items were distributed to households in Murray Town and John Obey Communities.
9. With support from Liberty church in Japan, we carried out a school feeding programme for pupils at Samu Baptist Secondary school in Kassirie during the course the 2019-2020 WASSCE exams.

STAFF EMOLUMENT

To the glory of God we are able to make annual increment on staff salaries during this period, paid all the salaries in full and to date. We don't have backlog salary for any staff throughout these five years. Secondly we are in right standing with the NASSIT contributions of all staff up to 31st December 2020, we have also met all taxes for the staff throughout these five years. God has met all our moral and legal obligations to His servant who heed his call to serve Him in SLEFES, glory be to His name.

GOING FORWARD

We have incorporated the phrase “the next best step” in our drive for sustainability, one that will make SLEFES financially and materially sustained. To continue with the Ministry of SLEFES in a changing world such as this that is full of uncertainties, the only way out is to make use of what we have to get what we need. What we have in this case is, land. A precious commodity and skills placed in the hands of our Associates and Student community. These two assets fit very well into our SLEFES Agro Business Co LTD dream. The proposal has been developed, two accounting firms have sent in their proposals to evaluate the project and do a business plan for SLEFES. Management through the help of some Associates have negotiated a fair price for this service with one of the valuers, all that is needed at this stage is Board approval to appoint and contact the valuator of our choice and move the process forward. After this process, we will host an exhibition press conference with a component of Zoom for the diaspora Associates to follow the presentation and consider the need to invest by buying share in the Company that will be set up. This is achievable if we all agree on terms and work together as a team.

We have contacted IFES and received some technical support that will enable the GS, RSC South East region and initial field coordinator to travel to the Gambia and Senegal to study a similar model that has succeeded in this venture. As soon as regular flight resume we should be planning to make said trip. A good number of our Students and Associates are waiting in anticipation for the commencement of this investment opportunity. SLEFES will be celebrating 40 years of existence next year and it's our desire to have started this process of sustainability as we look forward to the 40th Anniversary Celebrations of the Ministry.

INTEGRITY CAMPAIGN

We started an integrity campaign among students and members of the public through public lectures, focus group discussions and community dialogue sessions. We have developed a framework that will lead to a formal partnership with the Anti-Corruption Commission on this drive.

MY REFLECTIONS

I was hopeful when I heard the call, I heeded the call when it was time and my heart still rejoices over the responsibilities of the Ministry of SLEFES. It has been a true walk with the Lord looking from where we came from and where we now seek to go. The journey might seem long but I believe we can get there because He has promised He will not fail us. I find strength and encouragement to press on when I hear the testimonies of students, when we share in their moment of grief and despair and lack, and how we carry them in our arms like babies to the hope we all share in Christ Jesus.

The past five years has been a time boom and burst, pain and pleasure etc. it was like a paradox through which I have come to experience and learn from these moment and develop my faith each step along the way. To those students, friends, partners and associates who believed in what the Lord has called us to do, we remain grateful. It's a sacred opportunity for us that you share in our plight and common course for the Master's kingdom. To our partners especially, SAVE USA and their Board, you have been supportive in very many ways and we appreciate those moments. Some of you were very close to our needs, pains and frustrations. The complexion of the job in SLEFES requires our collective effort hence no one person can get the job done. We also stand in solidarity with you in prayers and supplications. May your labour of love never go unrewarded, Amen.

APPEAL / PRAYER REQUESTS

We are grateful for your enormous contributions to SLEFES throughout the years, we cannot over emphasize the impact of your generosity to the Ministry in the years under review.

Kindly consider the following point in your prayers:

1. Funds to pay staff stipends for this Ministry as we trust the Lord to provide for us the sum of \$1,800 on a monthly basis to care for all the men and women in service with SLEFES.
2. We are asking God to touch the hearts of friends, partners and Associates to consider the need to at least support SLEFES with a grant that would take care of at least six months of staff stipends.
3. We are in urgent need of two motor bikes for the field staffs the TSs. And one motor bike costs \$ 2,000. The bike when secured will enhance for fruits on campus and sustain the gains made so far.
4. Pray for the SLEFES sustainability drive that God will provide for our partners, friends, students and associates so that they can make the requisite investment to this drive.
5. Pray for grace to remain on course with the campuses and reach more souls with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

This report cannot contain every single details of what we have so far done, but rather it contains a summary of some of the highlights of our walk with the Lord for the period under review and amidst the difficulties we faced throughout this period.

SUBMITTED BY: WILLIAM YANDI CONTEH

GENERAL SECRETARY