

# **REPORT ON THE DISBURSEMENT OF FUND RECEIVED FOR THE SACRED HEART PARISH PROJECT FROM ST. MARY'S PARISH CONCORD FOR 2017-2018.**

## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

The St. Mary's Parish Concord project has been an existing project long before this time in the Serabu. The project is geared towards giving charity to the Sacred Heart Parishioners in Serabu in order to improve or enhance their condition of living.

From the funds we receive, we are able to help in promoting the church's activities, helping the needy and poor in the community, intervention in the education of vulnerable children within the parish whose parents cannot afford their schooling and feeding of the aged and the physically challenged in the parish renovation of the church, and so many other emergency interventions.

With these funds, plenty lives have been transformed from miserable to a better living condition which is why the project is one in a million for the parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish, Serabu.

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report captured the relevant activities that were carried out for the disbursement of funds received IN 2018 for the renovation of the church and other interventions. Mention is also made on the observations, the constraints and the recommendation that could be of significance for the future of the project.

## **3.0 ACTIVITIES**

### **3.1 RENOVATION OF THE PARISH CHURCH AND BUILDING OF A HUT**

Prior to the disbursement of the said fund received, there was an urgent need for the renovation of the Parish Church which has been in existence for decades in Serabu. The situation to renovate the Parish Church became a priority to the Parishioners because the church had way gone out of condition/standard. It was no more very convenient for worship; looking to the current standards of churches in the country. The house of God must also be a decent place which in one way or another makes worship more appropriate.

We observed that the church structure lacked proper ceiling system and the Floor of the church was in a very deplorable state with some many holes in it. This is because this structure was built so many years ago and its present state was in a very deteriorative condition. It was at the result of this backdrop that the Parish Pastoral Council (**P.P.C**) suggested that they fund received for 2018 be first and foremost concentrated on the renovation of the church.

Therefore, without wasting any time after receiving the funds, we quickly embarked on the renovation of the church by giving it more presentable and attractive ceiling system and we tiled the Floor with some local tiles.

The renovation project of the church started soon after receiving the said fund. Local materials like sand, sticks, granite stones, provision of unskilled labour were provided by some parishioners, also some skilled parishioners in construction were hired and paid to do the job at a minimal cost. Climax with the renovation of the church, we were able to buy 200 rubber chairs for the church as a way of addressing seating accommodation which has been a great problem over the years.

The initiative of building a Hut came as a result of the constraints we faced in keeping church meeting and other leisure activities. Previously, almost all of the church organizations in the Parish use to keep meetings either inside the church or in an open place. This became a hitch especially during the raining season or when multiple organizations have meetings at the same time.

Therefore, the hut was built to help salvage this situation and all thanks to God the Hut is serving it intended purpose(s).

After the completion of the above activities, the renovated church was repainted together with the Hut and presented to the community by Rev. Fr. Gerald L. Jabati and members of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC).

#### **Pictures showing the renovation of the church.**





**Pictures showing the 200 Rubber Chairs Bought**





**Picture showing the Built Hut**



### **3.2 INTERVENTION IN THE EDUCATION OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND FEEDING OF THE AGED AND THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED IN THE PARISH**

With the funds we receive regularly, it has almost become a tradition in the community to help the less privileged in so many areas. Therefore, after completing the renovation of the church in certain aspect, with some of the remaining cash at hand, the Parish Pastoral Council sat together to identify other key areas for urgent interventions.

It was noted that, a nation will only prosper if more investment is done in the educational sector. Seeing the need to enhance education, few vulnerable school pupils were again identified (preferably those children who were not fortunate to benefit from the previous aid) within the Parish whose parents have little to provide in terms of schooling not to mention basic amenities.

In supporting education at the Parish community level, the Sacred Heart Parish, Serabu on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2018 gave educational support to the different Catholic primary schools: Holy Rosary Primary School for Girls, Sacred Heart Primary school for Boys and Sacred Heart Pre-School by donating books, uniforms, pens, pencils and school bags. **50** pupils from the two primary schools benefited from the donation and **30** pupils benefited from the Pre-School making a total of **80** beneficiaries. The donation was climaxed with feeding of the pupils in the different schools. Presenting the donated items, the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Gerald L. Jabati reiterated that the donation is a regular contribution from their Old dear friends of Sacred Heart based in Australia.

The need for the feeding of the aged and physically challenged which comprises of both Muslims and Christians came as a result of the usual begging habit of the above-mentioned people on Sunday Masses and on the streets on ordinary days. This activity is routinely done in order to stop them from begging regularly from different people and parishioners. This activity has become a routine for the beneficiaries as they pile up early every Saturday morning. Some testify that this convention has helped a lot to subsidize their feeding burden as they are always hopeful of getting food on every Saturday.



**Pictures showing the Pupils receiving learning materials**



**Pictures showing the Feeding of the Aged and Physically Challenged**



### **3.3 INTERVENTION IN INSTALLING SOLAR LIGHT IN ONE OF OUR SCHOOLS (HOLY ROSARY SCHOOL)**

One of the cheapest and reliable power supply in Sierra Leone at the moment is “Easy Solar”. Easy Solar is a company that sells solar equipment. This method of power supply has been more beneficial to the rural districts or regions in the country. It uses sunlight to generate electrical energy. This has helped in solving electricity (blackout) problems in many rural parts of the country.

Holy Rosary school have a newly constructed school building; and it was of need for us to help these children of this school to have access to a better power supply. Looking at this emerging technology, we thought it fit to help our school pupils, teachers and parents.

Installing the Easy Solar light in the school became an urgent need because: the classrooms were always very dark and becomes darker when it wants to rain/when it's raining, teachers were most of the time unreachable through their cell phones because there was nowhere in the village they can recharge their cell phones and as a result, there was always breakage in communication with teachers in this part of the country, some of the children in the school that are to take public exams like National Primary School Examination (**N.P.S.E**) and Basic Education Certificate Examination (**B.E.C.E**) had serious constraints of studying their notes at night for such exams because there is no electricity supply in the village.

Most of the children in this school have passion to learn but do not have a better means of studying their notes; so, they sometimes use candles and other local means to study their notes. Therefore, the installation of this Easy Solar in the school was geared towards helping the children in their studies with school serving as the hub for electricity supply to those children whose parents cannot afford it and this Easy Solar has helped the school to match with contemporary standards of schools in the country.

#### **Pictures showing the installation of the Easy Solar Light.**







### **3.4 DONATION OF PLAYING GROUND EQUIPMENT TO PUPILS OF SACRED HEART PRE-SCHOOL**

As the saying goes “all works no play makes Jack a dull boy”, the children in the Pre-School had little or no toys/equipment to play with in the school during break/lunch as their contemporaries do in other schools. The kids usually fight over the little available playing equipment in the school. This has been a challenging issue over the years for kids attending the Parish Preschool (Sacred Heart Pre-School). With some remaining fund after addressing some other interventions in the community, it was of great need to donate to the Parish Preschool these playing equipment. In total, we were able to donate four (4) working playing equipment to the children of this school.

**Pictures showing the donated Playing equipment in the school**



## **4.0 OBSERVATIONS**

- ❖ After doing the ceiling, Floor of the church and providing better seating accommodation in the church, we observed that church attendance has increased and the decency of the church has also improved thereby attracting more worshippers to the church every Sunday.
- ❖ That the pupils were happy and appreciative for the donation of school materials given to them and most significantly, the ones who benefited shared their items among their other vulnerable friends who did not get the items donated.
- ❖ We also observed that the routine feeding of the aged on every Saturday keeps them a little away from the streets begging for food and other things and also makes them feel belong and among in the community. The exercise has helped these aged persons who cannot take care of themselves needless to say their children/grandchildren.
- ❖ It was also observed that the donation of these playing equipment/materials to the Parish Preschool (Sacred Heart Preschool) have attracted many kids to the school because children in this community see that as an opportunity and encourages them to learn even though fighting over the limited equipment has also become an emerging issue in the school.

## **5.0 CONSTRAINTS**

- ❖ Even though some pupils have been benefiting from the donation of learning materials, there are so many vulnerable ones still left out who needs urgent help in terms of education.
- ❖ The playing equipment/materials donated to the Parish Preschool is not enough for the pupils attending the school – thus, there is a need for donation of more playing toys/equipment to help set the school on basic standards.
- ❖ In a community like Serabu, feeding the grandma means you are feeding the grand child or children all together because most of the children live with their grandmas. As a result of this, there is always a constraint of insufficient food to feed the aged because they always come along with their grandchildren on Saturdays to undertake this exercise.
- ❖ Because of the poor road network, transporting building material to Serabu from Bo became one of the major constraints in the renovation process which resulted in slowing down the renovation process as a whole.

- ❖ The installation of the Easy Solar light in the Holy Rosary school have seen an increased and robust performance of the pupils in public exams because they can now study well and the teachers now use this facility to recharge their cell phones on regular bases which has kept them in constant touch with their superiors.

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ❖ Since the structural part of the renovation of the church have been completed, we also recommend that we equip the **CHOIR** with both local and modern musical instruments in order to promote the musical ministry in the church.
- ❖ We believe that we can do more interventions if we have more funding because we don't want to limit ourselves to the central Parish but looking in the direction that the Parish consist of **10 major outstations** and these communities also have vulnerable persons. Lacking these facilities, they also feel neglected. We recommend that these charity work be extended also to these other communities as we have already started.
- ❖ Because of the number of outstations and their distances, the Priest cannot visit all these places within a month. We recommend that two Catechists be employed on payroll/stipend to help visit these places in the stead of the Priests.
- ❖ In as much as the renovation of the church is completed, there still remain a problem of water source in the house. Children find it very difficult to even get a clean drinking water during school hours and have to resolve in begging neighbors around the school for water. We recommend that a hand pump be constructed which if done can also help solve the drinking problem of these children who come to school every day and the Parish as a whole.
- ❖ We also recommend that some support be given to small Christian communities (SCC) in the church who help in evangelizing the word of God to their neighbours.
- ❖ There is a huge shortage of teachers in Serabu and its nearby villages. Because, most the newly graduated teachers prefer to stay in the cities and teach in order to make more money. As a result, schools in villages have little way to attract teachers to come and teach in these various schools in Serabu and its environs – thus, lack trained and qualified teachers. Therefore, we are recommending that some incentives be given to these auxiliary teachers who teach in these various school because all of these auxiliary teachers are not on government payroll.

**Submitted to: St. Mary's Parish Concord**