



## Diakonia Interdenominational Services for Counseling, Evangelism and Teaching (DISCET)

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### **DISCET NEWSLETTER, JAN – MAR 2022**

*DISCET helps to meet the emotional and spiritual needs of post war Sierra Leone society. It trains Counselors to help individuals deal with relationships, and trains church leaders to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to the unsaved.*

#### **1. DISCET HOSTS A THREE DAYS PLANNING RETREAT IN JANUARY**

Early this year, DISCET Secretariat hosted a three days Staff retreat with the aim of planning future programmes of the organization and how they can be fully implemented during the year. The retreat started with daily devotion with prayers and bible study. The retreat gradually moved on to taking retrospect of activities of the gone year. This was done at departmental level. As retrospect of the previous year was taken, it was observed that much was not done as was planned due to COVID -19 restrictions. Anyhow, amidst these restrictions, DISCET continued to serve people in areas where the restrictions are not flouted like, online counseling, radio outreaches etc. More programmes were also implemented when the restrictions were relaxed at a given point in time, like: the training of sixty-eight medical practitioners both Nurses and Doctors in Makeni and Bo, the sweet home conference in Port Loko, the Counseling Training Schools in Waterloo and Freetown, refresher course for trained Counselors etc. Prospect of activities for implementation was also discussed in the meeting. The meeting agreed on the full implementation of all programmes this year if there are no external factors that will impede our operations.

#### **2. DISCET GRADUATES 16 TRAINED COUNSELORS**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> January this year, the DISCET Counseling School graduated 16 candidates as trained



Counselors from its counseling schools. Amongst the graduands were six Counseling Supervisors and ten Professional Counselors. The counseling training lasted for seven months whilst the counseling Supervisory training lasted for one month, exhaustive. The graduation ceremony took place at the Open House Global

Missions Church on 16 Elizabeth Street in Freetown. The ceremony was attended by distinguish personalities from all works of life. Two candidates from the Waterloo training center who happened to fulfill all conditions necessary for graduation joined the other team in Freetown for the graduation. The graduands were addressed by the Rev. Solomon Val Kanneh of the Methodist Church Sierra Leone. In his address, he told granduands not to be complacent as the need for counseling in the country is enormous and that they need to rise up to the task. The certificates were distributed by the Director Emeritus of DISCET, Rev. Can. Dr. John E. Modupe Taylor-Pearce. The graduands are expected to go back to their churches and help with Counseling.

### 3. DISCET COUNSELS TANKER INFERNO VICTIMS / SURVIVORS

DISCET made available four [4] professional counselors who provided counseling to thirty-five [35] people during January and February 2022 this year. Before going out to counsel them, our Supervisor guided us all on how to go about it and the kind of counseling needed-Depression, grief/bereavement, trauma, low self-esteem and the potential of some slipping into drug and alcohol to calm their fears, tensions and emotional traumas. DISCET Counselors visited victims/survivors of the inferno in their homes where one on one counselling was done. Each one of the counselors gave the victims and



survivors an atmosphere of acceptance and assured them of the fact that the stories of their private lives will not be broadcasted but will be kept secret.

*Counselor Simeon Camara, visited Kadiatu Ramatu Jalloh, a 26 years old businesswoman from Waterloo who was going back home from her business spot at Saní Abacha Street in the middle of the city. "The driver of the mini bus wanted to brave pass the area of the inferno when they heard a big explosion and suddenly the cars in front of the minibus started catching fire, "I had to jump out of the window of the bus myself, together with others. Unfortunately, I landed on my face and hands on the ground in the area where the petrol have already spilled and soaked the ground. I later saw fire on my hands and face as I ran for help. The mini bus later was burnt down completely," Kadiatu lamented her nightmare.*

*I met Kadiatu in a locked house where she refused to come outside because of the burnt marks on her face and hands, Counselor Simeon explained. But after few sessions with Kadiatu, she was consoled and starts coming outside of her house to mingle with other people. On my last visit to her, Kadiatu said "I am fine now. You have helped me to close that negative chapter of my life and start a new one. I thank you and your organization".*

### 4. DISCET CELEBRATES 24 YEARS OF MINISTRY IN SIERRA LEONE

On the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2022, DISCET celebrated 24 years of ministry to Sierra Leone and beyond at the King Memorial United Methodist Church, Regent Road in Freetown. The programme was attended by different personalities across different denominations in the body of Christ in Sierra Leone, some of who consented to serve in different capacities in the service. The Director Emeritus, Rev. Can. Dr. John Eldred Modupe Taylor-Pearce gave the sermon on the theme; **"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" Matt 11:28.** Uncle



Modu elaborated on the truth that it does not make sense for people to die of emotional pains when DISCET Counseling Center has the answer. He threw a universal appeal to all in attendance to tell others that are not in the service to come counseling whenever they are going through emotional pains.

In the past 24 years, DISCET has served and impacted numerous lives and homes through counseling and leadership controls in organizations through DISCET conducted leadership conferences across the country within the body of Christ. Here are some testimonies from individuals and organizations:

Ms. Melody Conteh used to view life as worthless, a mere waste of time. She wished to even die than to live; but encountering the DISCET one to one counseling, her story changed. Look at what she said;

*"I reached a place in life where I almost gave up on life when I lost my father. Our mother is a single parent and was unable to carry all our responsibilities. Our father died and left us at tender age in her hands. As a mother of four, it wasn't easy. I was in second year in college when an elder in our church heard my story and decided to help me with my fees and other necessities. After sometime the man just stopped. I went over to his wife asking if I have done anything bad but she said nothing. I later asked the man and he too said nothing. I later learnt that some group of people in our church went and told the wife of the man that, the reason he is helping me is because I am in love with her husband. When I learnt this, I grew angry and bitter for those who said so and to the point I was unable to forgive them. This went on for months until it started affecting my health. I explained this issue to my friend who encouraged me to see a counselor. Thank God, when I came to DISCET I did not regret it at all. I have now forgiven the people and my health is now fine. I thank God for DISCET for allowing God to use them to restore me. Today I am a proud graduate".*

Rev. Alex Kargbo is a graduate from the Sierra Leone Theological College with a bachelor degree in theology. He read counseling as a module but was never satisfied with the counseling he read in college. He enrolled in the DISCET Counseling School and this is his testimony; *"I thank God for directing me to the DISCET Counseling School. Even though I read counseling in college, but I have to be candid, I was unable to help anybody in counseling not until when I attended the DISCET Counseling School. I was taught how to help a counselee to discover answers to their problems and to take decisions to remedy their situation. This is helping me today in my ministry. I am grateful to DISCET".*

## **5. DISCET COUNSELING SCHOOL AND RADIO OUTREACHES ARE STILL IN PROGRESS:**

The January to June session of the DISCET Counseling School have resumed classes for the 2022 school year. Ten students in all have so far enrolled for the January to June session. Enrollment is now closed for the January to June Session. Waterloo recruitment of students is in progress. As soon as we have the targeted number for Waterloo, we shall start. We are still praying to God for open doors of financial provision so that we can start in Makeni. In the last two years, a lot of planning has been put into the establishment of the Counseling School in Makeni but since then we've been constrained for funds. Please pray with us for the establishment of the School in Makeni and Kono in the near future.

## **6. THE DISCET SECRETARY RESIGNS FROM THE SERVICES OF DISCET**

The DISCET Secretary that doubles as the Administrative Assistant to the Director, Mrs. Esther Tucker tendered her letter of resignation last year to be effective 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021. She took this decision because her children who are all girls are growing up and needs parental attention especially when they are off from School in the afternoon, she explained to the DISCET S/Leone Board. Her position (Secretary) is still vacant. Administration is working on possible advertisement of the position together with the Field and Programmes position as soon as the financial

position of the organization is a little lifted. Kindly pray with us.

## **7. OBITUARY**

*DISCET regrets to announce the death of its Board Member, the late Mr. Victor Macaulay. He got his home calling in South Africa where he was in the last few months of his life for medical attention. His remains was later flown back home where he was laid to rest on the 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2022.. He was survived by his wife, Blanche and children. Kindly pray with us for God's consolation in that family.*

*Kindly send me feedback as you read this newsletter. Thank you.*

*Rev. Steven A. Mahoney, Director, DISCET.*