

# Cleaning Day in Bo

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The last Saturday of each month is the designated 'Cleaning Day' in Bo. This was introduced in Freetown by President Valentine Strasser in the early 1990's and subsequently adopted in Bo.



No-one is allowed to go on to the Bo streets before 10am, with the risk of being arrested and fined. All the fronts of the properties and the streets must be cleaned, with the rubbish being piled up ready to be collected by the refuse lorries.



With an authorised escort of two young men we ventured out into the streets and wandered around taking photographs. The Chief Administrator of Bo City Council was out with the 'cleaning police', checking on progress and rounding up loiterers.



Even the Central Market, a warren of narrow dark alleys and open laden stalls, was eerily empty and quiet - very different to the hustle and bustle of the usual day.



Towards ten o'clock, the children and young people took advantage of the empty streets to come out and play football and games - all too soon they would be expected to start their regular street trading work.



We were taken aback by the arrival of two young policemen on motorbike - ready to arrest us - someone had reported us for being out and taking photographs! It was a sticky moment, and there is no photo of this - not wise! Simeon, one of our guides, explained and showed them his camera, which had only a few photos on - we kept quiet - and we were allowed to walk on to the community centre.

Cleaning Day is very impressive - and unlike Freetown, which (according to web blogs) does not actually collect the rubbish and take it away - Bo City Council can relate this directly to the waste management scheme now being introduced with support from Warwick District Council.