

**PROJECT PROPOSAL TO THE COMMONWEALTH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
FOR DISBURSEMENT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION FUND TO SIERRA LEONE**

1. INTRODUCTION

Sierra Leone continues to maintain one of the lowest literacy rates in the world. It is estimated that 375,000 children do not have access to schools. Successive governments have not given education the priority that it deserves. Funding for the education sector continues to be inadequate for the demands and the available funding is not well utilised. Although a public expenditure tracking system has been established there is still lack of follow-up and action to address lapses in expenditure on education..

In line with the two millennium goals of bridging the gap in school attendance between boys and girls by 2005 and ensuring equal access to basic quality education for all by 2015, the United Kingdom launched the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) in 2002 to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of Her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Through this fund, the United Kingdom makes available 10 million British Pounds through the British Department for International Development (DFID).

This fund, which is for 17 low income Commonwealth Countries, is managed by an international management committee constituting leading United Kingdom based Non governmental organisations (Action Aid, Save the Children UK and Oxfam GB) under the leadership of Action Aid.

Contrary to other interventions in the education sector that focus on physical infrastructure development (School construction and rehabilitation) the provision of adequate teaching/learning materials and teacher training, this fund will be for advocacy. It has the following national objectives:

- To strengthen civil society capacity to advocate for better access to education in collaboration with other key actors like the Global Movement for Children (GMC) and Education for All (EFA).
- To raise awareness within communities of the importance of creating equal access for girls and boys to school education and enable them advocate to service providers for equal access.
- To strengthen the ability of communities to monitor government spending on education, working closely with mechanisms set up by the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and others to improve access to free and quality education as a result of their involvement in advocacy and monitoring.

2. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

2.1 Current Education Situation

Sierra Leone has just emerged from 10 years of what has been described as one of the most cruel and senseless wars in recent times. National elections have just been concluded with a new government now in place. The general atmosphere could be described as largely stable and the environment peaceful. The disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants has been largely

successful. Efforts are now geared towards reintegration of ex-combatants and at-risk youths into society. Government has pledged to eradicate poverty and corruption, and to put in place mechanisms and structures that would address the root causes of conflict.

With her authority now established all over the country, government has been working in partnership with humanitarian organizations (local and international) to facilitate the repatriation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees from neighbouring Guinea and Liberia into much safer areas of the country.

Sierra Leone continues to maintain one of the lowest literacy rates in the world. Successive governments have not given education the priority that it deserves. Funding for the education sector continues to be inadequate for the demands and the available funding is not well utilised due to lack of effective monitoring mechanisms. The wanton destruction of life and property occasioned by the war has further contributed to the deterioration of the country's already low educational levels. Schools were either destroyed or comprehensively looted, thereby rendering them useless to their communities. The notorious abduction and/or recruitment of children into the ranks of the fighting forces have also deprived many children of access to basic education and exposed them to trauma and related psychosocial disorders. Of a pre-war population of 4.3 million people, only less than 15% have completed six years of primary school education. To worsen an already deplorable situation, there has been a mass exodus of trained and qualified teachers due to the unattractive conditions of service..

The situation for the girl child is even worse. Some cultural beliefs do not favour the education of the girl child. The situation is even worse in the north and east with government having to intervene by waiving school fees for all girls entering Junior Secondary Schools in the northern and eastern provinces and offering further incentives.

Limited capacity to monitor the effectiveness of spending characterizes the educational system. Resources available to government are inadequate and allocations made to this sector are limited. Rural community access to these allocations is minimal because of the over centralization of facilities, lack of transparency and mismanagement of funds of some service providers in education. The poor and marginalized do not participate in decision-making and policies formulation. A number of education policies formulated have not been sustainable at the strategic and operational levels, as lack of ownership has contributed to the limited commitments in implementation at different levels of public policy directives and projects.

2.2 Key Players and Their Contributions to Education

Government has set out for itself a number of priorities geared towards combating poverty and eradicating hunger. With the classification of Sierra Leone as a Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) efforts are now being made to put together a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) outlining the new visionary direction of the country for the short and medium term. With this classification, Sierra Leone benefits from over \$600,000,000.00 (Six hundred Million United States Dollars) in debt relief. These funds should be spent on social projects geared towards addressing the basic needs of communities. A number of sectors, including the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) are expected to benefit from these funds to help boost the educational infrastructure around the country.

In addition to the HIPC funds and funds allocated on a quarterly basis to the MEST, the World Bank recently approved a loan of \$41,000,000.00 (Forty One Million United States Dollars) for the Rehabilitation of Basic Education Programme (REBEP) of the MEST. These funds are expected to go a long way towards rehabilitating the shattered educational infrastructure that has been a consequence of years of a virtual absence of a culture of maintenance, compounded by 11

years of a dastardly and senseless war that saw schools and other educational institutions being unfortunate targets for destruction.

Other key stakeholders in education and their contributions are outlined below:

- The National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA), a commission instituted by government to address post war issues is providing funding to implementing partners for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of education facilities.
- A coalition of civil society groups called the National Accountability Group (NAG) has emerged to work alongside the anti-corruption group established by government.
- International NGOs and agencies including ActionAid Sierra Leone, PLAN, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and UNICEF are supporting the Rapid Response Education Programme for children who have been out of school as a result of the war.
- Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) has undertaken advocacy issues on the girl child at local and national levels. They have established a Centre, in Grafton, Freetown to address and build capacity of people on issues of the girl child.
- The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology through the Milton Margai College of Education is offering courses on Reproductive Health Education/Family Life Education to avert incidences of teenage/unwanted pregnancies and health related issues.
- Quality Education Campaign - Search for Common Ground, Oxfam, SL Teachers' Union, Campaign for Good Governance and the Anti-Corruption Commission are currently conducting research into school funding, corruption and the extent of the government's achievement on delivering free, quality education to all.

2.3 Opportunities

- At national and international levels opportunities exist for education key stakeholders to enhance the promotion of the rights to quality basic education. The World Bank and DFID are committed to the rehabilitation/reconstruction of community education facilities and are looking forward to partnering with credible organizations.
- Through the intensive work of the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, a framework is now in place that offers significantly more space for civil society to influence education policy at every level. .
- Equally in Dakar 2000 there has been a historic commitment from the international community that any country with a credible plan to educate its children will not be allowed to fail for lack of resources.
- There is now a shift towards encouraging wider participation in policy formulation through the PRSP processes and public expenditure monitoring.

2.4 State of collaboration of civil society on education

The prospect for comprehensive support to education requires concerted and deliberate civil society intervention to put the necessary pressure on government and other institutions involved in, or interested in supporting education, to commit the necessary resources and political will to facilitate the process of education renewal.

Generally speaking, not much has so far been done in terms of concrete efforts at doing advocacy on key educational themes and issues. Even though religious organisations (Christian and Muslim) continue to play a very significant role in promoting education in Sierra Leone, they have not been very active in terms of doing advocacy on crucial educational issues like the education of the girl child, equal access to educational services and facilities, proper, timely and adequate remuneration for teachers, post-training employment, education for self-reliance and job creation, etc.

Work in the area of education over the years has been largely centred on the construction/rehabilitation of physical infrastructure and the provision of basic teaching and learning materials. Even teacher training and retention, and the formation and strengthening of Community – Teachers Associations (CTA) were not prioritised until quite recently when some CSOs and government launched the distance learning programme hosted by the Freetown Teachers College (FTC) with sponsorship mainly from PLAN International (PLAN) and government. Other organisations like Catholic Relief Services (CRS) have supported work with CTAs on a very small scale in some parts of the country.

More recently, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and Action Aid Sierra Leone have come up with very alarming figures about the high drop-out rates of girls and their generally low ratios at the secondary level. These appalling statistics, coupled with the ever increasing gender awareness and the active agitation of the women of Sierra Leone about women's rights have drawn attention to this need and government has responded accordingly by promising that effective September 2003, government will pay the fees of all girls entering Junior Secondary Schools in the North and East where the statistics are most alarming. FAWE, Action Aid and PLAN International have been leading campaigners in this area.

Talking Drums Studio, Sierra Leone Teachers Union and Anti Corruption Commission conducted an 8-month long assessment to ascertain community perspectives on quality education in Sierra Leone and made a presentation to the Parliamentary Sub-committee on Education outlining their findings and requesting that they initiate action geared towards addressing core issues that affect quality education in Sierra Leone. Key issues looked into included the government's quality education and free education policy, ownership and responsibility for education, parental responsibility, motivation in classroom, the role of the Sierra Leone Teachers Union and the Ministry of Education Science and Technology. They recommended more intensive information and sensitisation at the community level; ownership, proprietorship and active participation of communities in the management and operations of schools; improvement in the conditions of service for teachers; equity and fairness in the distribution of resources and opportunities; combating poverty which poses a major limitation to equal access to education and combating corruption.

The Sierra Leone Teachers Union (SLTU) on its part has been active in advocating mainly on issues related to conditions of service for teachers (their constituents) but very limited, if anything, otherwise. Peoples Educational Association (PEA) and PADECO have been active over the years in doing work on adult education and creating awareness in communities around the country about that, but not much has been done beyond that. PEA has worked with organisations like United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and a few others on work with non-formal primary education, and rapid education programmes (CREPS) etc.

Apart from the work done by the already mentioned organizations, there is actually no vibrant coalition of CSOs to advocate on educational issues in Sierra Leone. There is clearly the need to build the capacity of civil society to advocate for better access to education.

2.5 Advocacy gaps

2.5.1 Inadequate technical and professional expertise in advocacy

Most civil society groups and communities do not have the requisite expertise and professional requirements to do advocacy. This limits their institutional and programmatic capacity and subsequently their ability to forge viable networks for advocacy, access the required resources and build the political base or platforms for advocacy.

2.5.2 Inadequate access to information and resources

Civil society groups and communities have very limited expertise in basic data collection and documentation and as a result this limits their ability to collect, analyse, document and use such information to strengthen their advocacy platforms. It will, for instance, be difficult to advocate on the PRSP or the HIPC funds without adequate information on the quantum of resources available, how they have been allocated, the criteria for allocation, the distribution and volume of projects, the status of such projects, etc.

Civil society groups and communities even lack basic educational statistics on pupil/teacher ratios, sex and regional disparities, level and spread of services, etc. They could not therefore do advocacy from an informed point of view. Information is power in advocacy and mechanisms must be put in place to strengthen this capacity

2.5.3 Inadequate resources for advocacy

Civil society groups are handicapped in their work by inadequate resources - human, financial and material/logistic resources to do advocacy work. Some of them also have not demonstrated sufficient ability to utilise resources responsibly. They are therefore handicapped and can fall easy prey to manipulation.

2.5.4 Inadequate networking capacity

The viability of any advocacy organisation is largely dependent on its network capacity at the local, national and international levels. With such networks, advocacy groups can more easily access information, protection in cases of emergency and even financial and material resources. Unfortunately, most of the civil society groups in Sierra Leone do not belong to any viable networks. They are isolated entities without any political base or clients. There are also very few coalitions for advocacy in Sierra Leone. The few that exist, like the Coalition on the Diamond Area Community Development Fund, have a proven record of success.

2.5.5 Monitoring

There is a virtual absence of viable mechanisms for monitoring public expenditures on education within civil society. No current baseline data exists to address education advocacy issues. The situation is even worse for deprived rural communities that are not even aware of these resources.

2.5.6 Policy

At the policy level, most civil society groups and communities lack the requisite knowledge on existing education policies. Because of this lack of awareness or ignorance, they are not fully aware of their rights and privileges. They therefore cannot articulate their positions and demand their rights. The policy implementation structures are very weak.

2.6 Challenges

Sierra Leonean Civil Society is faced with a lot of challenges, most of which are as a result of its weaknesses. The institutional and human capacity of civil society is weak, thereby making it difficult to identify, analyse and attain its aspirations through sustained, organised and well-planned non-violent civil actions.

- Civil society organisations in Sierra Leone sometimes engage in unhealthy competition quite often for access to resources and for promoting their different agendas. This has contributed to the fragmentation of civil society to the extent that they rarely undertake collective actions. Moreover, civil society should expand its scope of operations beyond political issues. The trend has been for civil society to be active in issues relating to politics and painfully complacent in other equally important areas that demand their attention.
- Another major challenge for civil society leadership is that of restoring its lost confidence among its constituents. Without this, civil society can hardly be mobilized into action. The notion that civil society activists/leaders also expect rewards from government in the form of jobs, contracts, diplomatic postings, etc. would therefore have to be revised.
- The unwillingness of governments to create space for civil society in the governance of the country is a huge challenge that civil society would have to contend with. Quite often, civil society finds it difficult to access information crucial to their advocacy work.

3. THE CEF PLANNING PROCESS

Series of consultative meetings of the Managing Agencies on how to take the CEF process forward resulted to the initiation of a nation-wide consultative process leading to the identification of advocacy civil society groups and partners- their perceptions of education, gaps and weaknesses that would form the basis of the strategic plan. A draft report was produced and circulated to partners for their feedback. In a meeting of stakeholders held on the 22 and 23 September 2003, feedback on the draft report was given by the respective members and the strategic plan developed based on the consultations report. Consultations among managing agencies also ended up to the adaptation of the global CEF objectives into national objectives on which the Terms of Reference of the nation-wide consultations were based.

The CEF through Standard Chartered Bank Sierra Leone Ltd. has directed its effort in generating the interest of the corporate sector to engage in the CEF process. So far up to ten corporate bodies have indicated interest in the CEF and a formal presentation of the project was made to the corporate sector in April 2003. Their engagement is dependent upon the formulation of a workable and acceptable strategic plan for the CEF.

The following agencies have so far been part of the process:

- ActionAid Sierra Leone
- Oxfam
- Save the Children Fund (SCF)
- The Ministry of education, Science and Technology (MEST)
- Women's Forum
- Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)
- Partners in Adult Education Coordination Office (PADECO)
- Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)
- PLAN Sierra Leone
- Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone (PPASL)
- Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA)
- Sierra Lone Association of Non-Governmental Association (SLANGO)
- Norwegian Refugee Council
- Global Movement for Children

- Education for All
- World Vision
- Sierra Leone Teachers Union
- Council of Churches in Sierra Leone

4. NATIONAL PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Goal

To attain education for all by facilitating the provision of equitable access to quality basic education through greater participation, transparency and accountability by all stakeholders

Project Objectives

- To strengthen civil society capacity to advocate for better access to education in collaboration with other key actors like the Global Movement for Children (GMC) and Education for All (EFA).
- To raise awareness within communities of the importance of creating equal access for girls and boys to school education and enable them advocate to service providers for equal access.
- To strengthen the ability of communities to monitor government spending on education, working closely with mechanisms set up by the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and others to improve access to free and quality education as a result of their involvement in advocacy and monitoring.

5. THE NATIONAL CEF STRATEGY

Against the above contextual background 4 strategic thematic outputs have been identified for all CEF supported activities in Sierra Leone as following:

1. Advocacy capacity of civil society strengthened,
2. Civil society and community input into education,
3. School enrolment increased especially for the girl-child and retention ensured
4. Budget allocations to education improved and monitored

These outputs would be pursued and realized using the following approaches: capacity building, participatory approaches, printed electronic media and performing arts and advocacy.

5.1 Capacity Building

In response to the gaps and challenges identified among civil society groups in relation to advocacy work, the focus of CEF activities would be on building capacity of civil society groups and communities through training and support with the requisite logistics and some financial resource requirements, establishment of appropriate structures for advocacy, development of viable advocacy programmes and campaigns around education, supporting the creation of viable coalitions for advocacy and establishing appropriate networks for advocacy at the local/grassroots, district, regional, national levels. In particular, training will be provided to CSO groups on relevant aspects on advocacy and influencing including networking, budget analysis and tracking, data collection and use and management of resources for successful advocacy campaigns. Support will be provided to CSO groups to set up mechanisms to ensure the emergence of appropriate and viable advocacy platforms.

Monitoring of interventions in the education sector in Sierra Leone is very alien. Even though government has put in place structures and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, the selection process for membership into these establishments are suspect. Civil society and communities were never part of such decision-making processes. This has to change. Civil society and communities must be capacitated to be able to monitor funds from donors. The capacity to be able to access relevant information and to approach the relevant authorities to advocate for positive change must be built.

The third CEF objective aims at building the capacity of CSOs and community to be able to monitor expenditures on education. Strengthening mechanisms for monitoring and building the capacities in that direction is therefore critical for CEF.

In the first month the project team will produce a workplan (based on the logframe) and finalise funding mechanisms. The CEF Co-ordinator will use a participatory process to include all stakeholders in the development of the work-plan. The work-plan will include a schedule for training and grants, and criteria for identifying coalitions and partners.

5.1.1 CEF Sensitisation: As initial activity to the CEF project, the team will conduct an introductory information campaign around the country in order to publicise the project and convey the scope of programme participation. The focus for this campaign will be to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible are aware of the project and know how to participate. The project will then work with interested organizations, existing coalitions and networks that meet the established criteria.

5.1.2 Training of Trainers: A cadre of trainers will be identified to form a sustainable, permanent training resource, equipped to disseminate skills and information to individual organizations and coalitions. Trainees will be selected through an open application process from coalitions, networks and organizations. Trainers will include youth, women and people with disabilities with a desire and capacity to learn to train others in advocacy. The project will provide them with the financial or additional training tools necessary to become leaders in their communities. Trainers will be recruited from organisations already mandated, skilled and funded to conduct trainings of this nature, as this programme should build upon and enhance their current programmes with new and more effective methods. In addition, trainers may volunteer from other organisations who clearly demonstrate the ability to be effective trainers.

5.1.3 Programme Participants: The selection of partners will be an ongoing process. Other partners will join already identified partners as the scale of the project develops and gains momentum. Coalitions will register partners based on common interest and themes. The trainers will assist organisations, existing coalitions and networks to carry out a training needs assessment in order to act as lead organisations for coalitions in their regions. Coalitions will be provided with training to enable them to organise advocacy research and public awareness campaigns and to mobilise support amongst their constituency.

5.1.4 Development of Coalitions: coalitions will develop organically. Coalitions will develop their activities and will be assisted by the trainers to mobilise additional support from interested stakeholders, both civil society and government and galvanise their efforts in coalitions, participating directly in successful advocacy actions. Coalitions will initially be quite small, consisting mainly of organisations with a specific interest in education research and advocacy. However, as the project develops these coalitions will scale-up and expand the work to plan and implement larger scale (multi-community, regional or national) cooperative advocacy campaigns in order to influence government decision-making on targeted social issues.

5.2 Participatory Approaches

Participatory approaches will be used to bring together all stakeholders to form a national coalition to work in concert for the formulation and implementation of policies to promote participation and ensuring quality basic education. Its functions could be replicated at the regional levels for more effective communication coverage at all levels of the communities. Existing advocacy CSO networks and organization like the Global Movement for Children (GMC), the Sierra Leone Teachers Union (SLTU), Talking Drums Studio, Anti-Corruption Commission and the host of others will be encouraged to form regional and national coalitions to build on their existing work while new advocacy networks and organizations will also be encouraged to emerge and join the coalitions. These partnerships will engage the government and education stakeholders in ensuring that all obstacles to free education are surmounted.

Another activity could be supporting learning forums to mobilize the ideas of key players of basic education for national and district level planning of advocacy and campaign strategies. Such exercise will be very useful in determining the strengths and weaknesses of on-going advocacy and campaigns, identify gaps, new strategies and resource needs.

Small scale grants will be available for civil society activities which mobilise populations of local communities (including marginalised people) to work toward social change through participation in advocacy campaigns. These activities may include public awareness campaigns, civic fora or community level research activities, and will be designed by the coalitions during and after initial trainings. These activities will also be crucial in gaining the support of local level government authorities (formal and traditional) through their involvement and visibility.

These grants will be managed by the civil society organisations and groups in order to enable them to build a constituency and use participatory methodologies to mobilising communities to clearly affect a specific social change.

5.3 Print and Electronic Media and Performing Arts

Sensitisation approaches involving the use of all available media to reach out to various segments of the society will be explored. These approaches include the use of Radio, TV, community meetings, drama, street theatre, posters, video shows to video viewing groups, meetings in markets and agricultural fields, town criers, radio listening groups, songs, proverbs and story telling.

The approach emphasises the use of multi-media in the hope that when people hear the messages over and over again from different channels, they may be forced to take note and be induced to feel sufficiently sensitised to act on them

5.4 Advocacy Approaches:

The advocacy approach will be most useful in calling attention to relevant international and national policies on Child rights and related educational issues that stand on the way of achieving EFA by 2015.

It is the expressed view of the CEF partnership that intensification of advocacy work around the following themes or issues will significantly contribute to the achievement of the two key millennium goals of providing access to basic quality education for all by 2015 and bridging the gap between boys and girls in school attendance by 2005.

5.4.1. Education of the girl child

Girl child education continues to be critical for government in its plans for revamping the educational sector. Government and a number of CSOs have identified this, and in line with the Millennium goal of bridging the gap in terms of school attendance between boys and girls by 2005. The current efforts notwithstanding, there is still need to intensify advocacy work in this area. Government and other donors and education providers need to invest more into the education of the girl child in order to bridge the gap.

5.4.2 Equal access to basic educational opportunities for all.

This suggestion is proffered against the backdrops of over centralization of resources in the urban centres to the detriment of the rural settlements in Sierra Leone. Children in most urban centres in Sierra Leone have access to basic quality education. The situation in rural areas is not equally positive. Statistics show that up to 70 percent of teachers in rural areas in Sierra Leone are untrained and unqualified. This limits the quality of the service that they can offer.

This issue relates well to one of the two core millennium goals that aims at achieving equal access to quality basic education for all by 2015.

The country's school curriculum is not reflective of its needs and that education is becoming too expensive for Sierra Leoneans. Even though government has waived tuition fees, the other charges are often unaffordable to many. Because of this malaise in a country with chronic poverty, many children simply have to drop out of school because the parents simply cannot meet the cost.

The traditional preference for academia at the expense of middle level technical and vocational training that was perpetuated since independence did not make the educational system appropriate for our circumstances. Attempts were made with the introduction of the 6-3-3-4 system of education to reverse this trend.

The three CEF objectives stress the need to strengthen civil society and community capacity to advocate on issues and to monitor expenditures on education. For this to be achieved there must be equal and unhindered access to education. This issue therefore contributes to the achievement of the CEF goals for education and the CSO groups must be seen to put pressure on government in support of these issues.

5.4.3 Proper, timely and adequate remuneration for teachers

Teachers continue to be unmotivated and not committed to their work because of poor remuneration. The efforts of the SLTU to advocate for better conditions of service are yet to attain the desired results. There is clearly the need to intensify advocacy work geared towards exerting pressure on government to improve the conditions of teachers so that their reputation, dignity and motivation can be restored.

5.4.4 Allocation of resources to education.

Sierra Leone is yet to prioritise education and allocate sufficient human, financial, material and logistic resources to its development. Communities and civil society must put pressure on government and funding agencies to allocate sufficient resources for this purpose. This should become an object for advocacy work in Sierra Leone. This is a major goal for CEF – that pressure could be exerted on government and other funding agencies, to allocate more resources for education.

5.4.5 Policy

Many issues that affect education in Sierra Leone are policy related. To address this, advocacy work must also target the policy level. The change to the 6-3-3-4 system of education, for instance, was a policy decision. Favourable education policies must be enacted and civil society and communities must be seen to play a significant role in ensuring that this happens. Decentralisation of administrative structures for education, for instance, could help improve upon educational service delivery. This is an indirect goal of the CEF.

The audience in advocacy approach may include the Head of State, cabinet ministers, Parliament, Opinion leaders, traditional authorities, community leaders, religious leaders, business leaders, NGOs and policy and administrative officers of relevant line ministries.

Certain activities could be employed in pursuit of advocacy. These include lobbying through interpersonal communication, backed by e.g. an information kit or a pamphlet with brief information on key relevant points. Another activity is media advocacy, in which journalists are briefed and influenced, through focus group discussions and workshops, to join the campaign.

Advocacy could also take the form of high profile workshops and seminars in which very influential personalities including the President, Vice President and other high-ranking personalities are asked to make statements, which may affirm their commitment to basic education.

It could also take the form of special events at which the children themselves advocate for support to basic education by pitifully narrating their plight in the absence of adequate provision for quality basic education for all.

The goal of each of the coalitions must involve affecting government decision-making on a specific issue that addresses the right to basic education. Although focused on achieving a specific short-term result, each of these collaborative advocacy efforts will form some long-lasting work relationships within the civic sector and across sectors (government-civic-business). Many possibilities for the formation of coalitions will exist by this stage of the project. Coalitions may choose to expand their efforts in neighbouring communities and create a coalition of new organisations to undertake advocacy initiatives or may choose to coordinate across communities and regions to impact a larger level of change. Similarly, local government authorities that participated in the first community mobilisation projects may choose to remain involved when the activities scale-up.

5.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

The project will undertake on-going monitoring and annual evaluations through Reviews and Reflections by networks, organizations and coalitions to know which activities of the project are working well and not working well. Monitoring will be based on the output indicators developed in the logical framework. Reports will be produced for all activities. Monthly and terminal reports on project activities will be produced and shared with all partners. Lessons learnt from the implementation of the project will be disseminated widely. This approach it is hoped will guide future planning processes in the education sector.

5.6 LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Narrative	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Critical assumptions
<p>Goal</p> <p>To attain Education For All by facilitating the provision of equitable access to basic quality education through greater participation, transparency and accountability by all stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased enrolment of girls and boys in school • Increased engagement of CSOs with education policy • Increased participation on public expenditure tracking • Government more responsive to education priorities of the proo and marginalized • Increased government expenditure on education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School records • Advocacy issues raised and influenced • Records • Number of pro-poor policies passed • Records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace and stability sustained • Willingness of CSOs to participate in programme
<p>Strategic Objectives</p> <p>1. To strengthen civil society capacity to advocate for better access to education in collaboration with other key actors like the Global Movement for Children (GMC) and Education for All (EFA)</p> <p>2. To raise awareness within communities of the importance of creating equal access for girls and boys to education and enable them advocate to service providers for equal access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and regional coalitions for CEF education advocacy formed by September 2004 • Institutional and operational support provided to by September 2004 • Communities understand rationale of EFA and are advocating for it • 50% increase in school attendance for girls by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorandum of Understanding • Monitoring/Inspection reports • Spot checks • Evaluation reports • Activity reports • Monitoring reports • School reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of funds • Willingness of government to cooperate • Sustained regional socio-political stability

<p>3. To strengthen the ability of communities to monitor government spending on education, working closely with mechanisms set up by the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and others to improve access to free and quality education as a result of their involvement in advocacy and monitoring</p>	<p>September 2005</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 6% dropout rate by 2005 • Public and private expenditure on education monitored by 2005 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School records • Monitoring reports • Other project reports 	
<p>Outputs</p> <p>1. Advocacy capacity of civil society coalition strengthened</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOR for coalitions developed by March 2004 • 8 regional coalitions/networks formed by March 2004 • trainers identified in the 4 regions by December 2004 • 100 coalition members trained on various advocacy skills by September 2004 • Effective functional coalitions • Relevant public education information dissemination on various media • 4 quarterly Stakeholders meetings held by the end of 2004 • One national and 3 regional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training reports • Existence of coalitions • Terms of Reference • Number of public education information programmes on the various media • Minutes of meetings organized • Research reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of funds • Willingness of government to cooperate • Sustained regional socio-political stability • Policy makers and stakeholders will be receptive

<p>2. Civil society and community input into education policy formulation</p> <p>3. Girl child enrolment in schools increased</p> <p>4. Budget allocations to education improved and monitored</p>	<p>CEF advocacy coordination offices established by September 2004</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 consultative meetings with communities/stakeholders and beneficiaries held by September 2004 • Continuous sensitization of communities, stakeholders and beneficiaries on education plans and policies throughout the project life • Community involvement in the preparation of school annual plans by September 2005 • Increased girl child enrolment rates from 38% to 70% in the next 3 years • Decreased girl child dropout rate from 25% to 5% in the next 3 years • All school charges dropped by September 2005 • 80% increase in school enrolment by 2005 • By end of year one 100 coalition members would have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports of consultative meetings held • Appraisal reports • School records • School records • Recruitment reports • Training reports 	
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	<p>been trained in budget monitoring and advocacy by September 2004</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight resource persons (2 per region) and 100 CSO budget monitors would have been identified nationwide in the second month of year one • 2 training sessions in budget monitoring and control conducted for 50 coalition members in each region by September 2004 • 25% increase in budget allocation from government (HIPIC), World Bank (REBEP) and other allocations by September 2005 • 50% increase in private sector contribution to education by September 2005 • On-going lobbying (face to face) process of parliamentarians before the formulation and approval of budget in Parliament 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained regional socio-political stability
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6. Governance

This being a participatory approach, the actual governance structure will have to evolve and be reviewed over time and CEF will give support to the evolution of the mechanism. An initial move will be the setting up of a National Secretariat of coalitions that will be supported by the CEF to co-ordinate the day-to-day activities of the various coalitions. This will be staffed by a Co-ordinator of Coalitions and an assistant and would be remunerated from the CEF fund on a monthly basis. This Co-ordinator will maintain a direct link with the National CEF Co-ordinator on matters relating to the activities of coalitions and networks. In discharging its functions the Coalition Secretariat staff will liaise with coalition focal persons in the various regions and districts working in partner organizations/coalitions/networks. The roles, responsibilities and composition of the various layers of the coalitions will be participatorily defined by the membership of the coalition and to be followed by a detailed operational CEF country plans that will be equally participatory. The CEF partnership would over the two-year period develop mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of the coalitions secretariat after the withdrawal of the CEF support.

7. Links between national, regional and international work

National coalitions will be linked to the sub-regional and regional level by membership registration to the African Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA). Identified national education issues could be raised to ANCEFA who in turn will feed such issues to the international level. Coalitions will be encouraged to make provisions for membership participation to national and international events and to engage in joint actions on education advocacy issues. The National Secretariat will serve as a national focal point that will monitor the relationships between national and international coalitions and give feedback sessions to coalition members.

8. Gender Issues

Women constitute over half of the population and most of them live in rural areas engaged in subsistence farming, petty trading and non -remunerative domestic chores including management of the family. They constitute the majority of the rural labour force (80%) that produces 70% of the nation's supply. The strains and stresses arising from these have imposed a greater pressure on women. Only an insignificant number of women are in policy and decision-making positions both at traditional and central governance. A gender analysis of development issues reveals wide disparity and inequality between men and women in the economic, social, political and cultural aspects of development.

This notwithstanding, women's pressure groups are being formed to advocate for women's empowerment and equal representation in all spheres of life. A very good example is the 50/50 group, which has been training women as leaders and ensuring female participation in politics and public engagements. The governments, resulting in the setting up of Gender Ministries, have recognized gender imbalances. More women are being appointed Ministers of Government and to higher offices as well as being elected to parliament. With the exception of the North, women are elected paramount chiefs, the highest authority at community level in the Southern and Eastern provinces. Women have also played key roles in the peace process in the Mano River Basin.

We recognize the fact that gender inequality is one of the root causes of poverty; therefore both women and men would be encouraged to harness all available resources for maximum development and productivity. CEF will try to address the privileges and vulnerabilities of men as well as rights and aspirations of women through leading campaigners for women and girl-child like FAWE and the national Girl-Child Steering Committee.

9. Risks/Assumptions

This project will be successfully implemented based on the following assumptions:

- That the national peace achieved after the ten-year rebel war will hold
- The level of good governance aimed at decentralization of authority, devolution of power, strengthening the capacity of public service mechanisms to combat corruption and imbue a culture of transparency are maintained.
- Timely disbursement and additional allocations of funds to the national CEF.
- Cooperation and support of the Sierra Leone government towards the attainment of the core CEF criteria.
- Positive response of civil society movements to the CEF core values

11. BUDGET

Below is a summarized budget of the project from 2004 to 2005. 64% of the total budget is allocated for the core project criteria, 37% of which is for criterion 1, 30% for criterion 2 and 33% for criterion 3. 26% of the total budget will be used to meet the project support cost while 10% goes to the lead agency as management cost.

SUMMARY BUDGET FOR COUNTRY CEF PROJECT

COST CENTRE	2003	2004	2005	TOTAL
Criterion 1: Strengthening Civil Society Movements		19,000	12,000	31,000
Criterion 2: Tracking Public Expenditure on Education		15,000	10,420	25,420
Criterion 3: Support to Education Initiatives		16,000	12,000	28,000
Personnel		11,800	12,500	24,300
Local/International Travels		3,00	2,500	5,500
Secretariat Running		1,250	1,250	2,500
Monitoring and Evaluation		1,500	1,500	3,000
Lead Agency Management Cost (10%)		6,755	5,217	11,972
GRAND TOTAL		74,305	57,387	131,692

Personnel Cost will cover the salaries for the CEF National Coordinator and 50% of the Accountant salary plus remuneration for the Coalitions Co-ordinator and his/her assistant who would be responsible for the day to day running of the coalition secretariat over a two-year period.

Detailed activity plans and budget for the entire project period will be participatorily formulated by the coalitions. Mean while the Management Committee is requesting for the sum of 10,384GBP over a two months period from February to March 2004 to facilitate the 1) CEF nation-wide sensitisation of communities, coalitions/networks and organizations and 2) establishment of a Secretariat that would form the basis of the CEF activities. The establishment of a Secretariat will constitute the setting up of an office with basic working facilities and appointment of two key staff to run the secretariat.

ACTIVITY	AMOUNT
CEF Sensitisation	2,000
Setting up of Secretariat	5,000
Personnel Salaries (2 CEF national secretariat and 2 coalition secretariat staff)	2,440
Lead Agency Management cost	944

TOTAL	10,384
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