

JOHN MYERS REPORT ON VISIT TO BO FEBRUARY 2011

My role was to prepare for and support the visit by 7 teachers on their "Area Linking Visit" on a Department of Education Grant administered by British Council. The teachers visit will be reported separately, so this covers other matters.

COMMUNICATION

- Role of the British Council. Act as a two way staging post for postal communication. Michael Dennis is building up an extensive knowledge of school links.
- Cooperation with other groups especially of school links. There are a number of organisations/groups now organising school links with Bo; and it would make sense to have one core communication service for all. Communication between UK groups needs attention
- OWL organisation in Warwick and Bo. Warwick OWL needs to coordinate all communication at Warwick end and act as conduit and monitor for all physical post. Bo OWL needs to maintain an email service, and Warwick OWL needs to use it thereby reinforcing its value to Bo Schools. Post and email needs to be backed up by phoning and texting. Bo OWL needs to liaise with British Council in Freetown
- Good practice. Any communication system can only be as good as the people who use it . Guidelines for good practice need to be adopted and followed.

SECONDARY SCHOOL LINKS AND YOUTH

- Trinity with CKC and QRS. Visit to CKC and QRS, agreement in principle to cooperation between CKC and QRS with a view to a student led senior secondary link with Trinity and a curriculum led junior secondary link. Trinity have other international links. QRS has a link with a boys school in Ireland.
- Aylesford student led group. A number of individual profiles delivered and a the same number sent back. Cooperation between BGS and UCC to try to ensure female involvement in Bo.

COMMUNITY

- Visit to Gondoma. We are now aware of two villages outside Bo with development agendas that might appreciate village links.
- Beekeeping. Umaru Conteh is producing honey on an individual basis and we saw a lot of him. We have had some interest in the past from Leamington Beekeepers Association
- Blind and other disabilities. The City Council (Mayor and CA) are concerned with issues to do with blind, deaf and others. Meeting between OWL, William Alpha, Representatives of the blind, and Richard Stowell of the SL Association for the Blind (UK)
- Art. Some of our teachers made contact with Alpheus Lamin and commissioned some art work
- PRM Petesson Samai employed by Peace and Reconciliation Movement wrote a letter for the Leamington Conciliation Service
- Radio. Liz was interviewed on the Radio and other radio contacts made.

IT

- While we were there Magnus Lansana cleaned and restored the OWL laptop, and declined payment because he did it as an OWL member. The issue of IT training is a chicken and egg question. Maada Fobay feels that training will not take off until the demand is there; but accepts that there might be ways to stimulate demand.