



March 2013

January in Sierra Leone

Written by *Professor Johanna Kuyvenhoven*
Schools for Sierra Leone Board Member
who spent the month of January in Sierra Leone

Perhaps January is the very best time of the year to visit Kabala. The new crops of rice have been harvested and the town is nearly content with abundance. The dry season makes the roads easy to traverse, people move about more easily. The Harmattan winds blow from the Sahara, bringing a light haze to the atmosphere. My Sierra Leonean companions feel the filtered sun as "cold!" For me, fresh from temperate and snowy Michigan – it was lovely.

Since the school opened in 2007, we have added 5 classes. A beautiful Junior Secondary School was built adjacent to the primary school complex. We have gone from 4 teachers to 10 teachers. Solar energy powers the school for administrative and other work. Clean latrines and a washing station are part of the campus life.



Mr. J. T. Koroma (pictured left) has poured his heart, spirit and body into this school. God is using him and us to develop a new generation of Sierra Leoneans.

We were happy to add Mr. Dan Thulla (pictured right) to support the work. He brings computer and communication skills to assist in the growing administrative needs of our work together.



The children in our school are doing well. Every year the whole class of children pass the national exam; an unheard of accomplishment. There are several reasons for that. All our children have books and notebooks; their teachers are trained and have regular professional development. The children at nearby schools (pictured to the left) have only chalk tablets to write on.

However, over 4,000 other children go to school in Kabala and the surrounding area. The contrast between our school and others is harsh. The great majority of early primary school teachers are undertrained or not trained at all. They have no teaching supports. They teach in crowded and unfurnished rooms. The children come to school with hope, cleverness and shining faces. But they have very little else.

The Kabala Christian School has felt the difference keenly. We know that a light should benefit all who walk nearby. For this reason we have worked to help our partner school become a mentor and support to those schools nearby.



From February 7-8 we hosted a workshop for 14 area primary schools. Teachers and their headmasters attended to learn about more effective teaching of reading at the early grade levels. At the conclusion of the workshop every teacher went back to their classroom with a packet of teacher supports: story books, lesson plans, visual aids and charts.

Teachers made an alphabet strip, flash cards and story charts. They worked from 8:30 AM and left reluctantly around 5 PM.

Teachers and headmasters were all given notebooks, pencils, rulers, and erasers for all the children in the early primary grades in their schools. We distributed 3,000 packets for children in the area schools!



We look forward to seeing more ways in which the blessing Kabala Christian School spreads to children and families beyond its school membership.

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