

February 2018



Greetings to you all from FASE - The Foundation for African Social Entrepreneurship.

My name is Alfred Sesay and I am an immigrant from Sierra Leone currently living in the USA. My educational journey has led me to Ghana, the UK and the US through graduate, masters and on to doctoral degree studies. My investigations through this time have led me to continually question why there is so much economic inequality between the countries of the US and Europe, and those of my home continent of Africa. An understanding has emerged as to a way of narrowing this difference by linking an exchange of social and economic ideas and activities between those who have left for overseas and those who remain in the local community.

This understanding has brought about FASE, founded as an organization whose philosophy is different from other establishments and charities. FASE aims to bring about workable, long lasting answers to local social and economic problems such as a lack of basic healthcare, good educational structures, and also with regard to poverty and living standards at the local level through primarily focusing on those who have left Africa sharing their skills, resources and ideas with those still at home to bring about change. FASE uses a social entrepreneurship model. This is a mixture of the approach used by traditional NGO's, and those of businesses.



This model has been known to make a big difference in reducing poverty and achieving results in a more sustainable way. Our current focus is Sierra Leone,

with the intention to expand to other African countries as we grow and develop new partnerships. We already have activities going on in the US and the UK.

We wish to create a way in which everyone can participate and own each project and the results achieved. We are seeking continuous ideas from both communities with which to solve local social problems. We look to those who have left to join forces with those who remain to use combined efforts in reaching a richer life within each community so that social and economic levels can change *permanently* and communities do not need to rely on periodic non-sustainable financial assistance from those overseas.

Rather than sending small scale financial means to friends and families back home, which in truth means that both those overseas and those here in the home community remain financially restricted, FASE takes a new approach in promoting the combination of *skills and resources* to bring about permanent change.

Our business-based approach to solving social problems is all about Change - doing something different rather than doing the same thing over and over again while not getting an improved result. Change can also be about doing something that may have already had a good result and improving it further, giving even greater results.

This system presents a change in thinking, in processing; bringing about a new product and a new service, or a new way of looking at things. In this approach FASE looks to building on the interests within the community. The idea is to expand and progress from what others are already doing with the aim of greater and permanent impact.

When we look at the reason for past failures mostly we find that the lack of management of projects, once they are started, often brings about failures so these projects may need adapting to local cultures and situations and carefully monitoring to actually make them work. That is why a combination of the desires, needs and efforts of Africans in their home communities together with the input of those overseas becomes a critical part of the FASE concept.

So - the basic intention of FASE is the desire and willingness of Africans, both at home and abroad to make a difference. We understand that small-scale investment and financial aid from overseas actually limits the potential of economic growth, and is not sustainable. FASE seeks to instill, from immigrants and at the grass roots of the local community, a culture of creative ideas, collaboration and social change that provides opportunities for employment, a reduction in poverty, and more sustainable and permanent solutions to social problems. FASE aims to break the cycle of

dependence and restore dignity, with a transition towards inter-dependency within home communities.



This winter we were able to send a supply of resources to a local school in Sierra Leone. It is the result of a Management Program Consultation I undertook in the Tonkolili district during a combined ADRA/USAID/JSS initiative for a post Ebola health-care revitalization project. During my visits in community clinics I was touched by the story of a 12 year-old girl who was coming from school. I will call her Hawa, as I do not remember her name. I shared a bottle of water with her, and a pen, and we went into a lengthy conversation as other school children stood by, also receiving pens from me.

Hawa explained to me the struggles of her family, which I believe is typical of most families in these communities. I was very impressed by her mature thought processes,

and the sympathy she expressed for her parents who work hard to send her to school. I was made aware that parents, who rely solely on the harvest from their gardens to feed themselves and their families, have to sell some of their produce in order to pay fees and provide school supplies for their children. This means that the family often goes hungry and the children have only one meal a day - no breakfast, and no mid-day meal - just something to satiate their hunger before bed.

This experience was shared with Mrs. Eastwood (a former missionary to Sierra Leone) who is currently providing leadership for FASE UK. She has put together a package for two communities (Makali Junction School and





Rothuk School) and a further effort geared towards the young people affected by the recent mudslide in Freetown.



We want to thank all who have taken an interest in and made this project possible. This includes our able FASE volunteers in Sierra Leone. We are all in this together. And I strongly believe that with such talents, commitment and willingness to sacrifice for the sake of our communities, we will succeed. Myself and the FASE team in Sierra Leone hope to engage in an extensive dialogue to explore how we can all work together to make lives of our community better.

Looking forward to seeing you soon - Alfred Sesay