



F. A. S. E.

FOUNDATION FOR AFRICAN SOCIAL ENTREPRENURSHIP

FASE Sierra Leone Field Report

Education, Entrepreneurship & Community Empowerment

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Trip Dates: June 18 to June 29, 2025

Introduction

This field report outlines the key activities, outcomes, and strategic direction stemming from a recent visit to Sierra Leone on behalf of FASE (Foundation for Advancement of Social Empowerment). The visit aimed to monitor ongoing projects, deepen relationships with local partners, and accelerate FASE's multi-sector programs in education, youth entrepreneurship, agriculture, and infrastructure.

Over the course of the fieldwork, Dr Alfred Sesay engaged with FASE-sponsored students, program facilitators, youth coordinators, and community leaders. Activities included training workshops, project inspections, community planning meetings, and early-stage pilot launches.

This report provides a detailed look at core project areas, outlines the next steps, and reinforces FASE's commitment to locally led, sustainable solutions.

FASE Girls – Leadership & Livelihood Pilot Program

FASE has launched a pilot initiative involving twenty young women from Magburaka, Ernest Bai Koroma University (Makeni), the FASE restaurant team, and surrounding rural communities.

Dr. Alfred facilitated a two-day leadership and entrepreneurship workshop, which laid the foundation for a series of small business ventures:

Proposed Pilot Projects Include:

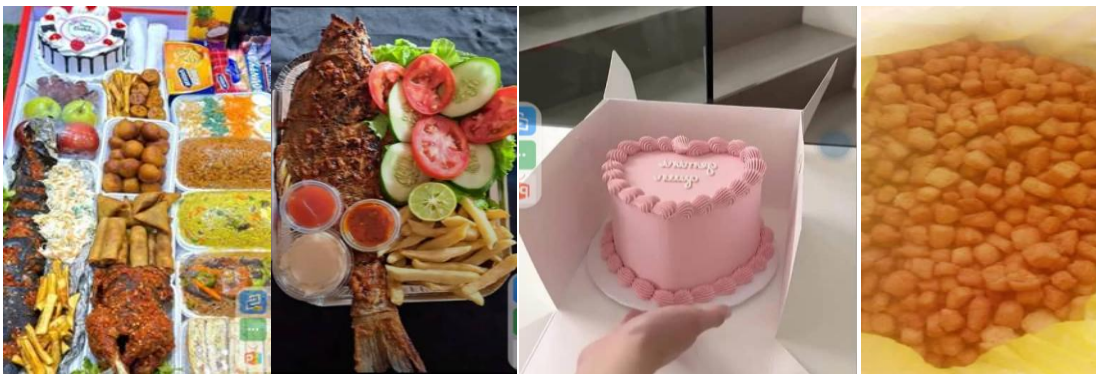
- **Bakery and fast-food services** production and delivery through the FASE restaurant and to homes, schools, universities, and nearby communities.
- **Garri packaging and sales** using cassava from Dr. Sesay's cassava farm product for local retail markets.

- **Event planning and culture and entertainment using space near the restaurant.**

Each venture is receiving startup capital with the goal of generating income to sustain the projects and support the participants' personal and educational expenses.

The group will also revive the bakery with a commercial bakery mixer donated by FASE UK, which has been unused for two years due to lack of electricity, facility readiness and management. Renovations are now underway, including roof leak repairs, the purchase of baking equipment, and installation of essential fixtures to operationalize the bakery.

A shared motorbike will support logistics for both the FASE restaurant and the FASE Girls, aiding in deliveries and outreach efforts. The bakery and fast-food initiative are expected to launch by the end of the month. Training is currently being led by Hawa, a nurse with self-taught culinary skills acquired from online tutorials. Photos documenting the workshop, Dr. Alfred's facilitation, and Hawa's displays of her skills in the finished product show the potential of this project.



2. Makali Junction School – Infrastructure & Community Investment

The newly constructed classroom block at Makali Junction School is now complete and being furnished with benches, desks, chalkboards, and office furniture to serve approximately 180 enrolled students. A community planning session, facilitated by Dr. Alfred, brought together parents, teachers, and local leaders to collaboratively explore strategies for the long-term sustainability of the school.

Key Proposals and Initiatives:

1. **Vegetable Garden Expansion:** A project aimed at generating revenue to cover teacher stipends, administrative costs, and school maintenance.
 2. **School Supply Shop:** A school shop is being established to reduce the burden on parents traveling to the city for basic school materials. The shop is also expected to generate modest income for school support.
 3. **Solar Lighting Installation:** A proposal to install solar-powered lighting to enhance classroom use during cloudy days or evenings and to enable evening community meetings.
 4. **Toilet Expansion:** Plans are in place to improve and expand restroom facilities in response to increasing student enrollment.
 5. **Water Well Construction:** A proposed borehole project aims to provide access to clean drinking water on-site, reducing the need for students to leave campus during lunch hours.
 6. **Employment of Caretakers:** The community has proposed hiring two local residents to serve as paid caretakers responsible for security, maintenance, and cleanliness.
 7. **Seed Funding for Garden Projects:** FASE is providing \$500 in startup funds for the garden initiative—\$250 each to the men’s and women’s groups. The women will focus on cultivating potatoes and “crain crain” (jute leaves), while the men will grow jute leaves exclusively. The produce will be sold to the FASE restaurant and the local community.
 8. **Agricultural Oversight:** An additional \$150 will be allocated for a qualified agricultural supervisor to manage and support the project. The funds to the men and women’s groups will be used to provide seeds, tools, fertilizer, and food for work.
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3. Sponsored Students – Academic & Mentorship Support

FASE is currently supporting seven students across all educational levels—from primary school to university. Sponsorship is from FASE UK branch coordinated by Mrs. Paricia Eastwood-Evans. During the field visit, Dr. Alfred held personal and academic check-ins with each sponsored student, joined by

FASE’s student engagement coordinator. These meaningful conversations provided deep insights into their educational journeys, aspirations, and challenges.

Back-to-School Support Provided by FASE:

- Full coverage of **tuition and national exam fees**
- Provision of **uniforms, school bags, books, and essential learning supplies**
- Ongoing **mentorship and encouragement** to help students stay focused and confident.
- **Quarterly follow-up reviews** to monitor progress and provide timely interventions.
- **One-on-one meetings** that reinforce the sense of belonging, care, and accountability

These investments go far beyond material support— FASE offers students a renewed sense of purpose, stability, and hope. For many, being part of the FASE family is a life-changing opportunity that bridges the gap between potential and possibility.



4-Youth-Led Crowd Farming Pilot

FASE has secured a **32-acre farmland lease**, generously offered free of charge for a two-year period. This land serves as the foundation for a **youth-led crowd farming initiative** aimed at encouraging socially responsible investment among Sierra Leoneans—both locally and in the diaspora.

The project is currently managed by **two committed youth leaders, Murray and David**. Murray, a former public transport driver, and David, recently laid off from his position as a firefighter at Lungi International Airport, both face financial hardship as family men with children in high school and college. This farming opportunity offers them a renewed path to self-reliance and community contribution.

A similar venture was piloted two years ago but lacked sustainable community support and consistent on-ground leadership. Learning from that experience, FASE is now ensuring local presence by supporting Murray and David to **relocate near the farmland**, where they’ve begun recruiting and

training other young people. They will occasionally return to their families in Freetown and Waterloo but remain primarily stationed at the farm.

To start, the team is cultivating **half an acre of pepper**, which aligns with the current agricultural season. This small-scale launch will help them evaluate systems, build experience, and lay the groundwork for scaling the initiative across the full thirty-two acres in future phases.

Project Goals:

- Recruit and train up to twenty young men with farming experience from nearby towns.
- Launch a model of shared ownership and return on investment for investors and contributors with emphasis on the Sierra Leone diaspora.
- Promote food security and youth employment through scalable agriculture.



Site Visit Highlight

During the visit to the newly secured 32-acre farmland, Dr. Alfred had the opportunity to walk the land and observe its potential. On his way back, he gave a lift to young men just finished a soccer game in a nearby village. These young men—like many others in the area who walk long distances daily—represents the very youth FASE aims to recruit for the crowd farming project. These young people will not only gain employment but also earn income to support their education and personal needs.

Next Steps & Recommendations

- **Launch the first FASE Girls pilot venture** focused on bakery and fast-food services.
- **Purchase a motorbike** to support logistics for the restaurant and FASE Girls' delivery and outreach operations.
- **Expand the Makali School vegetable garden** and officially open the school supply shop to generate income for school upkeep.

- **Continue discussions and secure funding** for key infrastructure improvements—including solar lighting, expanded toilets, and a new water well.
 - **Renovate and equip the bakery facility** to support the FASE Girls' food entrepreneurship ventures.
 - **Kick off the Community Diaspora Crowd Farming Pilot**, establish a formal investment model, and create a transparent tracking and reporting system for all stakeholders.
 - **Ensure annual support is secured** for FASE's sponsored students across all education levels—covering tuition, supplies, and mentorship.
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Conclusion

The one-week trip affirmed the dedication, creativity, and resilience of the communities working alongside FASE. Young women are leading ventures with confidence. Farmers are building purpose-driven collectives. Students are thriving with targeted support. And community members are stepping up to lead sustainability efforts.

As these programs grow, FASE's focus remains on strategic investment, mentorship, and scalable impact. We invite continued partnership to strengthen these systems and unlock the full potential of grassroots leadership in Sierra Leone.

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